

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

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

Monthly e-Magazine

ISSN 2319-4049

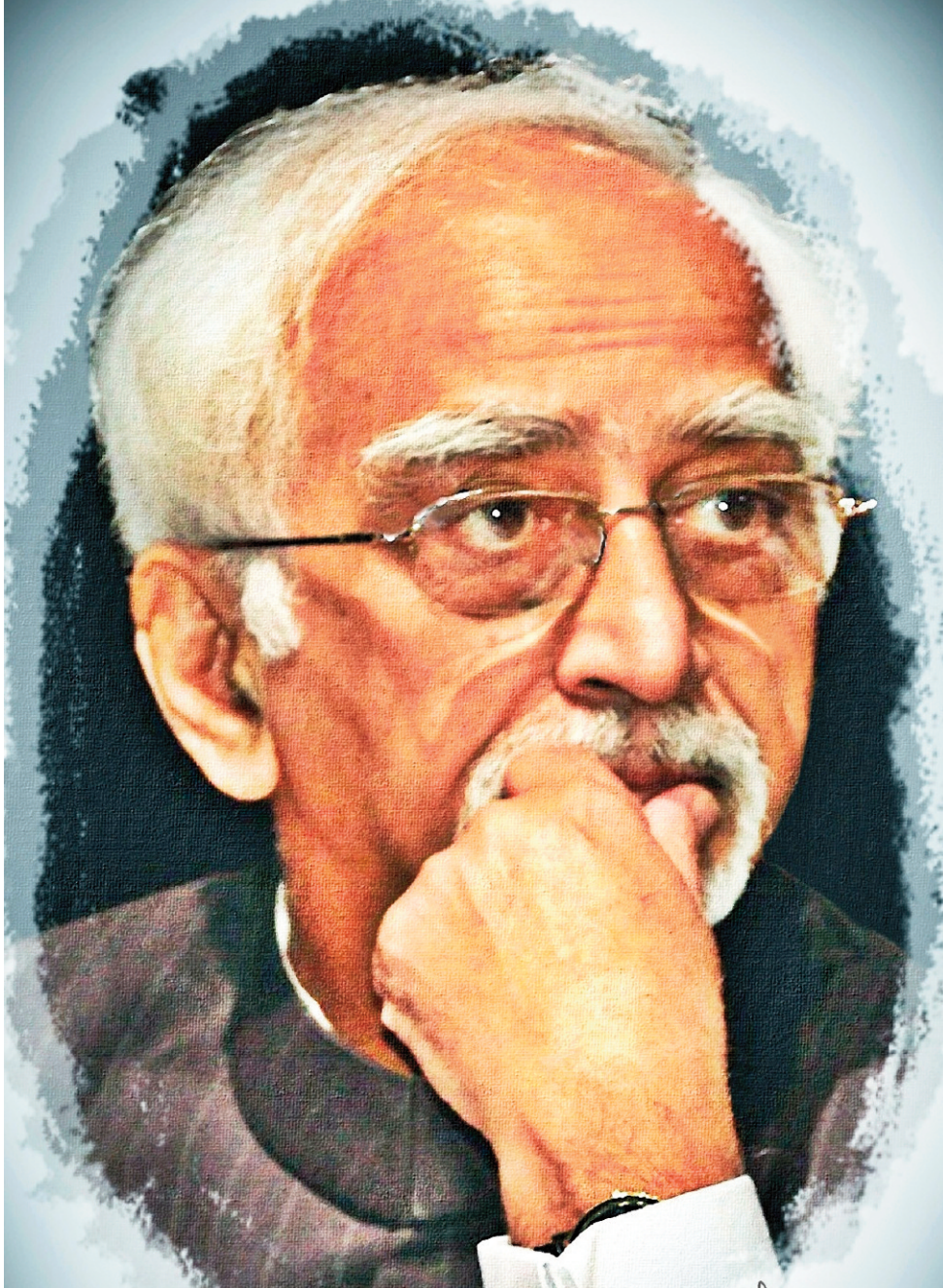
باخبر

# BAKHABAR

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

BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

Volume 8, Issue 11, November 2015



IN DEPTH

## Why Does The Vice President Of India Worry The Right Wing

### Editorial Board

#### Publisher

Bihar Anjuman BaKhabar

#### Editorial Board

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

bakhabar@biharanjuman.org

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



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

write to

bakhabar@biharanjuman.org  
form a chapter in your city or country

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

□ Ibn Al Qayyim may Allah have mercy on him said the word (نزع) – (sadness) does not appear in the Quran only in the form of forbidding it (لا تزنحوا) or in the form of negating it (لا تزنحوا). (نزع).

And the reason for this is because there is no benefit for having sadness in the heart.

The most beloved thing to the shaitan is to make the believing slave sad by taking him off track.

□ The Prophet (ﷺ) sought refuge in Allah (swt) from sadness (ين! مل) (نزع او مل! نم لب نوع)

□ Ibn Al Qayyim said: Sadness weakness the heart and diminishes determination and wanting to go forward. And there is nothing more beloved to the shaitan than sadness of a believer.

□ For this reason, be happy, optimistic and think good about Allah (swt). Have trust in what Allah (swt) is able to do and depend on Him. You will find happiness and pleasure in all situations.

□ Ibn Al Qayyim said: Don't ruin your happiness with worry, and don't ruin your mind with pessimism. Don't ruin your success with deception and don't ruin the optimism of others by destroying it. Don't ruin your day by looking back at yesterday.

□ If you think about your situation, you will find that Allah (swt) has given you things without asking, so have trust in Allah (swt) that He doesn't prevent anything you want except there is goodness for you.

□ You could be sleeping and the doors of the heavens are being opened with dua'as being made on your behalf, subhan Allah: perhaps from someone poor whom you helped, or someone sad whom you brought joy, or someone passing by and you smiled to him, or someone in distraught and you removed it.. so don't ever underestimate any good deeds.

□ One of the righteous predecessors said: I make dua'a to Allah (swt) for something I want, and if He gives it to me then I'm happy once and if He doesn't give it to me then I'm happy ten times because the first was my choice and the second was Allah's choice.

□ As Sa'ady may Allah have mercy on him said: life is short so don't shorten it with worries, grief, and sadness.

□ So be the owner of a heart that breathes happiness and satisfaction.

May Allah (swt) make your times happy and may Allah (swt) forgive us all. Ameen.



# Mystery of Missing Muslim Captains of Industry

I By T K Arun I

This newspaper's finding that only 2.67% of the directors and seniormost executives of the largest 500 companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange are Muslims is a sad reflection on the state of the community and of Indian society in general, but hardly comes as a shock Except to those engaged in professional demonization of Muslims as descendants of foreign invaders who pollute the culture, owe foreign allegiance, harbour terror in their hearts and are resolutely fecund, so as to outnumber Hindus, the sooner the better. The 2011 Census data showed that the Muslim population growth rate has steadily been coming down, is lower than that for Bihar as a whole and that, in absolute numbers, Hindus outnumber Muslims by the largest ever majority today. Now, the ET study brings out an indicator of relative economic disempowerment of Muslims, as well. Rather than the caricature of menace the Hindutva brigade paints of the Muslim, the reality shows a deprived, disempowered community living under the shadow of violence as the number of communal incidents recorded by the Home ministry keeps going up.

Of course, Muslims are not alone in being under-represented in the corporate hall of fame. The result would be even more disheartening, if one were to hunt for the presence of members of India's deprived castes and tribal groups in the higher echelons of corporate India. However, certain other minority communities are likely to be overrepresented, in relation to their population: Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Parsis.

**The difference, essentially, is education.**

Of course, the same prejudice that makes it hard for Muslims to rent a home in urban India will be at work when it comes to hiring as well. However, given the shortage of talent in general, companies are likely to pay attention more to capability than to religious identity. Discrimination on the basis of community used to be far stronger and overt in the pre-liberalisation era of suppressed competition. Even in companies with Muslim promoters, the largest proportion of senior managers would be non

Muslims, more likely than not. This underscores the role of factors other than discrimination in hiring for the weak representation of Muslims in decision making roles in corporate India.

The Sachar committee report and the subsequent evaluation report on its recommendations, by Prof Amitabh Kundu both brought out the plight of India's Muslim minorities. In terms of socio-economic indicators, they are at the bottom of the heap, along with the scheduled castes and

*Other minorities  
Christians, Sikhs,  
Jains & Parsis--are  
likely to be overrep-  
resented. The differ-  
ence, essentially, is  
education*

scheduled tribes.

The Planning Commission, under the previous UPA government, found that funds allotted for education and healthcare had systematically skirted Muslim-dominated villages in places like Uttar Pradesh. This led former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to declare that the minorities and other deprived sections had the first claim on the nation's resources. Such statements were widely interpreted to be minority appeasement -with merit, considering that Congress-led Maharashtra did not particularly lag Gujarat in

putting away young Muslim men behind bars for years on terror charges that were subsequently disproved.

Vice President Ansari recently said Muslim backwardness is a drag on the entire society. He called upon the community itself to do more for its own uplift. Things are, indeed, changing.

When e-learning software producer Extra Marks was scouting for a school to deploy its offering, it met with skepticism and rejection, till it met up with the Muslim Education Society in Kerala. The MES school in Pattambi was the first school to buy and use English-language software and tablet based teaching and learning.

This is, of course, far removed from the Madrasas of north India, where Muslim pupils are herded into a closed universe, whose horizons are defined by Urdu, the only language they learn, besides the Arabic of the Quran.

The route to redemption for Muslims, as well as for other deprived sections of Indian society, is to equip themselves to take part in the ongoing structural transformation of the Indian economy, from an economy where the bulk of the workforce was engaged in agriculture to the new, emerging, urbanizing powerhouse of services and industry. Those who become skilled professionals and entrepreneurs from among the ranks of the deprived communities will augment their community's social capital and help the rest climb their way out of backwardness.

## My observation

[Asrarul Haque <asrarulhaque@hotmail.com>]:

We have been neglecting education as a community for very long. This is more so in case of families which are not well off i.e. below average or lower middle class. One important reason has been that we have wrongly associated education with Govt. jobs.

Because such jobs are not available/ possible, the conclusion is that education is of no use. We encourage children to learn some odd skill and start working when they should be in schools/colleges. Those who want to have some semblance of education send their children to Madarasas, an important reason being that there things are free including boarding and lodging. Community bears the expenses by way of Zakaat.

Even if some child is intelligent and interested in education, the family finds one or the other excuse to discontinue the formal schooling and higher education. The same is more so in case of girls.

Being better as compared to others in the community, especially by way of education, it becomes our duty to encourage the deprived section (education-wise) of community towards education. We can do so by:



1. Starting or supporting existing educational institutes, especially the ones which admit and educate children from deprived sections of the community.

2. There are large numbers of organizations which are encouraging formal education by way of scholarships, financial assistance for fee, hostel expenses etc. We can support such

organizations as well.

3. By providing financial assistance to students who are good and interested in education. Most of the time the families are not in a position or not interested in paying the fee and other expenses. They are more interested in children working from early age. We can intervene in such cases.

4. Zakaat money which we normally keep exclusive for Madarasas can be utilized for the purposes mentioned above. We can also use the funds for both components depending on situations and requirements.

## Out of six largest meat suppliers in India four are Hindus

By Muslim Mirror Special Correspondent

New Delhi, 4 Nov 2014: Muslims are unnecessarily blamed maligned and targeted for excessive meat consumption while the fact is that Christians and Jews are the highest meat consumer communities. The world's largest beef meat exporter country is Brazil followed by India, Australia, USA and UK. When we see this matter in an Indian perspective we would be surprised to know that out of six largest meat exporters of India four are Hindus. In spite of these facts Muslims are harassed and targeted and as beef eaters. In several cases they are beaten severely by Hindutva brigades and put behind bars by the police. Many times communal riots took place only due to this blame game. These communal elements become more active during Eid ul Azha festival only to communalize the atmosphere.

But the same Hindutva brigades forget the Hindu animal sacrifice festivals which get media attention world over in which thousands of animals are killed ruthlessly.

There's a ritual of sacrificing cow which is still performed in many temples of Himachal Pradesh, Surprisingly, the high court had to intervene to stop those animal killings in the premises of Mandir, specially at the Pashupatinath Temple.

Recently in Nepal around a quarter million animals were killed during Gadhimai Hindu rituals festival. Ironically many Hindu Businessmen are the largest beef suppliers of India. Following are the four largest beef exporters who are Hindus.

1) Al-Kabeer Exports Pvt. Ltd.

Its owner name: Mr. Shatish & Mr. Atul Sabharwal  
Add: 92, Jolly makers, Chembur Mumbai 400021

2) Arabian Exports Pvt. Ltd.

Owner's name: Mr. Sunil Kapoor  
Add: Russian Mansions, Overseas, Mumbai 400001

3) M.K.R Frozen Food Exports Pvt. Ltd.

Owner's name Mr. Madan Abott.  
Add : MG road, Janpath, New Delhi 110001

4) P.M.L Industries Pvt. Ltd.

Owner's name: Mr. A.S Bindra  
Add : S.C.O 62-63 Sector -34-A, Chandigarh  
160022

## Inauguration of RAHBAR ITI - Bihar Anjuman's 1st ITI: 4th of November 2015 at 11 AM in the premises of 106 year old Madarsa Islamia, Shahpur Bha-gauni, Samastipur

Dear members, Asslam Alaikum,

As you are aware that long awaited BA ITI is approved and admission process is complete. All the seats are full. We are planning for inauguration ceremony on 4th of November 2015 at 11 AM in the premises of 106 year old Madarsa Islamia, Shahpur Bhaugauni, Samastipur. It will be inaugurated by Hazarat Maulana Anisurrahman Qasmi, Nazim Imarat Sharia, in sha Allah. The invitees are as follows:

**Chief Guest:**

**Maulana Anisurrahman Qasmi, Nazim Imarat Sharia and President of ITI**

**Special Guest:**

**Maulana Suhail Ahmad Qasmi, Secretary, Imarat Sharia Trust.**

**Other Guests.**

**Md. Naushad Ansari sb, IRS, President Peace Foundation**

**Bahauddin Gilani Sb, founder member of BA and Gilani Foundation, Maulana Masroor Ahmad sb, Vice President of ITI, Suhail Ahmad, Secretary, ITI**

**Committee members of Madarsa, Local Invitee, Newly appointed Teachers. Students (82 Nos.)**

Home Work:

We are in the process of collecting syllabus and Books of, Electrician, Plumber, Mathematics (Work shop calculation), Social Studies, Engineering Drawing, Trade Theory

Preparing Routine

Through this mail I am inviting all BA members to attend the function. Please confirm your participation by writing a mail on my email. Lunch will be arranged by Nizam Ahmad sb. It looks, this will be my last job, I will request all the members to pray for success of this project and I hope young BA dedicated worker will take this project to new height in future, In sha Allah.

Md. Enam Khan,  
Patna



# The Islamic Golden Age of Science for today's Knowledge-based Society: The Ibn Al-Haytham Example

Report

I By Sameen Ahmed Khan I

There have been numerous conferences on the themes related to the Islamic Golden Age of Science, during the 8th-13th centuries. But the event reported here is the 'event of events' and we need to briefly note the background leading to it. The United Nations declared 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies (IYL-2015), with the intention to stimulate worldwide interest in light-related sciences and technologies. The year 2015 marks numerous anniversaries from the field of optics. The oldest among these is the 1000th anniversary since the appearance of the encyclopedic treatise on optics (Kitab al-Manazir or the Book of Optics) by the Arab scientist Ibn al-Haytham (965-1040). Ibn al-Haytham became a central figure in the documents, which were submitted to UNESCO and eventually leading to the declaration of the International Year of Light by the United Nations in December 2013. The International Steering Committee of IYL-2015 launched an International Working Group (IWG, <http://www.ibn-alhaytham-iwg.org/>) "Ibn al Haytham" to highlight the contributions of Arab scholars in the Islamic golden age to optics; in particular the work of Ibn al-Haytham. Prof. Azzedine Boudrioua, a leading optical scientist is the Chair and Coordinator of the Ibn Al-Haytham Working Group. Prof. Roshdi Rashed the world renowned mathematician, science historian and the 2007 King Faisal International Prize Laureate is the Honorary Chair. The author of this note is a member of the IWG.

As part of the IYL-2015, UNESCO hosted an international conference from 14-15 September 2015 at its Headquarters (in Paris, France) focusing on the accomplishments of the Islamic civilization in its Golden Age and the life and works of Ibn al-Haytham. The event had a very high profile inauguration. Dignitaries in the inaugural session included their Excellencies: Irina Bokova (Director-General of UNESCO); John Dudley (President of the Steering Committee of the IYL-2015); Mohamed Amr (Ambassador, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO); Ziad Aldrees (Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to

**The Islamic Golden Age of Science for today's Knowledge-based Society: The Ibn Al-Haytham**

Sameen Ahmed Khan

Department of Mathematics and Science  
College of Arts and Applied Science  
Dhofar University

Post Box No. 2509, Postal Code:  
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman  
shelakhan@yahoo.com <http://SameenAhmedKhan.com>

UNESCO); Sheikh Faisal bin Qasim Al-Thani (Founder and Chairman of the Al Faisal Without Borders Foundation, <http://www.AlFaisalFoundation.org/>). Putting the conference in perspective, Irina Bokova stated that "today, at this time of great change, when ignorance and violent extremism are rife, it is essential we do everything to teach the common history of humanity, to share the histories of women and men who did so much in the past to impact on the world as we know it today. Ibn Al-Haytham stands out in this pantheon as a great scientist and humanist." John Dudley noted, "Studying the history of science and the lives and works and ideas of its pioneers such as Ibn al-Haytham can yield many important lessons, and provide inspiration for the future."

Rest of the event had about thirty presentations distributed in eight sessions as follows:

- 1.Session-1: History guiding the future, example of Ibn al-Haytham.
- 2.Session-2: Light-based technologies for the future.
- 3.Session-3: Education and Investment in Science & Technology.
- 4.Session 4: The legacy of the Ibn Al-Haytham Conference.
- 5.Session-5: History of Optics-1.
- 6.Session-6: History of Optics-2.
- 7.Session-7: Impact of Light Science and Technology.
- 8.Session-8: Optics and photonics in the Arab and Islamic world.

Each session was moderated by a distinguished expert. Renowned speakers in the history of light science and international experts in research,

technology and education presented talks over two days and provided decision-makers, scientists and the public with new historical insights and informed discussions. They further debated on the current trends and challenges of research and education in Arab and Islamic countries and other countries worldwide. The large UNESCO conference room was equipped with individual headphones and a shared microphone for three. This was accompanied with simultaneous translation in six official languages of the UNESCO: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Most presentations were in English with some in Arabic and French.

A co-located exhibition showcased the digital images of the documents and works of scholars from the Islamic Golden Age (courtesy: Qatar Digital Library, <http://www.qdl.qa/>). This exhibition also featured an exceptional piece, the seventeenth century microscope built by Leeuwenhoek for its scientific and historical value. This Leeuwenhoek microscope was exhibited to public for the first time during the Ibn al-Haytham Conference. Besides there was (a) Video presenting ancient manuscripts of scientists of the Islamic Golden Age (Produced by the Qatar National Library); (b) Opening of the Ibn al-Haytham Exhibition; (c) White Paper on Optics and Photonics (by the Ibn Al-Haytham Working Group). There were round table discussions and concluding remarks. The White Paper on Optics outlined the actions to follow. Suggestions included: (a) translation and digitalization of the works of ibn al-Haytham; (b) creation of an Ibn al-Haytham International Society. Finally there was a suggestion to do the same for other luminaries from the Islamic Golden Age.

About four hundred scientists, science historians, diplomats and science policy experts participated in the event. The author of this note is one of the thirty-six members of the IWG. He presented the case of the “Medieval Arab Achievements in Optical Sciences and its impact on the European renaissance”. He in collaboration with Dr. Azher Majid Siddiqui of Jamia Millia University, Delhi, India presented the proposal: “Need to Create International Science Centres in the Arab Countries”. The proposed centres can be modeled after the European institutions. It is to be noted that photonic technologies can serve as a vehicle for international collaborations across the Arab countries. A prime example of one such collaboration is the SESAME Synchrotron facility in Jordan. The need to initiate the African Synchrotron Programme was also cov-

ered. Sameen Ahmed Khan is the author of the first book with the title “International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies”. He handed over a copy of this book to John Dudley the President of the Steering Committee of the IYL-2015.



Sameen Ahmed Khan with  
Science Historian Roshdi Rashed

#### Bibliography

- 1.Symposium Websites: and <http://en.unesco.org/events/islamic-golden-age-light-science-today-s-knowledge-based-society>
- 2.Host Websites: UNESCO: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, <http://unesco.org/>
- 3.Sameen Ahmed Khan, Medieval Islamic Achievements in Optics, *Il Nuovo Saggiatore*, 31 (1-2), pp. 36-45 (January-February 2015). (Publication of Società Italiana di Fisica, the Italian Physical Society). <http://prometeo.sif.it/papers/online/sag/031/01-02/pdf/06-percorsi.pdf>
- 4.Sameen Ahmed Khan, International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany (30 July 2015). <http://www.lap-publishing.com/> and <http://isbn.nu/9783659764820/>

Sameen Ahmed Khan  
Department of Mathematics and Sciences  
College of Arts and Applied Sciences (CAAS)  
Dhofar University  
Post Box No. 2509, Postal Code: 211  
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman  
([rohelakhan@yahoo.com](mailto:rohelakhan@yahoo.com),  
<http://SameenAhmedKhan.webs.com>)

# The Unfair Witch hunt of Hamid Ansari

I By MOHAMMAD SAJJAD I

‘Hamid Ansari was not talking of reservations for the whole religious community to which he happens to belong. Yet, sections of the media chose to put words in his mouth and then subjected him to criticism he never deserved,’ says Mohammad Sajjad.

The Vice President of India, Hamid Ansari, uses his words with finest possible measurement. This is his distinctive quality. After all he is a trained diplomat. He used the word “affirmative action” for the deprived ones and the immediate reference point was the stated policy announcement of the incumbent regime, “sab ka saath, sab ka vikas”, meaning thereby, an all inclusive development. This way the Vice President of India was saying exactly what the Vice President should actually do.

Yet, it drew unseemly controversy. A private news channel went on to dedicate a specific news debate with highly objectionable punch-line as to whether he is the Vice President of a particular community. This was shocking! Media of the world’s largest democracy will behave like this is so very sad and unfortunate, to say the least. This particular episode of making him a soft target cannot be seen in isolation. Earlier too the Vice President has been subjected to extremely undue criticism. Just few weeks ago, ill informed and patently prejudiced sections had mustered the courage of questioning the patriotic commitment of the Vice President on the issue of the Yoga Day. If this is happening with the incumbent Vice President because of his personal location in a religious minority, then this augurs ominously for a democracy which wants to be respected worldwide.

In all democracies, historically deprived and discriminated ones are given one or the other kind of institutional protection and favours to lift them up towards making equitable society. Sincere efforts towards having egalitarian socio-economic order are mandatory for the humanity to move ahead. The

USA has provided it for its coloured citizens. A history of deprivation and discrimination puts a psychological strain on the affected groups of the people which results into loss of their self esteem and confidence. Precisely because of this, reservations in the public employment and education have been given to certain segments of the Indian society which include Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and belatedly it has been extended to the Other Backward Classes. However, a Presidential order of 1950, excluded the corresponding segments of Muslims and Christians from the category of the Scheduled Castes. This religion based discrimination introduced by the then President of India has been perpetuating ever since then despite the “secular” formations having been in state power. At least since 1990s, movements are there to undo this religion-based discrimination but all these remain unheeded.

The Vice President, in his Monday’s speech (31 August 2015) was not being explicit on all these outrageous discriminations. Quite characteristic of him, he was talking in a measured way. He was commending the government’s reiteration of inclusive development, which he said is, “a prerequisite”, as it is “the affirmative action (where necessary)”, which would “ensure a common starting point”. He qualified it by putting it more appropriately, as he said, “corrective strategies have to be sought on category differentiation admissible in Indian state practice”. Thus his insistence on, “category differentiation” is explicit enough to understand that he was not talking of reservation for the whole religious community to which he too happens to belong. Yet, sections of media chose to put words into his mouth and then subject him to the criticism he never deserved. Recurrent maltreatment to the unblemished high office of the Vice President hurts the democracy.

Interestingly, he was so very unambiguous about suggesting the India’s Muslims to look inward and see what they have done to redress the identified shortcomings. Referring to compendium of official reports he also outlined that the identity and security,



education and empowerment were the issues confronted by the community to be addressed by both the society as well as the state. He alluded to his concern about leaving the rioters unpunished, which is sadly one of the biggest failures of India's criminal justice system; and all these grievances are certainly not directed solely against the BJP which has come to power only recently. Thus, the Vice President was talking rather in a language which genuinely strengthens a democracy.

Now, if one asks why did he speak only about Muslims, the answer is, he was speaking on the occasion of golden jubilee session of a Muslim organization, "All India Muslim Majlis e Mashaweraat". It was founded on August 8-9, 1964. One of the most important persons among the founders was Syed Mahmud (1889-1971), the freedom fighter, and the one who served Bihar as its minister in 1937-39, and in 1946-52 with great distinction as well as in the Union Cabinet in the capacity of the Minister of State for External Affairs. Syed Mahmud's book on Bihar (1939), "A Plan of Provincial Reconstruction", sold many prints just in the year of its publication (1939), and Dr Rajendra Prasad commended this book in passionately glowing words who wrote its Foreword. Hardly any other book by a politician-statesman of that era has spelt out plans of agrarian and industrial improvements specifically for Bihar. None of his tall statured contemporaries were as much alive to the specific plans for the economic development of Bihar—not even his close friend and the tallest Indian statesman, Jawaharlal Nehru—who insisted so much on "balanced regional development". As the subsequent regimes ignored it, Bihar inevitably found itself in a situation which many prefer to call it "India's Internal Colony".

Leaving the story of Bihar's politically caused economic backwardness, it would be in the fitness of things to take a journey down the memory lane about the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mashaweraat. It was formed in a particular political context. Starting with the communal riots of Jabalpur (1961) to the communal riots of early 1964 across Calcutta, Jamshedpur, Rourkela, etc., there were lot of misgivings among the Muslim minorities against the ruling Congress. Nehru was particularly uncomfortable with his long time close friend Syed Mahmud who was putting Nehru to great embarrassment as he was exposing his government's failure in providing security to the India's Muslims. This gave birth to this Muslim organization which understandably made an

impact on its outlook. At present the Mashaweraat advocates itself to be a non political body; its aims and objectives of serving the vulnerable section may have convinced the Vice President to deliver an address on the occasion of its silver jubilee celebrations and stock-taking. Today, the unforgettable nation-maker, Syed Mahmud must be turning into his grave for the kind of treatment that is being meted out to the organization's silver jubilee event. Indeed very sad!

One hopes the incumbent Prime Minister, would not sit in silence. He will speak up, at least in the next Radio address of much advertised, "Mann Ki Baat" wherein he will ensure the minorities that frightening atmosphere of 1961-64 will not be repeated in India ever again. This is an era where even a monarchical regime of UAE (Dubai) with hardly a long proud history of polychromatic civilization is willingly giving spaces to religious minorities including constructing temples. In such an era if a proud pluralist civilization like India will relapse into minority persecution is something absolutely unbelievable and unacceptable. Rather than targeting the well meaning Vice President let the nation resolve that India is going to do away with the situations which breed and perpetuate the Juhapura like ghettos. It is going to make a sincere move towards sab ka saath sab ka vikas, rather than popularising the falsehood of appeasement about the communities mired in continuous economic and educational backwardness. The Prime Minister can plan to visit the shelter camps of the hapless abandoned victims of the Muzaffarnagar riots (2013) and even of the Bhagalpur riots (1989) where even the regimes of "secular" Lalu-Rabri (1990-2005), and of "secular" Akhilesh-Mulayam-Azam have evidently made a wilfully miserable failure in providing adequate rehabilitation and compensation, not to say of an effective criminal justice system. Such a move of the Prime Minister will go a long way in sending a strong message to the hoodlums of whatever shades, and to win the trust of the excluded and deprived ones. That will script a new chapter of India's pluralist democracy. But the moot question still persists: shall the Prime Minister do this?

<http://www.rediff.com/news/column/mohammad-sajjad-the-unfair-witch-hunt-of-hamid-ansari/20150903.htm>

MOHAMMAD SAJJAD is Associate Professor in Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University (India)

# Was Aurangzeb the most evil ruler India has ever had?

Probably not. And here are five reasons why.

**I By Shoaib Daniyal I**

As has been happening ever so often since Narendra Modi took power, history has burst out into modern-day politics. The New Delhi Municipal Corporation has proposed renaming “Aurangzeb Road” in Lutyen’s Delhi to “APJ Abdul Kalam Road”. The move had wide support and both the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Aam Admi Party seem to have pitched for it, even as the Congress has maintained a studied silence. This also revived the long-standing Shiv Sena demand to rechristen Aurangabad in Maharashtra. Once the Mughal capital in the Deccan and founded by the Prime Minister (Peshwa) of the Ahmadnagar Sultanate, Malik Ambar, the city is set to be renamed Sambhaji Nagar, after Shivaji’s son.

Many people assume that history is an impersonal record of past events; a dull roll call of facts, events and figures. While

raw data is certainly a component in the writing of history, there’s more to it in the way of how the historian interprets that data. In the words of EH Carr:

“History consists of a corpus ascertained facts. The facts are available to the historian in documents, inscriptions and so on, like fish in the fishmonger’s

slab. The historian collects them, takes them home, and cooks and serves them in whatever style appeals to him.”

The final meal, then, depends not only on the fish available with the fishmonger, but also what the chef selects to cook and how he wants to cook it.



Most Indian state-written histories, for example, choose to elide the devastating invasion of the Marathas into western Bengal in the 1740s. A majority of Indian narratives look at the Marathas as a “national” force and ignore the fact that (like any medieval army) they had no concept of nationalism and were mostly interested in loot. In a mirror image, Pakistan has named its missiles after Afghan king Mahmud of Ghazni, deliberately choosing to forget that the man made his fortune by mostly plundering what is current-day Pakistan.

This is not to say that a history of Bengal that does not include the Maratha invasion is per

se false. After all, any history of Bengal has to leave out something or the other in order to tell a cogent story. This example is just to introduce the concept of a narrative and its power in shaping our concept of history.

With Aurangzeb, therefore, at least in the popular realm, a narrative has taken root which paints him as



a Mughal Voldemort, so dreadful and tyrannical that even his name on a single road in the entire country could endanger the republic.

Of course, it is impossible to disprove (or prove) such a narrative in an article. Nevertheless, here are five facts that at least don't fit into it.



## 1. Aurangzeb built more temples than he destroyed

The issue of temple destruction has taken on a particular hysteria after the violent mass movement in the 1980s and 1990s led by the Bharatiya Janata Party to destroy the Babri Masjid, based on the belief that the spot once housed a temple to the god Ram.

Ironically, there are almost no complaints of temple destruction by Mughal Hindu citizens in the medieval period itself, when these acts were actually supposed to have been carried out. Or even after Mughal power had waned in the 18th century (in case one would want to argue some sort of Mughal censorship). As the historian Richard Eaton has shown, destruction of temples by Muslim rulers in India was exceedingly rare and even when it did happen, it was a political act meant to chasten recalcitrant rulers and not a theological move.

In spite of his terrible reputation, Aurangzeb sticks to this template. Temples are rarely destroyed (Eaton puts the number of instances at 15 for Aurangzeb) and, if they are, the reason is political. For example,

Aurangzeb almost never targetted temples in the Deccan, although that is where his massive army was camped for most of his reign. In the north, he did attack temples, for example the Keshava Rai Temple in Mathura. But the reason was political: the Jats of the Mathura region had revolted against the empire.

For these same reasons of statecraft, Aurangzeb also patronised temples, since Hindus who remained loyal to the state were rewarded. In fact, as Katherine Butler Schofield from King's College London points out, "Aurangzeb built far more temples than he destroyed." Scholars such as Catherine Asher, M Ather Ali and Jalaluddin have pointed to numerous tax-free grants bestowed on Hindu temples, notably those of the Jangam Bari Math at Benares, Balaji's temple at Chitrakoot, the Someshwar Nath Mahadev temple at Allahabad, the Umanand temple at Gauhati, and numerous others.

Also, temple destruction was a common part of Indian politics at the time and was not restricted to Muslims. In 1791, for example, the Maratha army raided and damaged the Shankaracharya's temple in Sringeri because it was being patronised by Tipu Sultan, their enemy. Later on, Tipu renovated the temple and had the idol reinstalled.



## 2. Music flourished in India during Aurangzeb's reign



A crucial part of the entire narrative of Aurangzeb as a tyrant is the parable that he banned music. It is a powerful tale and one that could really clinch the case. The only problem? It's not true.

Far from being banned throughout India, as Katherine Butler Schofield comprehensively establishes, music wasn't proscribed even in Aurangzeb's court. The Emperor's own coronation anniversaries were marked by both musicians and dancers. Not only that, his patronisation of music meant that a number of dhrupads were composed in his name. Not only that, he also seemed to be quite knowledgeable about it himself. In the *Mirat-e-Alam*, Bahktawar Khan wrote of the Emperor having a "perfect expert's knowledge" of music. The *Rag Darpan*, a musical treatise by Mughal noble Faqirullah lists out Aurangzeb's favourite singers and instrumentalists by name. Aurangzeb's dearest son, Azam Shah went one step further and, during the lifetime of his father, became an accomplished musician.

In fact, it could even be said that music flourished under Aurangzeb's. Schofield writes: "More musical treatises in Persian were written during Aurangzeb's reign than in the previous 500 years of Muslim rule in India, and all of them make significant references to current music making."

In spite of his own love for it, later on in life, as Aurangzeb got more religious, he did stop listening to music himself. However, given the evidence, the assumption that this personal preference of Aurangzeb's fashioned Mughal state policy seems incorrect.

### **3. Aurangzeb employed more Hindus (including Shivaji) than any other Mughal**

It is a well-established fact that the number of Hindus employed by the Emperor's administration was the highest ever in Mughal history up till then. In fact, the number of Hindu bureaucrats rose significantly during Aurangzeb's rule, a statistic that, in the words of M Ather Ali, provides a "fine lawyer's answer to any charge that Aurangzeb discriminated against Hindu mansabdars".

The proportion of commanders, senior court officials and provincial administrators who were Hindu rose



from 24% under Aurangzeb's father, Shahjahan to 33% in the fourth decade of the Aurangzeb's own rule.

This trend actually becomes sharper as you move up the administration. A remarkably large number of Aurangzeb's top generals were Hindu Rajputs. In fact, when Aurangzeb's campaign against the Marathas or Sikhs is presented in a communal light, it is often forgotten that the actual Mughal army in the field was almost always led by a Rajput general. Shivaji, himself, in fact, served in Aurangzeb's army as a mid-level commander (mansabdar) at one time and, writes Jadunath Sarkar, even expected to be made the Mughal Viceroy of the Deccan, but was refused by Aurangzeb, who could not gauge his military genius.

### **4. Aurangzeb's mother tongue was Hindi**

Being unIndian is a charge levied not only at Aurangzeb but at almost any ruler who happens to be Muslim in medieval India. At one level, it is a puerile and, in fact, absurd test, given that there simply was no concept of "nationalism" in 17th century India (or almost anywhere else).

Nevertheless, almost by any standards, Aurangzeb

was a pukka upper-class Hindustani (a somewhat obvious point, since he was born and raised upper-class Hindustani). Patronising Braj Bhasha, a North Indian literary language for poetry and song, had been a long-standing Mughal tradition which continued into Aurangzeb's rule. The patronage climate for Braj in Aurangzeb's court was a "lively and encouraging one", says historian Allison Busch. Azam Shah, his son, was keenly interested in Braj poetry and patronised some of the biggest names in the language such as Mahakavi Dev. Vrind was another giant of Braj who was employed by Aurangzeb's administration.

Moreover – again, this is obvious – the mother tongue of Aurangzeb and the other Mughals by then had become an early form of modern Hindi-Urdu. In a fascinating letter, written by Aurangzeb to his 47-year old son, Azam Shah, the Emperor gifts him a fort and orders that drums be beaten in his name. He then reminisces about Azam's childhood, reminding him that he loved drums as a toddler and would often exclaim, "Babaji, dhun dhun!" to Aurangzeb in Hindi when he heard them.

Of course, the Mughals still mostly wrote in Persian, which was the official language of the day. However, since you're reading this in English, that shouldn't be too much of an issue.

## 5. The jizya tax wasn't unusually discriminatory for its time



Controversial point, this, but let's see it through. Abolished by Akbar and reintroduced by Aurangzeb, the jizya was a tax levied on non-Muslims in the realm over and above all other duties. It functioned in three slabs depending on income and its rate ranged from 0.5% to 6%. It also had a number of exceptions built in and the poor, unemployed and disabled were not expected to pay. Moreover, Brahmins "as the spiritual leaders of the Hindu community" were also exempt, as were bureaucrats.

The Muslim counterpart to the religious tax of jizya was the zakat, or alms tax, also to be paid over and above normal taxes. Aurangzeb, however, abolished the zakat.

From the modern point of view, this is clearly discriminatory and modern nations do not (with minor exceptions such as the Hindu Undivided Family provision in India) impose taxes on groups based on identity.

Judging people in the 17th century with today's morals, though, would result in an absurd situation: everyone would come out looking terrible. Taxation based on identity is an anachronism today but was not that much in Aurangzeb's time. The Marathas, who went on to replace the Mughals in large parts of the Deccan, had a discriminatory taxation policy as well; a mirror image of Aurangzeb's, in fact. They collected zakat from Muslims with no corresponding tax from Hindus.

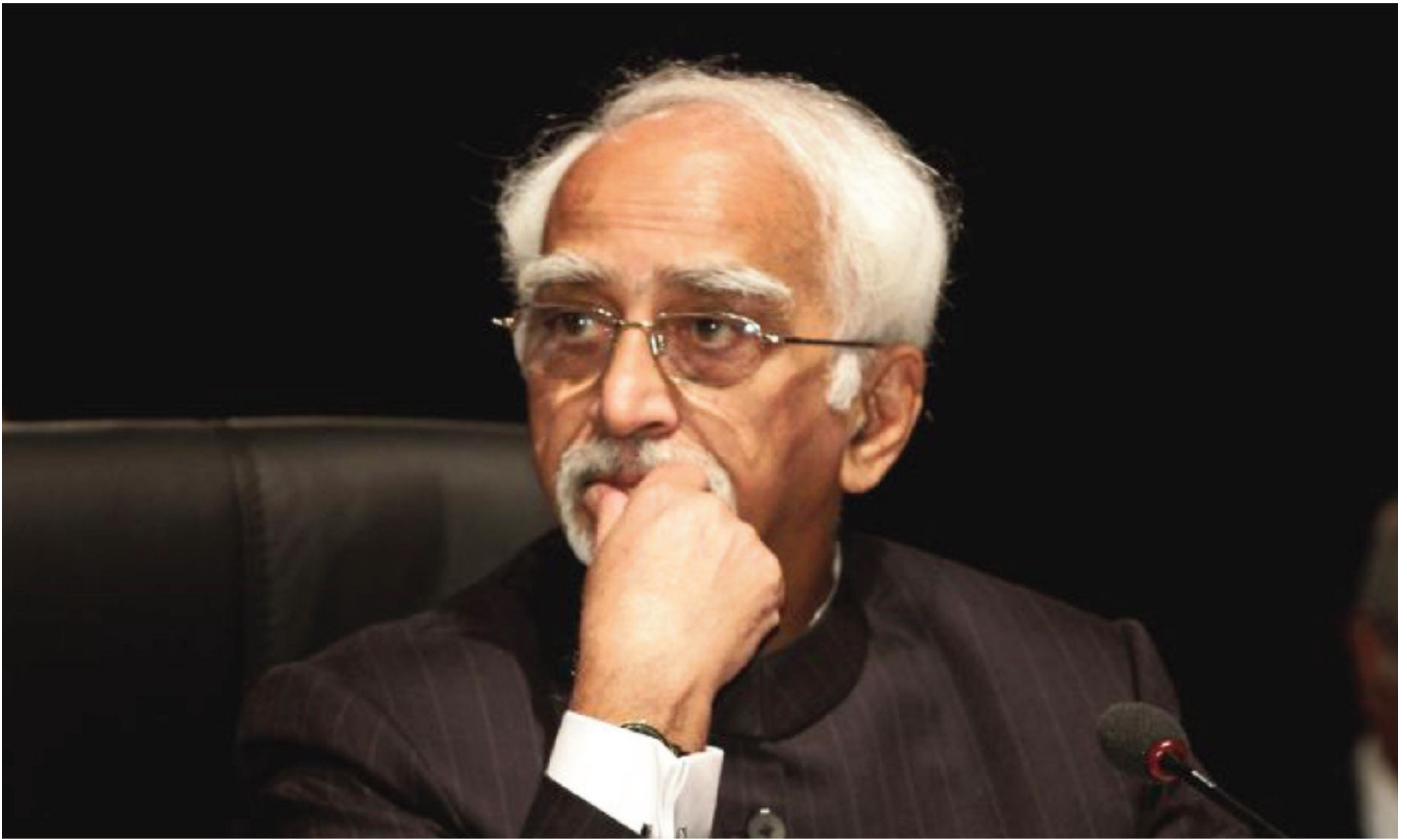
However, in many ways, both the Maratha zakat and Mughal jizya were, for their time, only mildly discriminatory, involving minor sums and a tiny percentage of the population (modern India's income tax base is less than 3% of the population, so you can imagine how small it was for Mughal India). Unlike today, the main axis of India's society at the time did not revolve around "Hindu" and "Muslim". To see real 17th century discrimination, one needs to go to caste.

The Maharashtrian Mahar Dalit caste under the Peshwa rule, for example, had to hang a broom from their backs, which swept away their footsteps as they walked so as to not "pollute" the path, in case an upper caste person should happen to use it later. A pot had to be hung below their neck, to collect any saliva that should inadvertently fall out from their mouths, also to prevent "pollution". Arms and education were, of course, banned and any Mahar breaking these caste laws was summarily put to death. So degrading was the condition of the Mahars under Peshwa rule that BR Ambedkar, also a Mahar, celebrated the victory of the British in the Anglo-Maratha wars — a practice that continues till today with the Mahars.

Of course, our evaluation of tyranny in the past is not based on any objective reading of history (if such a thing were possible at all) but rests mostly on our modern prejudices and politics. This is why Aurangzeb's jizya is discussed threadbare but the Maratha zakat or policy on caste is mostly swept under the carpet. And this is why Delhi's Aurangzeb Road may soon be renamed.



# Why Does The Vice President Of India Worry The Right Wing?



**I By Seema Mustafa I**

**T**he soft spoken Vice President of India Hamid Ansari has become the target of right wing groups who leave no occasion unturned to flout all constitutional propriety and norms and hurl nasty accusations at him.

The latest is a statement by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad attacking the Vice President over an impressive speech at a meeting of the All India Majlis-e-Mushawarat where towards the end, and in context, he said “the official objective of sab ka sath sab ke vikas is commendable; a pre-requisite for this is affirmative action (where necessary) to ensure a common starting point and an ability in all to walk at the required pace. This ability has to be developed through individual, social and governmental initiatives that fructify on the ground. Programmes have been made in abundance; the need of the hour is their implementation.”

VHP Joint General Secretary Surendra Jain described this as a “political” and “communal”state-

ment. He insisted that the demand was designed to “push Muslims into the dark alleys of dissatisfaction whose consequences will be dangerous.” He said that the statement did not befit the office of the Vice President. And he again reiterated the old saffron statement that Muslims in India enjoy more constitutional rights than they do in other Muslim countries, as if it is a favour they are being given. And hence, he wanted the Vice President to apologise.

This comes after two concerted attacks on the VP earlier, both born out of ignorance. One was a vicious onslaught through the social media, led by RSS functionary who is now with the Bharatiya Janata Party Ram Madhav, questioning him for not attending the Yoga Day celebrations led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Vice Presidents office explained at some length that as per the protocol the Vice President cannot attend functions without be specifically invited. And a Union Minister had to apologise. Opposition parties said that Madhav was indulging in communal divisive politics. Incidentally VP Ansari was the head of protocol at one time in the Ministry of External Affairs, and acknowledged



to be one of the best diplomats to head this unit.

Another attack on the Vice President was launched earlier on Republic Day in January, with even abuse being hurled his way, in response to the right wing campaign asking why he was not saluting the national flag while standing with US President Barack Obama and President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Again it had to be explained through a detailed statement by the Vice President's office that as per protocol he was not receiving the salute, and hence could not return it.

His address to the conglomeration of Muslim organisation has again drawn right wing ire. More so as VP

India and placed the onus on the state to rectify the exclusion and deprivation suffered by the minorities.

The Citizen has pieced together seven points that Vice President Ansari made that have worried the right wing organisations leading to the VHP attack on him. These are:

1. Vice President: "They (Muslims) were an integral part of the freedom struggle against the British rule."

An assertion of Muslim patriotism that flies in the face of the right wing propaganda seeking to dub India's largest minority as 'anti-national.'



Vice President of India Hamid Ansari at the meeting of the All India Majlis-e-Mushawarat

Hamid Ansari is the face of a liberal, intelligent, well informed Indian whose words are heard, not because he is a Muslim but because he has created a space as a diplomat and as the Vice President of India. He is a diplomat recognised for his good work, a soft spoken, dignified gentleman who was recommended by the Left parties for the post when the UPA government came to power with their support.

He excels in the use of words and his address to the Mushawarat was again a classic exercise in diplomacy albeit hard hitting, and assertive without appearing to be so. In the process he basically bust the myths and propaganda unleashed by the right wing organisation against the Muslims and minorities in

2. Vice President: "They (Muslims) are dispersed all over the country, are not homogenous in linguistic and socio-economic terms and reflect in good measure the diversities that characterise the people of India as a whole."

This cuts into the propaganda seeking to portray Indian Muslims a monolith, alien to the culture of India. And underlines the social and economic commonalities they have with all other communities living in India.

3. Vice President: "The Independence of India in August 1947, and the events preceding and following it, cast a shadow of physical and psychological insecurity

rity on Indian Muslims. They were made to carry, unfairly, the burden of political events and compromises that resulted in the Partition.”

This is a clear reference to the propaganda seeking to link the Indian Muslim to Pakistan, the accusation that the Muslims here are supporters of Pakistan and have their hearts and mind across the border that VP Ansari has questioned categorically as “unfair.” Muslims here have always maintained they stayed back in India out of choice and not compulsion. And the numbers of those who chose India over Pakistan were so high that as VP Ansari had said earlier in his speech, the second largest population of Muslims in the world lives in India after Indonesia.

4. Vice President: “The process of recovery from that trauma has been gradual and uneven, and at times painful. They have hesitatingly sought to tend to their wounds, face the challenges and seek to develop response patterns.”

In this he recognises the problems that the Muslims have faced, as against the right wing propaganda that they have given problems to the nation by their very existence. And also a recognition by the Vice President, who cannot be described as illiberal by even his worst critics, that the community has tried to deal with the challenges through adjustments and specific response patterns.

5. Vice President on the Sachar Committee report: ‘In the past decade, work has also been done to delineate the contours of the problem. The Sachar Committee Report of 2006 did this officially. It laid to rest the political untruth in some quarters about the Muslim condition and demonstrated that on most socio-economic indicators, they were on the margins of structures of political, economic and social relevance and their average condition was comparable to or even worse than the country's acknowledged historically most backward communities, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.”

Vice President:” Expert Group reports were prepared in 2008 on the need to develop a Diversity Index and establish an Equal Opportunity Commission.”“Taken together, these and other studies bring forth sufficient evidence to substantiate the view that "inequality traps prevent the marginalised and work in favour of the dominant groups in society".

Vice President: “Kundu Report of September 2014,

commissioned to evaluate the implementation of decisions taken pursuant to Sachar recommendations, has concluded that though "a start has been made, yet serious bottlenecks remain." It makes specific recommendations to remedy these. It asserts that "development for the Muslim minority must be built on a bed-rock of a sense of security."

These three quotes referring to reports set up by governments, and their recommendations is again authentic proof of the social, economic backwardness of the Muslims certified by commission set up to look at the issue. The Kundu reports makes the necessary link between security and development, and the Vice President's words are clearly a reminder that the government has not taken note of any of this. Instead there seems to be a hint in his words that the opposite is happening, and insecurity amongst the minorities has reached new heights.

6. Vice President: “identity and security; education and empowerment; equitable share in the largesse of the state; and fair share in decision making. Each of these is a right of the citizen.”

All citizens in his words, of all castes and communities. Right wing organisations affiliated to the RSS, and individuals heading the affiliates have created a stir in secular India over the past months questioning the rights of minorities in an India they insist should belong to the majority.

7. Vice President: “The default by the State or its agents in terms of deprivation, exclusion and discrimination (including failure to provide security) is to be corrected by the State; this needs to be done at the earliest and appropriate instruments developed for it.”

This was his most direct statement making it clear that the state has defaulted to the point of depriving, excluding and discriminating against the minorities and needs to rectify this at the earliest.

The speech was not about terrorism but about the problems, the challenges, and the exclusion and trauma being faced by the minorities that struck a chord with secular India.

# Understanding the Significance of Z a k a t

**I By Sameen Ahmed Khan I**

Zakat mean purity and cleanliness. A portion set apart from the wealth for the needy and the poor is called Zakat. By giving the Zakat, both the wealth and the self of the person gets purified. If somebody fails to give the poor and the needy what is their due, then his wealth remains impure. So also the inner self of this person is impure. Both Salah (prayer or worship) and Zakat were ordained as compulsory for the Ummah of all Prophets. After mentioning about Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and the Prophets of his race:

1. and made them leaders who would guide [others] in accordance with Our behest: for We inspired them [with a will] to do good works, and to be constant in prayer, and to dispense charity: and Us [alone] did they worship. [Surah Al-Anbiya' (The Prophets), 21:73]

## **Prophet Ismail in:**

2. who used to enjoin upon his people prayer and charity, and found favour in his Sustainer's sight. [Surah Maryam (Mary), 19:55]

## **Prophet Musa (Moses) prayed for his people:**

3. And ordain Thou for us what is good in this world as well as in the life to come: behold, unto Thee have we turned in repentance! [Allah] answered: "With My chastisement do I afflict whom I will - but My grace overspreads everything: and so I shall confer it on those who are conscious of Me and spend in charity, and who believe in Our messages- [Surah Al-A'raf (The Heights), 7:156]

## **Even after Prophet Musa, the people of Bani Israil were admonished on account of Salah and Zakat:**

4. AND, INDEED, Allah accepted a [similar] solemn pledge from the children of Israel when We caused twelve of their leaders to be sent [to Canaan as spies]. And Allah said: "Behold, I shall be with you!

If you are constant in prayer, and spend in charity, and believe in My apostles and aid them, and offer up unto Allah a goodly loan, I will surely efface your bad deeds and bring you into gardens through which running waters flow. But he from among you who, after this, denies the truth, will indeed have strayed from the right path!" [Surah Al-Ma'idah (The Repast), 5:12]

## **Prophet Isa (Jesus) the last prophet before Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was commanded:**

5. and made me blessed wherever I may be; and He has enjoined upon me prayer and charity as long as I live, [Surah Maryam (Mary), 19:31]

## **The Salah and Zakat are mentioned together in numerous places in the Holy Quran:**

6. Alif. Lam. Mim. THIS DIVINE WRIT - let there be no doubt about it - is [meant to be] a guidance for all the Allah-conscious who believe in [the existence of] that which is beyond the reach of human perception, and are constant in prayer, and spend on others out of what We provide for them as sustenance; [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:1-3]

7. and be constant in prayer, and spend in charity, and bow down in prayer with all who thus bow down. [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:43]

8. And be constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues; for, whatever good deed you send ahead for your own selves, you shall find it with Allah: behold, Allah sees all that you do. [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:110]

9. True piety does not consist in turning your faces towards the east or the west - but truly pious is he who believes in Allah, and the Last Day; and the angels, and revelation, and the prophets; and spends his substance - however much he himself may cherish it - upon his near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage; and is constant in prayer, and renders the purifying dues; and



[truly pious are] they who keep their promises whenever they promise, and are patient in misfortune and hardship and in time of peril: it is they that have proved themselves true, and it is they, they who are conscious of Allah. [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:177]

10. Verily, those who have attained to faith and do good works, and are constant in prayer, and dispense charity - they shall have their reward with their Sustainer, and no fear need they have, and neither shall they grieve. [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:277]

11. But as for those from among them who are deeply rooted in knowledge, and the believers who believe in that which has been bestowed upon thee

will, on the Day of Resurrection, be hung about their necks: for unto Allah [alone] belongs the heritage of the heavens and of the earth; and Allah is aware of all that you do. [Surah Al-Imran (The Family of Imran), 3:180]

14. O you who have attained to faith! Behold, many of the rabbis and monks do indeed wrongfully devour men's possessions and turn [others] away from the path of Allah. But as for all who lay up treasures of gold and silver and do not spend them for the sake of Allah - give them the tiding of grievous suffering [in the life to come]: on the Day when that [hoarded wealth] shall be heated in the fire of hell and their foreheads and their sides and their backs branded therewith, [those sinners shall be told:] "These are



from on high as well as that which was bestowed from on high before thee, and those who are [especially] constant in prayer, and spend in charity, and all who believe in Allah and the Last Day - these it is unto whom We shall grant a mighty reward. [Surah Al-Nisa' (The Women), 4:162]

12. Behold, your only helper shall be Allah, and His Apostle, and those who have attained to faith - those that are constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues, and bow down [before Allah]: [Surah Al-Ma'idah (The Repast), 5:55]

13. AND THEY should not think - they who niggardly cling to all that Allah has granted them out of His bounty - that this is good for them: nay, it is bad for them. That to which they [so] niggardly cling

the treasures which you have laid up for yourselves! Taste, then, [the evil of] your hoarded treasures!" [Surah Al-Taubah (The Repentance), 9:34-35]

15. The offerings given for the sake of Allah are [meant] only for the poor and the needy, and those who are in charge thereof, and those whose hearts are to be won over, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage, and [for] those who are overburdened with debts, and [for every struggle] in Allah's cause, and [for] the wayfarer: [this is] an ordinance from Allah - and Allah is all-knowing, wise. [Surah Al-Taubah (The Repentance), 9:60]

16. Thus, as for him who gives [to others] and is conscious of Allah, and believes in the truth of the ultimate good - for him shall We make easy the path

towards [ultimate] ease. But as for him who is niggardly, and thinks that he is self-sufficient, and calls the ultimate good a lie - for him shall We make easy the path towards hardship: and what will his wealth avail him when he goes down [to his grave]? BEHOLD, it is indeed for Us to grace [you] with guidance; and, behold, Ours is [the dominion over] the life to come as well as [over] this earlier part [of your life]: and so I warn you of the raging fire - [the fire] which none shall have to endure but that most hapless wretch who gives the lie to the truth and turns away [from it]. For, distant from it shall remain he who is truly conscious of Allah: he that spends his possessions [on others] so that he might grow in purity – not as payment for favours received, but only out of a longing for the countenance of his Sustainer, the All-Highest: and such, indeed, shall in time be well-pleased. [Surah Al-Layl (The Night), 92:5-21]

17. “What has brought you into hell-fire?” They will answer: “We were not among those who prayed; and neither did we feed the needy; and we were wont to indulge in sinning together with all [the others] who indulged in it; and the Day of Judgment we were wont to call a lie – until certainty came upon us [in death].” And so, of no benefit to them could be the intercession of any that would intercede for them. [Surah Al-Mudathir (The Wrapped Up), 74:42-48]

**The Iman (Faith), Salah and Zakat constitute the basis to bring the community of believers into existences:**

18. Yet if they repent, and take to prayer, and render the purifying dues, they become your brethren in faith: and clearly do We spell out these messages unto people of [innate] knowledge! [Surah Al-Taubah (The Repentance), 9:11 ]

19. AND [as for] the believers, both men and women they are close unto one another: they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and are constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues, and pay heed unto Allah and His Apostle. It is they upon whom Allah will bestow His grace: verily, Allah is almighty, wise! [Surah Al-Taubah (The Repentance), 9:71 ]

**Zakat is one of the preconditions to receive Allah's help:**

20. those who have been driven from their homelands against all right for no other reason than their

saying. “Our Sustainer is Allah!” For, if Allah had not enabled people to defend themselves against one another, [all] monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques - in [all of] which Allah's name is abundantly extolled - would surely have been destroyed [ere now]. And Allah will most certainly succour him who succours His cause: for, verily, Allah is most powerful, almighty, [well aware of] those who, [even] if We firmly establish them on earth, remain constant in prayer, and give in charity, and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; but with Allah rests the final outcome of all events. [Surah Al-Hajj (The Pilgrimage), 22:40-41]

**Zakat is a big blessing to those who realize its importance and give it wholeheartedly. There is severe warning to those who do not give the Zakat:**

21. Say thou, [O Prophet:] “I am but a mortal like you. It has been revealed to me that your Allah is the One Allah: go, then, straight towards Him and seek His forgiveness!” And woe unto those who ascribe divinity to aught beside Him, [and] those who do not spend in charity: for it is they, they who [thus] deny the truth of the life to come! [Surah Fussilat (Revelations Explained in Detail), 41:6-7]

**It is obvious that the Zakat helps the needy recipients and moreover purifies the persons who give it:**

22. [But as for you, O believers,] never shall you attain to true piety unless you spend on others out of what you cherish yourselves; and whatever you spend - verily, Allah has full knowledge thereof. [Surah Al-Imran (The Family of Imran), 3:92]

**When giving Zakat one should not expect any return from the recipients:**

23. and who give food - however great be their own want of it - unto the needy, and the orphan, and the captive, [saying, in their hearts,] “We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: we desire no recompense from you, nor thanks: behold, we stand in awe of our Sustainer's judgment on a distressful, fateful Day!” [Surah Al-Insan (The Man), 76:8-10]

24. O you who have attained to faith! Do not deprive your charitable deeds of all worth by stressing your own benevolence and hurting [the feelings of the needy], as does he who spends his wealth only to be



seen and praised by men, and believes not in Allah and the Last Day: for his parable is that of a smooth rock with [a little] earth upon it - and then a rain-storm smites it and leaves it hard and bare. Such as these shall have no gain whatever from all their [good] works: for Allah does not guide people who refuse to acknowledge the truth. [Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow), 2:264]

Zakat is a social institution. It is best done collectively. Every Muslim possessing the liable amount of money or property must pay an annual percentage of that amount as Zakat. Zakat is to be given on wealth (money, gold, silver, jewellery, business goods etc); cattle; and the agricultural produce obtained by the farmers. The details of the minimum wealth on which Zakat is due and its calculations have been covered in detail in several articles of this magazine. This article has focused on the significance of Zakat and charity activities in the light of the Holy Quran. The amount of Zakat based on the calculations is the bare minimum to be given. We need to give additional amounts to help the needy. Educating the poor and creating livelihood for the unemployed would be a good start. This helping nature is sure to contribute to the eradication of illiteracy and poverty in the community. This charity has great and obvious advantages in the society. It makes the rich reconcile with the poor. It fulfils some of the poor people's needs and alleviates some of their suffering. It protects the needy from going astray in terms of criminal behavior such as: robbery, violating other people's property, and even committing suicide. May Allah Almighty Make us generous in helping others by giving Zakat; and additional help to the deserving and needy, Amen.

#### Bibliography:

1. A website for Quran Majeed with comprehensive search in Arabic and numerous languages, along with several English translations (meanings), <http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/quran/>
2. Websites for Hadith, <http://www.searchtruth.com/> and <http://ahadith.co.uk/>
3. Tarawih Summaries in English, Hindi and Urdu, <http://NawabMohammedAbdulGhani.webs.com/tarawih.html> and <http://www.ipci.co.za/information/taraweeh-quran-summary/>

4. Shams Pirzada, Is it not necessary to read the Qur'an with Understanding?, Idara Da'watul Qur'an, Mumbai, India, 13th Edition (2011). <http://scanislam.com/browse-islam/read-quran-with-understanding/> and <http://www.quranforall.org/quran/iintrqwund.htm>
5. Khurram Murad, Way to the Qur'an, Islamic Book Service, New Delhi, India. <http://www.sunnipath.com/library/books/B0039P0000.aspx> and <http://www.islambasics.com/view.php?bkID=29>
6. Learn Arabic through English, Hindi and Urdu at: Functional Arabic: <http://www.Functional-Arabic.com/> and <http://www.Explore-Quran.com/index.htm>
7. Abdul Karim Parekh, The Easy Dictionary of the Qur'aan, This Treasure-house originally in Urdu is now available in numerous languages including: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, English and Turkish, (Zia Publications, Lucknow, India, Fifth Edition (2005). <http://Corpus.Quran.com/>.
8. Abdul Aziz Dahran, 80% of Qur'anic Words, This Pocket-sized booklet is in Urdu and English, Parekh Publications, Nagpur India (2009). <http://www.eMuslim.com/>.
9. An online source of Quran in different formats accompanied with audio to suite a variety of readers: <http://www.QuranFlash.com/home?en>
10. Sameen Ahmed Khan, Gearing up for the Tarawih, BaKhabar, Vol 7, Issue 06, pp 23-26 (June 2014). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhabar.biharanjuman.org/>
11. Sameen Ahmed Khan, Plan your Ramadan Month, BaKhabar, Vol 7, Issue 07, pp 24-25 (July 2014). Published by Bihar Anjuman, <http://bakhabar.biharanjuman.org/>

Sameen Ahmed Khan  
Department of Mathematics and Sciences  
College of Arts and Applied Sciences (CAAS)  
Dhofar University  
Post Box No. 2509, Postal Code: 211  
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman  
(rohelakhan@yahoo.com,  
<http://SameenAhmedKhan.webs.com>)



# My Algeria Visit

I By V.K. Tripathi I

Algeria is the largest and north-most country of Africa continent with a population of 3.7 crore (growing at 1.2% per annum) and area 2.4 lakh square km. To the North is Mediterranean Sea, across which lie Spain and France and rest of Europe. 85% land area of Algeria is Sahara desert and only 3% land is arable (total agricultural surface area amounting to 8.67 m ha). 90% Algerian population lives in its North most part, bound by Tunisia and Libya on the East and Morocco on the West. 99% percent people are Amazigh and speak Arabic. Islam arrived here soon after the Prophet. For several centuries Algeria was a part of Ottoman empire. France colonized it in 1830 and left only in 1962 after a bloody conflict that took a toll of 1.6 million lives. After independence, single party rule by National Liberation Front (FLN, that had led the freedom struggle) was established. Ben Bella (1962-1965), Houari Boumediene (1965-1978) and Chadli (1989-92) were at the helm for the first twenty years. In 1989 began movement for multi-party democracy. In 1990 local elections, Islamic Salvation Front emerged as winner but military intervened. This led to bloody conflicts, causing 1.6 lakh people to die in next 10 years. Peace was restored when Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected as the President on the plank of reconciliation and general amnesty. He served for 3 terms.

Algeria ranks 15th in oil export and 7th in Liquefied Natural Gas export in the World. These account for 31% of Algeria GDP. Other contributors to GDP are: services (25%), agriculture (9%), administration (12%), construction (11%), non-hydrocarbon industry (5%).

My interest in Algeria began in 1994 when Rachd Annou came from the University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene (USTHB) to work for his Ph.D. with me at IIT Delhi. His brilliance, innovation and extraordinary analytical elegance, reminded me of Arab Mathematicians. During September 13-15, 2015, USTHB, Algiers organized a 3-Day conference, "Laser Light and Applications" and invited me to give a talk on Free Electron Laser.

I reached Algiers on September 12, 2015. Prof. Rachid Annou and his younger son Abdul Rahim took me to their home. His wife Widad and elder son Ilyes greeted me with great warmth. Widad is an embodiment of humility and compassion. She is a journalist with liberal and objective outlook. She cooked excellent food. Then Rachid took me to Hotel El Dey where delegates to the Conference from France, Spain, Tunisia and other places stayed. I stayed there for 4 days. Next two days I stayed in Hotel Adghir at the shore of the Sea. It was a joy watching the vastness of the Sea and jogging on the beach.

The Conference Venue was in USTHB. It is a vast campus with 40,000 students and 1500 faculty. The percentage of girls in all disciplines of science and engineering is higher than that of boys. Faculty has 50% women. No country on the Earth has such high educational emancipation of women.

The conference was a delightful sight with no show off. Most presentations were in French, the medium of instruction in most Algerian universities. I spoke in English, yet people expressed fascination and appreciation. I also made remarks on science and freedom that touched them. On September 16, Prof. Rachid took me to his class of 100 students. I spoke for 20 minutes on Freedom. The response was overwhelming. Girls and boys opened their hearts. Many of them took autographs and photographs. Next day Dr. Jameela and Dr. Karima Annou arranged my talk at Center of Advanced Technology on Laser driven charged particle acceleration. There too 50% scientists were women and doing excellent work. We had an absorbing session. September 18 I left for India.

The Arab countries, for their Oil resources, are currently in an eye of a storm. In the garb of democracy foreign sponsored devastating assaults are being waged on people and the states are being destabilized. Hundreds of thousands are fleeing their homes and lands. I wish Algerian educated youth provides leadership to these nations and peace and national sovereignty are re-established.

# The two ideas of India

I By AIJAZ ZAKA SYED I

*Nisaar main teri galiyon pe aye watan ke jahan  
Chali hai rasm ke koi na sar utha ke chale  
Jo koi chahne wala tawaaf ko nikle  
Nazar chura ke chale; jism-o-jan bacha ke chale  
Hai ahle dil ke liye ab yeh nazm-e-basto kushad  
Ke sang-o-khisht muqayyad hain aur sag aazad  
Bohat hai zulm ke dast-e-bahana ju ke liye  
Jo chand ahle junun tere naam lewa hain  
Bane hain ahle hawas muddaii bhi munsif bhi  
Kisey wakeel karen, kis se munsafi chahen*

(My salutations to thy sacred streets, O beloved nation!

Where a tradition has been invented  
That none shall walk with his head held high  
If at all one takes a walk, a pilgrimage  
One must walk, eyes lowered, the body crouched in fear

The heart in a tumultuous wrench at the sight  
Of stones and bricks locked away and mongrels  
breathing free

In this tyranny that has many an excuse to perpetuate  
itself

Those crazy few that have nothing but thy name on  
their lips

Facing those power crazed that both prosecute and  
judge, wonder

To whom does one turn for defense, from whom  
does one expect justice?

**T**he stirring lines from one of Faiz's most celebrated poems have lately acquired a whole new world of meaning for me given the developments back home. India right now is, in the words of Emerson, in a tumultuous privacy of storm. It was the Hindi writer Uday Prakash who cast the first stone, by returning his Sahitya Akademi award to protest the rising intolerance in the country. Now the prairie fire started by him has spread to the far corners of India and threatens to consume the fiction of "achche din."

More than 30 award winning writers and intellectuals have now joined the growing chorus against the march of fascism, returning their awards and state honors in unprecedented protest.

From the tiny state of Punjab alone, eight authors have surrendered their awards voicing anger against the spiraling violence and hate crimes against minorities, encapsulated powerfully in the lynching of a Muslim blacksmith supposedly over beef eating rumors, and killing of intellectuals such as Prof Kalburgi and Govind Pansare.

Punjabi writer Dalip Kaur Tiwana in her note of protest wrote: "In this land of Buddha and Guru Nanak, the atrocities committed on the Sikhs in 1984 and on the Muslims recurrently are an utter disgrace to our state and society." Hindi author Krishna Sobti, 90, returned her award saying, "We do not want any more Dadris or Babris."

Historian and Nehru's niece Nayantara Sahgal has been the most high-profile of scholars to protest the direction in which the country is headed: "India's culture of diversity and debate is now under vicious assault," Sahgal said in an open letter to the Sahitya Akademi. "Anyone who questions any aspect of the ugly and dangerous distortion of Hinduism known as Hindutva, whether in the intellectual or artistic sphere, or in terms of food habits and lifestyle, are being marginalized, persecuted, or murdered. Mohammed Akhlaq was dragged out of his home outside Delhi, and brutally lynched, on the supposed suspicion that beef was cooked in his home. In all these cases, justice drags its feet. The Prime Minister remains silent about this reign of terror. We must assume he dare not alienate evil-doers who support his ideology."

Writers and artists, naturally being more sensitive and emotional than hoi polloi, are the first to react to developments around them in any society — and the stronger the reaction the healthier the society.



These fearless voices of conscience are the redeeming hope of India. It takes real guts and strength of character to speak truth to power. It's easy to pontificate about the social responsibility of intellectuals and their duty to hold a mirror to their society. However, few can stand their ground when faced with adversity. Courage under fire is a rare virtue. When going with the tide and colluding with the establishment is more sensible and rewarding, who would want to stick their neck out to do otherwise? No wonder speaking truth to power is considered jihad in Islam. And it's nothing short of dharm yudh given the clear and present danger threatening Indian democracy. The very Idea of India appears in peril as the body politic comes under repeated assaults.

Predictably, instead of being shamed by the clamor of India's finest writers and scholars, the BJP and RSS accuse them of suffering from "disease of secularism" and being "anti-national." Some want their "ideological antecedents" checked while some writers are intimidated with visits by intelligence officials. As for the PM, he wakes up 16 days after Dadri to term it "unfortunate" when goaded by a Bengali publication, only to accuse his adversaries of polarizing the country with their "pseudo secularism." Meanwhile, it has been business as usual with Shiv Sena resorting to familiar antics like forcing Ghulam Ali to abandon a planned tribute to his friend Jagjit Singh and blackening the face of Advani aide Sudheendra Kulkarni for hosting former Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri's book launch. Even Advani is outraged terming the attack as another sign of changing times. But, pray, who sowed the seeds of this intolerance? If Modi rules from Delhi today, the credit goes to his one-time mentor and his rabble-rousing politics. Also, after the 2002 Gujarat carnage when Vajpayee apparently wanted to sack Modi, it was Advani who protected him. So, as they say, you reap what you sow. And why are we surprised if the country is hurtling down the hill? What did voters expect when they elected this dispensation ignoring its illustrious past?

This week the Reuters news agency came up with a detailed report on the Hindutva takeover of India ti-

tled, Battling for India's Soul, State by State. The report should be prescribed reading for everyone who cares for the country. Many of us are familiar with most of the facts in the Reuters report, especially about the RSS, its hand in Gandhi's assassination, its decisive role in Modi's victory and its warped "Hindustan for Hindus" worldview, and above all, how the fascist organization has been setting the governance agenda for India. As the country attracts increasing international attention for outrages such as Dadri, for the first time these facts seem to be sinking in and being registered by the world media and the international community.

After noting the extensive "impact that the RSS is having on government rhetoric and decisions" and the fact that the majority of Modi's ministers are RSS men, not to mention its capture of institutions such as the Indian Council of Historical Research and FTII Pune, the authors comment: "What's unfolding is a battle for the soul of India. Since independence, Indian politics has been dominated by the Congress and its offshoots, who espoused a secular, multi-faith vision of the nation. Hindus are the majority, but roughly 14 percent of India's 1.2 billion people are Muslim.

"The RSS promotes a fundamentally different vision that draws on a mix of Hindu legends and ancient Indian history. According to this narrative, India's glory days ended after it was invaded by Muslims and then Christians, who converted the Hindu inhabitants. The RSS believes that if all Indians were to acknowledge and accept that ancient Hindu identity as theirs, it would unify the country."

This is indeed a battle for India's soul. The war is between the two visions of India. The Gandhian and Nehruvian idea of a democratic and inclusive India is being threatened by the exclusivist, Hindu supremacist India of Golwalkar's dreams. Unless more and more Indians wake up to the danger and fight to take back their country, there is little hope for the future.

Source:  
<http://www.arabnews.com/columns/news/821521>



# Three Days in Bihar

I By V.K. Tripathi I

**B**ihar elections are being held at a time when there is country wide upsurge of sectarian sentiment. One expected brutal lynching of an innocent in Dadri would shake the sensitivity of leaders of sectarian brigade but they have responded with a massive offensive by raising the bogey of cow. They are making it an issue in Bihar elections. It is not uncommon for the ruling elite to practice filtering water before drinking to save insects while having no hesitation in sucking the blood of the people.

I decided to spend three days in Bihar and do my bit to touch the chord of the people. I had no contacts with political parties nor had inclination to reach them out. I talked to legendary Gandhian Dr. Razi Ahmad and he advised me to go to villages. I also talked to faculty at Magadh Mahila College and IIT Patna and they arranged my lectures.

I reached Patna on October 9, 2015 at 7:30 AM with 4000 fliers, "Practice Five Fundamental Truths/ Watch your Step". After getting fresh at the station I began distributing fliers and talking to people while walking towards the city. I would tell people: yeh nafrat aur shoshan mitaane ka parcha hai. Desh mein ooper se neeche tak nafrat ki aag lagayi jarahi hai (this is the flier to reduce hatred and exploitation. There are efforts from top to bottom to ignite hatred in the country). Many people responded with appreciation. At 10:30 I reached Gandhi Museum. Razi sahib arranged a meeting with Rupesh ji, Shri Asif Wasi and Shri Javed. They apprised me of the ground situation. I also learned that the PM, by his exhaustive rallies and campaigns by his entire

cabinet and thousands of RSS cadre from other states, had turned Bihar elections into a battle. The corporate owned media was providing him unflinching support and round the clock coverage. Rupesh ji connected me to Shri Ramautar in Maner, a town 35 km from Patna.

I took tempos in succession and reached Maner at 1:30 PM. Ramautar is down to earth simple and doing social work among the underprivileged. He offered me rice and daal and took me around to different localities. The Dalit localities reflected hard life as in other states including Gujarat. Women were washing clothes on the road near a hand pump as there were no water connections in their homes.



They had no idea about designs of sectarian forces. In the evening we went to villages in Gyaraspur Panchayat. We met a cross section of people in Shantinagar. Dalits, particularly the educated ones, appeared inclined towards BJP. One reason

could be their affinity to Ram Vilas Paswan and Manjhi who are aligned with BJP. The other could be their losing hopes with successive governments in last 25 years. I realized my inability to argue the relevance of communal threat to meek masses. By 9 PM I returned to Patna. As I was walking towards Gandhi Museum and distributing fliers I met a youth Chandan. After reading the flier he came to me saying he loved every word of it and said he would distribute copies to his friends. Shyam, a masters student in Patna Science College, also expressed similar sentiment. They wanted to listen to my lecture but there was no public lecture planned.

Next day I began at 7 AM, reaching out to localities in Patna. Where ever I found 7-10 people gathered I read out few lines from the flier and peo-



ple asked me to read it more. I met two young medical doctors, Dr. Rai and one more, they loved the flier and expressed their anguish with the hatred being aroused in the garb of beef. At 10:30 I went to meet a professor at Patna University. At 12 I reached Magadh Mahila College. 120 girls and professors had assembled in the hall for a session on “Relevance of Gandhian Thought in the Current World Crisis” organized by Prof. Pushplata. Ten girls expressed their views with great clarity and conviction. I spoke for an hour. I talked about the three struggles Gandhi carried against color and caste segregation, colonialism and communalism and how Gandhi mobilized masses. After independence India did not carry any massive satyagraha but Gandhian legacy led to nonalignment movement that opposed neo-imperialist onslaughts in the period of cold war. It also shaped the character of our democracy. In the current phase, world faces three major challenges: attack on national sovereignty of third world nations, marginalization of working classes in the market driven economy, and sectarianism as an instrument of polarization and exploitation. Gandhian doctrine provides a way to take on them. In the afternoon I went to IIT Patna at Bihta. Dr. Naveen Nishchal organized a two and half hour session with 40 students and faculty. I gave two talks on “Science and Freedom” and “Laser Driven Proton Acceleration”. These were followed by heartening discussions

Third day I went to poorer localities of Patna and held heart to heart exchanges. I met a large number of candidates who had come for a B.Ed. exam. Despite pressure for exam they listened to me. Some vendors and shopkeepers also expressed their appreciation. I continued until 6 PM when I boarded the train to Delhi. Still there is hope in Bihar.

### **The flier**

#### **Practice Five Fundamental Truths**

- 1) Laborers, artisans and farmers, irrespective of their religion, are not fed by the nation, rather they feed the nation. Never entertain such evil thoughts against any worker that he eats (food) of the nation and sings for the other nation. Such thoughts are treachery. Liberate your self from them.
- 2) To reply a pebble with a stone or gun is derailed mentality. Get over it. It strengthens exploitation.
- 3) Hatred against the other person or other commu-

nity may unite you. And with that (power) you may crush the weak. However, your soul will go to ashes. Refrain from this sin.

4) The military might of the nation, wealth of the capitalist and wisdom of the intellectual are not your strength. Your strength is your soul. Its nourishment is truth, compassion and productive labour. Strengthen it.

5) Masses of the world are one – living on honest earnings, simple and truthful. Develop affinity for them.

We undertake self inquiry and develop strength to speak truth. Remember the meeting between Lord Ram and Bharat. Build that kind of uncrooked love. Remember the Hudebia Agreement of Prophet Mohammad (s.a.) (when he took multitude of people, who had come for tawaf (going around) of Kaba after travelling 300 miles from Madina, back without tawaf, for the sake of peace). May Almighty give us that kind of tolerance. At this time the fire of hatred and assertiveness of authority is gripping village after village. We contain it. Otherwise the fast growing wave of exploitation by market forces will ruin the villages.

### **Watch Your Step**

Today we are under the reign of trading and corporate class whose income is rising at the annual rate of 25% while that of the farmers and workers at 1%. The sectarian elements have their full support. After forming the government at the Center, they brought in anti labor laws, promulgated land acquisition ordinances, removed non-partisan and able people from academic institutions and imposed their own people, initiated Unnat Bharat Abhiyan to siphon huge sums of research and rural development money to their cadre, provided ground for foreign arm companies to manufacture and sell arms, weakened the foreign policy that we can't open our mouth when grave atrocities are inflicted upon the people of the world. Even worse is that rioters are arousing religious hatred to break the unity and soul force of the farmers and landless laborers, Media is mum. It only prays the authority at the helm. Save yourself and the nation from these forces. Do not let them control panchayats and governments. Do not sell village lands. Do not let river of hatred emanate from shrines.

# In Abraham's footsteps

I By AIJAZ ZAKA SYED I

Nothing celebrates the oneness of humanity and submission and surrender to the will of God as Haj does. The millions of voices perpetually chanting in unison, Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik, La Shareek Laka Labbaik, Innal Hamdah, Wan Nematah, Laka wal Mulk, La Shareek Laka, reaffirming their faith and commitment to the ideals of sacrifice, peace and unity of mankind re-create every year a surreal, out-of-this-world experience.

The sea of humanity surging and swirling around the Kaaba. There is not a more glorious and awe-inspiring sight in the whole world. Watching men and women in white going around the black-robed Kaaba during the annual Haj and at other times throughout the year is an experience that is sure to touch and transform everyone watching.

You do not have to be a believer or even get close to the Kaaba to be part of the surreal experience. No

one remains unmoved by the way the faithful from all parts of the world —

black and white, rich and poor and men and women — respond to the divine call and submit themselves before their Creator as equals and partners in the fellowship of faith and humanity.

You forget who you are and where you come from when you are in the presence of God, circling the Kaaba in a two-piece, unstitched attire. Indeed, nothing else matters when nearly three million pilgrims from around the world undertake the journey of a lifetime to Makkah.

The uninitiated may not be aware that Haj is not a tradition initiated by Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. By undertaking the passage to Makkah, mandatory for everyone who can afford it, Muslims retrace the historic journey of Prophet Abraham and the ultimate sacrifice of offering his beloved son Ismail's life (Ishmael) to God near the Kaaba thousands of years ago.

That is the essential message of Haj — sacrificing everything you've got and everything you love in the path of Allah — as Abraham repeatedly did. In fact, his whole life had been a study in sacrifice. From being cast into Nimrod's fire to moving wife Hajra (Hager) and young Ismail to the wilderness of Hejaz and finally the supreme sacrifice of Ismail, the extraordinary life of the great patriarch remains unparalleled for its heroic fortitude and endurance in the way of God and total surrender to the divine will.

No wonder Abraham had been honored with the unique and most distinguished title of being Allah's Khalil (friend). It is that liberating spirit of surrender and submission — of forbearance and fortitude by the noble Abraham and his equally noble son that the millions of pilgrims to Makkah celebrate.

The believers around the world join them in spirit and in emotion by offering their own sacrifice and sharing the meat with family, friends and the less fortunate during Eid Al-Adha.

Here I am at Thy service O Lord, here I am.  
Here I am at Thy service and Thou hast no partners.  
Thine alone is All Praise and All Bounty, and  
Thine alone is The Sovereignty. Thou hast no partners.

It is not merely the meat that is shared. It is the spirit of fellowship, togetherness, love,

mercy, generosity and caring for each other that is the gift of this holiday of sacrifice.

Nothing offers a peek into the heart and soul of Islam and its teachings and worldview as the Haj and the Eid that follows it do. So does the Eid Al-Fitr. Indeed, if anyone wanted a crash course in Islam, they could learn all that they want to know about the faith and its philosophy by merely observing the two major festivals and why and how they are celebrated. If Eid Al-Adha celebrates the spirit of sacrifice, abstinence, piety and mercy are the hallmarks of Eid Al-Fitr that is celebrated at the culmination of the holy month of Ramadan.

Today, when the faith is under siege everywhere, with ever new challenges from people walking around pretending to be Muslims and an entire industry being dedicated to distorting, faking, falsifying and misrepresenting it in a myriad ways, there



has never been a greater need to turn to the original teachings and message of Islam.

It is time to resurrect and rediscover the original values and pillars of the faith that made it great and conquer the world. It was not the cutting edge of Islam's sword — as many like to believe — but the revolutionary nature of its message that conquered the hearts and minds everywhere; the message championing the unity of God and humanity. This Islam as we know it is as different and distant from the death cult of false gods peddled by the fiends of Daesh as day is from night. But Muslims aren't exactly helping their cause by remaining silent or de-

fensive in the face of falsehood, ignorance and intolerance purveyed by the fringe.

This is no time to hide. They have to speak out more often and more forcefully to present the true face of the faith before the world. If nothing else, they should speak up and defend their faith for the sake of their future generations and their own future. Darkness is fast deepening around us. Every ray of light is precious now. We must fight back the forces of darkness with the light of hope.

<http://www.arabnews.com/columns/news/811156>

## Peace Foundation Announces Free Coaching for SSC / RRB / Banking

By MM News,

Patna, Oct. 12: Peace Foundation has announced Merit-cum-Means Scholarship to the needy minority aspirants of Staff Selection Commissions (S.S.C.)/ Railway Recruitment Boards (R.R.B.s), Banking (I.B.P.S.) and other general competitive examinations.

Mr. M. Naushad Ansari, Hon'y President of the foundation, informed that thousands of vacancies are filled up every year for Group B and Group C jobs through examinations conducted by various government agencies and public/private sector units. Muslims' representation in these services is very poor. These can be cleared with proper planning, focused preparation and mentoring. He further stated that the foundation has provided coaching to two batches consisting of 15 candidates each. Till now three candidates from first batch got selected for the government jobs; in Defence Research Development Organisation (as an Assistant), in Postal & Telegraph (as a postal assistant) and in Indian Railways (as a loco pilot). The second batch is undergoing coaching. For third batch the Foundation has planned to select thirty candidates namely, 'SCHOLAR-30'. The students, who have passed/are in the final year of graduation and qualify to write above examinations, may apply for the scholarship. The selection of candidates will be done through screening test and interview. Last date for submission of application is 30th October, 2015.

The selected candidates will be admitted to the best coaching centre/s in PATNA. They will also be provided free study material and guidance. To implant social values and responsibilities, orientation program will also be conducted, so that the scholars become good citizen of the country.

The Peace Foundation is a non-profit voluntary organisation (N.G.O.). It was established in May 2013 with the object of bringing social and economic development in the society. It is registered as a Public Charitable Trust (Govt. of Bihar).

Guidelines and application form can be downloaded from its website. It can also be obtained by e-mail, by post or by hand from the Foundation's office. Address:

Peace Foundation, A/21, Alinagar Colony, Behind S.B.I., Anisabad, Patna – 800 002, Bihar (India),  
E-mail ID – [peacefoundationbihar@gmail.com](mailto:peacefoundationbihar@gmail.com), Contact Nos. – 08804832789, 09431879346, 9308290198

(<http://muslimmirror.com/eng/peace-foundation-announces-free-coaching-for-ssc-rrb-banking/>)  
(FOR DETAILS PL. VISIT - <http://peacefoundation.co.in/>)

# Indian Muslims are living at the mercy of Hindus: The lesson from Dadri 'beef lynching'

I By Jyoti Punwani I

After the 1992-'93 Bombay riots, senior advocate Adhik Shirodkar, who led the Shiv Sena's legal team before the Srikrishna Commission of Inquiry, told me something that has been true for every communal conflagration in India: Muslims, he said, were at the receiving end during the riots. That's because, he claimed, they began the violence. And once the minority takes on the majority, he said, they are bound to get it back not in equal measure, but with twice the intensity.

"Revenge? Don't even think of it," was Asghar Ali Engineer's response when I once told him that I agreed with the Muslim youth who wanted to avenge what the Shiv Sena did to them during the May 1984 Mumbai riots. "When will the cycle of violence ever end once you start taking revenge?" the reformist-writer said. "Do you think Muslims would stand a chance?" In India, Muslims need to learn two things. First, do not ever think of "taking on" Hindus. Second, forget about vengeance.

## No place for modern State

Contrary to Shirodkar's claim, Muslims didn't start the violence in the 1992-'93 Bombay riots – the Shiv Sena did that. But, they did come out on the roads, attack temples, policemen and burn Hindus alive. The leader of the Hindus couldn't stand such audacity, so he ordered his foot soldiers to leave not a single Muslim alive. The Muslims were "taught a lesson".

As they seethed with humiliation after the riots, Dawood Ibrahim and Tiger Memon unleashed a series of bombings in Bombay on March 12, 1993. But

what was the outcome? A brutal hunt for anyone remotely suspected of participating in the conspiracy, torture, lives wasted in prison, and finally, the execution of a man who was part of the Memon family. What cost, this revenge?

But in Dadri, what had 50-year-old Mohammed Akhlaq and his son Danish done to deserve a lynching? By purportedly eating beef in their own home, did the family "take on" the Hindus among whom they had lived for decades?

Whether in Uttar Pradesh or Karnataka, Muslims are being 'taught lessons'. What are the rules that Muslims need to remember?

The Bharatiya Janata Party seems to think that was enough to incur the wrath of the village's Thakurs. The family maintains the meat was mutton, not beef. But how were the enraged Thakurs to know that? They suspected it was beef, and the WhatsApp message making the rounds two hours before the lynching had suggested it was beef. Wasn't that enough for a killing?

In the BJP's justification of the mob violence in Dadri, there is no place for a modern State. There's the majority, and then there's the minority living in their midst. The minority doesn't

know what act could offend the all-powerful majority and how far this anger might go. There is no mechanism to check this rage, no instrument of the State that the majority fears.

## Living on Hindus' goodwill

Thirteen years ago, when the same party was last in power under a moderate prime minister, a statement was made that perfectly illustrated the meaning of the Dadri incident. In Bangalore, the party's ideolog-

ical parent, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, passed a resolution that said: "Let the Muslims understand that their real safety lies in the goodwill of the majority." This was on March 31, 2002 – the Gujarat violence had barely ended.

Much outrage greeted this resolution, but the RSS did not budge. Instead, it argued, "The resolution simply states a fact of life. It is not the police, the para military forces and the army that can provide real safety to citizens. It is mutual goodwill among people and communities that does the job best."

Mutual goodwill? The Dadri family bore no ill will towards the Hindus when they stored and cooked meat in their house for Bakri Eid. Perhaps what they didn't know was that they were living on the goodwill of their Hindu neighbours. The Akhlaq family ate meat, but in their carelessness they let the Thakurs know that. Call it their confidence in being free citizens of the country, with the right to lead lives as they thought fit.

### **Well, they learnt, didn't they, who set the terms for their lives?**

Outside the Akhlaq home, neighbours reportedly saw a stray dog picking a piece of meat. Bakri Eid is a festival when everyone, even the poorest Muslim, eats meat. Two hours after the WhatsApp message had done its damage, when the police came, their first act was to send the meat for analysis. What if it was actually beef? Would the police have registered a First Information Report against the dead man and his family, as they do in such cases?

### **The rule of the majority**

During the second phase of the Mumbai riots, when the BJP-Sena were holding maha aartis on the road every evening, as a display against the practice of the Friday namaz on the roads, one such maha aarti was held at Grant Road. The clash of cymbals, the clamour of voices singing bhajans was in full swing, when suddenly the leaders of the maha aarti got agitated. They could hear the sound of the azaan from a nearby masjid.

Their anger was enough for the police who always guarded maha artis to raid the masjid and stop the azaan. That wasn't enough. The participants were so angry that they attacked Muslim shops in the vicinity after the maha arti.

At the next maha arti a week later, the Shiv sena



shakha pramukh announced: "Any resumption of azaan on the loudspeaker, and we will retaliate by any means."

A police photographer present at the site told the Srikrishna Commission that such was the din created by the maha aarti that there was no way any azaan could have been heard. In fact, he said, the faces of the participants showed they were deeply immersed in their own chanting, oblivious to any other sound. But the masjid was raided, the warning issued – and obeyed. The imam of the masjid learnt that he had to live on the Hindus' goodwill.

The BJP-Sena confidently asked the police to raid the masjid because they knew the State belongs to them. The police do their bidding because they too believe in the same premise – the minorities live on the goodwill of the majority.

A doctor frightened by the aggressive slogans shouted by the maha aarti participants, despite the presence of the army outside his clinic in Muslim-dominated Dongri, rang up the police asking for protection. "Make arrangements for your own protection," he was told, after being addressed by a derogatory word for Muslims. He, too, learnt that his existence depended on accepting the aggression of the majority.

Live on Hindu sufferance – that's the third rule that Muslims must keep in mind today, whether they live in "Maulana" Mulayam Singh's Uttar Pradesh or Congress Socialist Siddaramaiah's Karnataka. What should secular Hindus, who find these atrocities unacceptable, do? Make sure the BJP is defeated in Bihar, so that the saffron wave doesn't spread further? Or, make sure that the law is made to catch up with the powerful majority, be it in Dadri or Mangalore – make sure the majority accepts that it's the Constitution that rules, not them?

We welcome your comments at [letters@scroll.in](mailto:letters@scroll.in)



# Islam spread because of its great message of equality, but it's ridden with castes in India today: Katju

I By Md. Javed Equbal I

"Islam spread from Spain to Indonesia because of its great message of equality. People who were oppressed converted to Islam as it gave them social emancipation. Only 5% conversions may have been forcible, but 95% were voluntary," said former judge of Supreme Court Markandey Katju but raised questions about the way Islam is practiced in India today. Katju said Islam in India today is ridden with castes and so-called 'upper caste' Muslims look down on so-called 'lower caste' Muslims. "Is this what the Prophet taught," asked Katju in a post on his facebook page today.

"In Bengal about 60% Hindus converted to Islam because the caste system there had become totally inhuman (see the novels and stories of the great Bengali writer Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyaya). So the 'lower' caste people converted to Islam in large numbers. If people are treated like dogs they will surely embrace a religion which treats them as humans.

If one reads Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyaya's short novel 'Palli Samaj' (also known as Gramin Samaj) one will see how Muslims had social cohesion among themselves. If some Muslim fell ill or had some other trouble or calamity, other Muslims of the village would all rush to help him, but that rarely happened among Hindus. The same social cohesion was there among early Christians (see Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' chapters 15-17). In Kashmir too there was horrible caste oppression (see Kalhan's 'Rajtarangani' translated into English by Ranjit Pandit), and so the vast majority of Kashmiris voluntarily converted to Islam to get social emancipation."

"So Islam, by its message and practice of equality was of great benefit to mankind at one time. But what is Islam as practised in India today? The truth is that the so called 'upper caste' Muslims, the 'ashrafs', i.e. Syeds, Sheikhs and Pathans, regard themselves as superior and look down on Ansaris (bunkars or weavers), Qureshis (butchers or kasais), Abbasis (water carriers), Gaddis, Darzis, Telis, etc.," wrote Justice Katju and gave some examples from his personal experience to prove his point.



"When I was in Allahabad my daughter had a school friend who was a Syed. When she grew up I went one day to her parents and said that I regarded their daughter as my daughter, and so could I suggest a match for her for marriage. They agreed. I found an Ansari boy whose family had a huge carpet business in Bhadohi, which is a carpet belt near Varanasi. And I suggested his name. The parents told me 'Sorry, magar hum chamaron mein shaadi nahin karte'. I was shocked, and told them that I had thought there is no caste system among Muslims. They replied that they had to live in their 'biradari', and so could not marry their daughter to low caste Muslims."

"I may mention another incident. In Banda, U.P. there was a dalit young man who fell in love with a Muslim girl. That Muslim girl's family were Rajput converts. The young man converted to Islam to marry the girl, but the parents and relatives told him they would kill him if he does not stop meeting the girl. "Humne apna mazhab badla hai, jaat nahin", they said."

After giving these examples, Justice Katju said: "This is the reality of Indian Islam today. Is this what the Prophet taught?"

--

Md. Javed Equbal  
Postdoctoral Research Associate  
Kusuma School of Biological Sciences,  
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi,  
India.

Email: mdjavedequbal@gmail.com  
<http://www.assamgazette.com/islam-spread-because-of-its-great-message-of-equality-but-its-ridden-with-castes-in-india-today-katju/>

# Pre-Marriage Counseling: Dare you challenge...!

**M**arriage still happens to be amongst the most confusing decisions in the minds of many young Muslims. The reasons are simple: Some of the radical liberal culture has crept in our customs and it has captured our thoughts and decision-making abilities on our social issues. The whole issue has been mixed up with certain economic rules borrowed from capitalism. There is no straightforward counseling done on this issue, nor anything spoken in the sermons.

**Let me prick a few issues and see if it causes some pain.**

**Earn while you learn:** Many grown up boys still remain in the cradle when it comes to financial dependence. Many, in their mid twenties are still thriving on the pocket money given by their fathers! Therefore, the biggest obstacles of the marriage is "late earnings".

My first question to young men seeking counseling in marriage is: "Why do you start earning late?" Which noted economist has asked you that you should not or cannot try your hand in earning while you are studying? I know of so many doctors who used to earn and learn while pursuing medicine. Many American and Canadian students of high schools work as salesmen to meet their expenditure. I know hundreds of Gujarati merchants who study and work in their father's establishment and learn while they study. A large number of postgraduate students of Mumbai University work as lecturers in the same college where they study! Why is it that a large number of young Muslims avoid earning at a young age while pursuing studies?

Many of the young men from higher middle class staying in large apartments spend lavishly on their mobiles, shoes and designer clothes, but they reason foolishly that they cannot afford to host a wife! How much do you require for the maintenance your wife? Will she eat from the rizq allotted to you by Allah? Does she have any power to do that? Where ever she goes, the poor little creature will only get what Allah has written for her.

Young men are the backbones of the society but they remain dependent upon their parents even when they reach their thirties. In fact, when they keep girlfriends, movies and dresses and other exciting things, they take no stamp of approval from parents. They enjoy their liberty to choose. But when it comes to responsibilities they are in the last rows. In fact, they should be taking part in the discussion about their sister's marriages; they should

take active part in looking for a groom for their sisters too. But they rather stay away or are kept away from decision-making. If they are involved then it will be the practical lessons that the school syllabus will never include.

**Misconception about the age of marriage:** One of the brothers wrote: "Some young men prefer to get married at the age of 25, because our own Prophet got married at 25!" An astonishing question! I would remind that brother that the Prophet at 25 married a woman of 45 and a widow. How many young men today would begin their matrimonial life with a widow who is older to him?

Islam has broken all the barriers that are obstacles for marriages. It encourages marriage, discourages fornication. It commands a simple marriage. It rebukes extravaganza in marriage. Neither status nor age is a rule for disqualification of a proposal. Someone should trace the roots of this uncrowned authority in our marriage customs, and find out who dictated that the difference in age of bride and groom should not be more than few years, or have just borrowed from other cultures?

Those who worry about "what will people say?" should shed away this inferiority complex, by reading the biographies of the noblest men on the earth. They will throw out this feeling "what will people say?".

**The hidden fear:** Some sisters are concerned about having proposals from Un-Islamic boys. Yes, but it all depends upon who gets the proposals for you and where do you look for the prospective groom. You may come across people who will put invisible pressure upon you like, "if you reject this proposal then you may not get a better one" or "you will remain unmarried" or "get married to this boy and correct him". Many girls get frightened to say 'yes' to such proposals where as some unwillingly give up.

The local da'wah centers perhaps can play a good role in getting good proposals. Or a common family friend can help in getting a good proposal. Many females who attend Islamic seminars for women, keep an eye for a good girl for their son or their brother, and many relations are built through these seminars. Finally Allah is the best decision maker.

My last question to the young men would be: How long will you wait to get married?



# Lewd Musicians and Singers: The Pied Pipers of Today

In my school book I had a story: "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" written by Robert Browning. It was a fictitious story that happened in a German village which was afflicted by rats. The mayor announced a huge reward for anyone who could get rid of the rats. A musician arrived from somewhere and played his pipe, the rats from all around the town followed him and he walked into the river, followed by the rats intoxicated by his tune.

Later when he approached the Mayor for the reward he was refused and was mocked at. He took his revenge. Next evening he played his flute again. This time the little children of the town were mesmerized and they followed him. He entered the opening of a cave and the children followed him, and when the last child had entered, the door of the cave closed. The Pied piper took away hundreds of children from their parents leaving them in grief.

Today these Pied pipers are back in new forms. Like Pied Piper of Hamelin these singers and musicians drive away our children from their innocent childhood and duties.

There is an invisible movement to stir up the sexual passions among the kids. These kids are the richest consumers throughout the globe. The most powerful buyers come from this age group with an estimated \$40 Billion. The number one thing bought by kids is "Music Albums". Hanna Montana and Britney Spears are household names in many Muslim families whose culture is colored by western brushes. What do these children get in return except that their iPods and blackberries are full of raunchy and sexy lyrics?

Like heavy drinkers we have "Heavy listeners", swaying, jumping, and twisting along with hip hops, rap or rock, each beautified with vulgar lyrics. Few decades back there were "Youth Bands", now they have "Teen Bands".

I was shocked to see a Muslim singer (guess his name) performing like a Jazz singer, in an American Auditorium, but presenting a Nasheed, and young girls standing on their seats swaying and enjoying! I was told later that the singer has shades of corrupt Sufism. Songs and Nasheed, as long as they are good and goodness oriented, are not objected by scholars.

A time will come when a man wakes up as a Muslim but in the evening he will die on kufr!

There are many Muslim singers and musicians, in-

cluding award winners in Oscars and Grammys, who sing and compose tunes for lyrics which have kufr related phrases. Imagine you find one of those songs good and you hum it many times and death

meets you all of a sudden, while you are humming it. In what state will you die?

How many of you are aware of the fact that the arrival of Dajjal will be welcomed by many people and the musicians will be leading them. Guess, if the musicians march, would not those who are intoxicated by the music follow like those rats and little children of Hamelin?

