

INSTITUTE OF OBJECTIVE STUDIES, NEW DELHI

Two-day International Online Conference on

**“Personality and Contribution of Dr. Mohammad Natsir
as a National and International Thought-Leader
in the 20th Century”**

On

February 6-7, 2021 at New Delhi (India)

CONCEPT NOTE

Dr. Mohammad Natsir

(17 July 1908 – 6 February 1993)

Indonesia, a geopolitically important nation of South-East Asia, was in shambles and shackles during the days of European and Japanese Colonial Clutch on its political and economic institutions and resources, ranging most tortuously from last quarter of 19th century to nearly the first half of twentieth century. In 1930s, a severe depression caused a colossal growth in urban poverty in the colonial landscape quite disastrous to find no solutions in the informal regional setups which could actually no longer cope with the immeasurable glitches and hitches of the unemployed, the homeless and the destitute people. Politically cognizant sections of Indonesian nation were convinced that the colonial rulers were concerned only about their own people whom they had habilitated there with no sense of care for the poverty stricken nationals.

Dr. Mohammad Natsir, born in 1908, during this troubled period, was a scholar from Indonesia who achieved notable political prominence for his understanding of the issues and contribution through his writings in finding solutions to the problems which had cropped up. He is well known for his later becoming the Fifth Prime Minister of Indonesia and is celebrated for his endeavours as a prolific writer having extensively written on contemporary issues and Islam. His schooling, graduate studies and further studies have been quite interesting at Solok, West Sumatra (his birth place) and Bandung, the capital of West Java province in Indonesia. He, in the course of his scholarly journey, contributed to subjects like the interpretation of the Quran, Islamic jurisprudence, dialectics etc. It is quite fascinating to note that he has, during his career, got involved with journalism also. In 1929 he penned two articles printed in the *Algemeen Indische Dagblad*, entitled "*Qur'an en Evangelie*" ("The Quran and the Evangelicals") and "*Muhammad als Profeet*" ("Muhammad as the Prophet"). He also teamed up with other thinkers to publish the newspaper *Pembela Islam* (Defenders of Islam) from 1929 to 1935, and wrote extensively about his views on the religion for *Pandji Islam* (Banner of Islam), *Pedoman Masyarakat* (Guide for the People), and *Al-Manār* (The Torch). Natsir founded *Pendidikan Islam* (Islamic Education), a private school, in 1930 which was shut down after the Japanese occupation of Indonesia.

Natsir is specially remembered for his discourses with his contemporaries and noted for resolute arguing on the relationship between Islam and the state with the then leader and future-President Sukarno in 1930, as a member of *Partai Islam Indonesia* (The Indonesian

Islamic Party), Chairman of the Bandung branch from 1940 until 1942 and Bandung Bureau Head of Education until 1945. During the Japanese occupation, he joined *Majelis Islam A'la Indonesia* (changed to *Majelis Syura Muslimim Indonesia* later), and became one of its chairmen from 1945. With the developments on the Proclamation of Indonesian Independence, he came to be a member of Central Indonesian National Committee. Natsir, in an appreciated move, on 3 April 1950, proposed a motion called Mosi Integral Natsir, to unite Indonesia through an agreement making Indonesia a nation of seventeen states. Shortly then, he became prime minister, influenced by his role as the head of Masyumi serving until 1951. But in Guided Democracy Era, he joined the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia and faced arrest as well. Later, he was increasingly associated with organizations related to Islam, including the *Majlis Ta'sisi Rabitah Alam Islami* and *Majlis Ala al-Alami lil Masjid* in Makkah, the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in England, and the World Muslim Congress in Karachi, Pakistan. After some more organisational efforts like *Yayasan Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah*, in Indonesia as a response to national and international developments, he passed away on 6 February 1993 in Jakarta.

His Works

Natsir is said to have published 45 books/monographs and hundreds of articles expressing his views on contemporary issues and his faith. In early days his focus, while writing in Dutch and Indonesian, was Islamic policy/guidelines, culture and correlation between Islam and politics. He then dealt with role of women in Islam also. In his later contributions, writing in English as well, his greater take was politics, exposition of Islamic principles and relationship between Muslims and Christians. His works are a source for understanding history as well a guide to trace out the future options with clarity.

Languages

Natsir could speak many languages, including English, Dutch, French, German, and Arabic; he was also capable of understanding Esperanto.

Awards and Honours

- A. King Faisal Foundation Award - 1980
- B. Honorary Doctoral Degree for Literature from Islamic University of Lebanon in 1967
- C. Honorary Doctoral Degree for Islamic Ideas from *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* and *Universiti Sains Malaysia* in 1991
- D. Honored as a National Hero of Indonesia in 2008
- E. An Indonesian stamp issued in his memory in 2011

Academic Evaluation of Dr. Mohammad Natsir

According to expert references, Natsir was "**the most prominent politician favouring Islamic reform.**" [Bruce Bennett Lawrence, Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion at Duke University].

Organisation of IOS conference on Dr. Mohammad Natsir

In its furtherance of the programmes on International Personalities, the Institute of Objective Studies will be organizing an **International Conference on the "Personality and Contribution**

of Dr. Mohammad Natsir as a National and International Thought-Leader in 20th Century” on February 6-7, 2021.

Objective of the Conference

To promote academic endeavours of understanding personalities, opinions and cultures across the globe for fostering healthy international understanding in accordance with Article 51 of the Constitution of India and International Instruments like UN Charter.

Theme/s for Deliberations

While it is worthwhile to highlight the Life and Times of Dr. Mohammad Natsir in National and International Perspectives comprehensively, certain suggestive aspects of the broader theme are noted below for deliberations in the IOS International Conference on “Personality and Contribution of Dr. Natsir as a National and International Thought-Leader in 20th Century”.

- Dr. Natsir’s Personal Life, Qualities, Educational Pursuits and Literary Works
- Socio-Political Environment in Indonesia during Making Days of Dr. Natsir and His Emergence as a National Leader
- Dr. Natsir’s Contribution to Nation Building in Indonesia
- Dr. Natsir’s Understanding of International Political Scenario and its Influences on Indonesia as a Nation
- Thought of Dr. Natsir and his Responses to Contemporary National and International Influences as an Islamic Scholar
- Dr. Natsir’s Contribution to Promotion of Islamic Thinking World Over as Author and Politician
- Relevance of Dr. Natsir’s Methodology and Thought to Modern Globalizing World
- Any Other Aspect of the Theme as may be found relevant.

Participation

Academicians, scholars, administrators, social workers, policy makers, promoters of international cooperation etc. from anywhere in the world on Online Mode.

Important Dates

Last date for submission of abstracts (in pdf & doc./Inpage file)	Jan. 10, 2021
Notification of acceptance/rejection of abstracts	Jan. 15, 2021
Last date for submission of full paper (in pdf & doc./Inpage file)	Jan. 25, 2021

Submit abstracts at ios.newdelhi@gmail.com

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