



IOS NEWSLETTER

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Thought for the Month

Just in the same way,
Whenever We sent a Warner
Before you to any people,
The wealthy ones among them
Said: "We found our fathers
Following a certain religion,
And we will certainly
Follow in their footsteps"
He said: "What!
Even if I brought you
Better guidance than that
Which you found
Your fathers following?"
They said: "For us,
We deny that which you
(prophets)

Are sent with."

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FOCUS

Our Constitution embodies 'liberal' principles as is evident from its Preamble, the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles. The concepts of equality and non-discrimination, the right to life and liberty, freedom of conscience and religion and the rights conferred on the minorities to conserve their culture and language and to establish educational institutions of their choice, are some of the shining stars of 'liberalism'. In addition, through legislation, we have recognised the need to protect human rights. All this goes to show that the spirit of liberalism is embedded in our constitutional philosophy. The communal forces have tried to shatter this 'liberalism' by creating an anti-minority environment in the last couple of decades. The spirit of secularism needs to permeate in our polity and every other democratic institution aided and supported by the Government.

The anti-minority environment created through hate speeches, arson and assaults on Muslims and Christians and their properties was let loose during the tenure of the BJP-led government with a view to terrorise them and instil in them a sense of inferiority. The attempt at polarisation of the country's populace is a dangerous game-plan which can only weaken our democratic fabric, stifle development and in the long run lead to chaos. Those very same political parties tried to bake their bread on the misfortune that had befallen the inhabitants of Mumbai when they sought to give it a communal/parochial colour. In this age of guided missiles, the more dangerous are the misguided missiles which have a high potential to cause widespread harm to humanity. The former are predictable, the latter are not. Every one knows that terrorists are respecters of no faith, much less Islam, which preaches peace and brotherhood; yet, is it not unfortunate that an attempt was made to communalise the event through a specialist rabble-rouser sent to Mumbai to whip up passions? Fortunately, to no avail. It goes to the credit of the inhabitants of Mumbai that they did not allow such attempts to succeed. Although such cowardly terrorist acts are allegedly planned and/or committed from across our borders, the tendency to blame the Indian Muslims across the board must be deprecated. At the same time Indian Muslims must expose such characters and report them to the authorities, if they come to their notice.

Unfortunately, of all the minorities, the Muslim minority has, over these 58 years of independence, remained marginalised in all walks of life. Periodic riots have ruined them economically. They have been victims of both direct and indirect discrimination. The benefits of State Schemes have not percolated to them. A special effort needs to be made to bring them into the mainstream of society but unfortunately whenever some step to ameliorate their condition is sought to be taken; members of BJP and allied parties raise the scare of pseudo-secularism and appeasement to deter such action. I think these scarecrows need to be shooed away. Affirmative action is urgently needed to bridge the disparity ratio that has slowly built up with the passage of time since independence. Whenever the Sachar Committee seeks certain information from the concerned bodies, the antenna of appeasement is immediately posted. I often wonder, what is it that these parties fear if the Indian Muslim is empowered! Their effective participation will only add pace to the development of this country. Otherwise, their economic and educational backwardness can be a drag on our system.

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Activities of the IOS Headquarters

Governing Council Meet

A meeting of the Governing Council (G.C.) was held on 30.4.2010 at 10:00 a.m. in the Committee Room of the IOS, 162, Jogabai Main Road, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-25.

The following were present:

1. Dr. M. Manzoor Alam
2. Prof. Z.M. Khan
3. Dr. Ausaf Ahmad
4. Prof. A.R. Momin
5. Dr. M.K.A. Siddiqui
6. Prof. M.A. Quddus
7. Prof. Sanghasen Singh
8. Prof. Mohsin Usmani
9. Prof. M. Afzal Wani
10. Prof. Refaat Ali Khan
11. Prof. Faizan Mustafa
12. Prof. M. Ishtiaq
13. Prof. (Ms) Haseena Hashia
14. Prof. Syed Jamaluddin
15. Dr. Fakhruddin Mohammed
16. Dr. A.A. Vahab
17. Dr. Md. Imteyaz Hassan
18. Dr. Syed Shaukat Ali
19. Mr. Mohd. Zeyaul Haq
20. Mr. Raju Mansukhani

Recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an by Prof. Mohsin Usmani marked the beginning of the meeting. He also explained the meaning and context of the verses for the benefit of all.

Before taking up the agenda items and starting the business, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Chairman, IOS welcomed the members and the special invitees for attending the meeting.

Then condolence resolutions on the sad demise of Prof. Amrik Singh (one of the advisors of the Quarterly Bulletin, *Human Rights Today*, an IOS publication, from its very inception in 1998), Jb. P. Mohammad Ibrahim Sb. (Father of Prof. Aftab Kamal Pasha, G.A. member) and all others who were associated with the Institute were adopted and *dua* for their *maghfirat* was made by the

Governing Council of the Institute of Objective Studies.

Thereafter the agenda of the meeting was taken up.

The minutes of the Governing Council (G.C.) meeting dated 10.10.2009 were presented and confirmed.

The Follow-up Report (Action Taken Report) on the last G.C. meeting dated 10.10.2009 was presented before the Council. The same was considered and after deliberations, got approved with the following observations/ suggestions/ decisions:

- In regard to identifying and selecting the scholars/ experts/



intellectuals in different subjects for making the functioning of the Academic Committees effective, the same may also be undertaken through the use of Internet, directory of U.G.C., ICSSR, Association of Indian Universities, leading magazines etc.

Further, a Committee to carry out the work is to be formed whose Convenor will be Prof. Syed Jamaluddin. He may co-opt some members for this purpose.

- In regard to 'Mechanism to identify Human Resource (HR) from the IOS perspective' it was decided that a letter would again be written to all the Coordinators of the IOS Chapters (other than Kolkata) requesting them to kindly send the field-wise/subject-wise list of scholars, who have participated in Sham-e-Muzakarah, Discussions, Seminars, Workshops etc.

organised by the Chapters from time to time.

And that a letter would be sent to Dr. M.K.A. Siddiqui (Coordinator, IOS Kolkata Chapter) to intimate the specialisation of the scholars (whose list was sent by him in respect of identification of desired Human Resource (HR)).

- In regard to preparation of Scheme based on Public Private Participation (PPP) concept in (school) education it is felt that all related aspects should be studied thoroughly in view of given policies. The members of the Governing Council (GC) suggested that a Workshop may be organised for this purpose and that Mr. Raju Mansukhani is assigned to make arrangements for convening Workshop.

- In regard to the column '*Nuqta-e-Nazar*' in Urdu on the IOS Website the Chairman desired that every member should send at least one article on monthly basis to be uploaded under this column for the benefit of the readers. This effort may articulate Urdu knowing people to come forward with their contributions to this column. Madaris should be one of the target pools of writers.

- In regard to the progress of the 'IOS Foundation for Education' the Chairman apprised the members in detail about the funds being raised through donors. Further, the feasibility is being worked out in collaboration with the concerned quarters.

Further, it was decided that Prof. Syed Jamaluddin, Editor of 'Human Rights Today' will act as Member Secretary for the 'IOS Foundation for Education'.

- In regard to conduct a 15-days programme on 'Minorities Jurisprudence' the Chairman informed the members that this programme will now be conducted after October, 2010 wherein 30-40 young scholars will participate.

With regard to the calendar of activities for the year 2010 the meeting discussed and resolved that the circulated list should be re-done in the light of discussion, and the members in this light, should send their suggestions/opinion within a fortnight so that the same may be finalised.

With regard to the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the IOS, the GC took the following decisions:

- The Chairman is authorised to form various Committees for all the activities related to Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the IOS.
- April 2011 to March 2012 will be the celebrations year in which one opening programme (Inaugural function) for two days will be organised in April 2011 followed by another programme (concluding function) for one & a half-day will be organised in March 2012. In the celebrations eminent personalities will be approached and invited to attend the function. They may also be requested for: (a) Perceptions and Views, (b) Message, (c) Impressions, and (d) Opinion about the IOS.

In between this period the IOS Chapters will organise the celebrations programmes at their own places.

- A special logo along with a slogan for 25th year of the IOS will be designed, which would be used in all the programmes, reports and publications during the celebrations year.
- The Main Theme of the Celebrations at the Headquarters will be:

Road Map for Knowledge, Development and Peace.

The sub-themes may be as under:

1. Development with Prosperity for all: An alternative model (Maqasid-e-Shariah).
2. World view of Development: Challenges and an Alternative Paradigm.

3. Knowledge Power: Paradigm, Source and Methods.
4. Challenges before Contemporary Youth.
5. Power of Peace in Globalising World: Role of Religions.
6. Peace and Progress: Role of Religions.
7. Good Governance in Globalising World.
8. Judiciary, Ethics and Delivery.

The IOS Chapters will decide the theme(s) for their local/regional needs. For this purpose the outline will be developed at the Headquarters and will be sent to the Chapters.

- A calendar of events for the celebrations year will be prepared.



- The following would be brought out on this occasion:

25-years Report into English, Arabic and Urdu.

In the report 'IOS Manzil ba Manzil' will be included, which will be prepared by the Chairman himself.

Selected articles appeared in JOS, RLR, Mutaaleat and HRT will be printed in book form. In regard to Mutaaleat there will be two volumes – one giving the selected articles on Indian Muslims and another one giving the selected articles on Islamic Economics.

For the selection of articles appeared in RLR a Committee comprising Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Prof. Faizan Mustafa and Prof. S. Khalid Rashid (Chief Editor) is formed.

Selected articles uploaded at IOS website and IOS Minaret will also be printed in book form. Further, the articles appeared in the IOS Minaret be translated in Arabic also.

All the above books will be released during Inaugural function.

- A CD, covering the major activities and programmes during last 25 years will be prepared. This work is assigned to Mr. Raju Mansukhani and Mr. M. Zeyaul Haq.
- A Souvenir will be prepared. The necessary details of the Souvenir will be worked out by a Committee comprising Prof. Z.M. Khan (Secretary General), Dr. Ausaf Ahmad (Finance Secretary), Prof. S. Jamaluddin, Mr. M. Zeyaul Haq and Mr. Raju Mansukhani.

'IOS Manzil ba Manzil' will also be included in the Souvenir which will be prepared by the Chairman himself.

- Mementos will be prepared and presented to dignitaries. The design of the Memento would be a new one. However, the office bearers of the IOS and

Mr. Raju Mansukhani will finally decide the design of the Memento.

- A 'special window' in the present website will be launched for this occasion.
- An exhibition during the period (April 2011 to March 2012) would be organised in collaboration with any Library, in which the journey of IOS would be portrayed through art, calligraphy and paintings.

A Committee comprising Mr. Raju Mansukhani and the office bearers of the IOS would be set up to work out the modalities of the exhibition.

- Under the programmes for youth, essay competition for college/university as well as Madrasah level (up to the age of 40 years) will be organised on the given theme(s) with prize money for the best essay.

The cooperation from IOS Chapters would also be sought in this regard.

A Committee comprising Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish (Convenor), Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, Prof. Z.M. Khan, Prof. Refaat Ali Khan, Dr. Ausaf Ahmad and Prof. S. Jamaluddin is formed to work out the theme(s) and other necessary details. Mr. Khalid Husain Nadvi will act as Office Secretary.

- A certificate of merit would be awarded to selected persons (Muslims & Non-Muslims) across the country in recognition of their extraordinary services in different spheres of social, educational and welfare of the minorities and other underprivileged sections of the Indian society. For this purpose a list will be prepared by Prof. S. Jamaluddin (Convenor) and Mr. Tanweer Alam.
- It was pointed out that the Roster status of the IOS with ECOSOC may be verified with the concerned bodies as to whether its renewal is needed or not.
- Secondly, it was also decided that the Institute should actively involve in the trends related to Muslims in India and abroad, study of nation-wise development of welfare schemes, scholarships for Muslims, Institute's possible role as a nodal agency for implementation of various government schemes etc.
A note on these aspects may be prepared by Prof. Refaat Ali Khan.
- The list of invitees for the celebrations programmes will include Arab dignitaries, NRIs, Ambassadors of Arab embassies besides academics, Vice-Chancellors, Bureaucrats, Judges & Advocates, Businessmen and Bankers from across the country will be prepared as early as possible.
- The Chairman along with the Secretary General and the Finance Secretary of the IOS would work out the modalities to raise the funds for this purpose.

- A tentative budget for the celebrations programmes will be prepared by the Finance Secretary within a fortnight.

A report about the status of ongoing projects was presented.

In view of the report submitted by the office about on-going projects the members of the Governing Council (GC) expressed their satisfaction on their progress, and desired that all efforts be made to complete them as early as possible.

On the recommendation of the Selection Committee (constituted for the Lifetime Achievement Award) the Governing Council considered the name of Dr. A.R. Kidwai and resolved to confer this award on him for the year 2009.

It was also decided that the Award conferring ceremony will be held on May 29, 2010. The award will be conferred to Dr. A.R. Kidwai by the Hon'ble Vice President of India (Mr. M. Hamid Ansari) while the Guests of Honour will be Dr. Farooq Abdullah (Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India) and Smt Shiela Dikshit (Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi).

As regards the 8th Shah Waliullah Award for the year 2006 the Chairman informed the members that the same is still in the process.

The item about working of the IOS Academic Committees has been under consideration since many meetings and has also figured in the Action Taken Report of the current G.C. meeting.

The administration is advised to take a note of it and pursue the matter further.

To decide about publishing (i) Revised edition of 100 Great Muslim Leaders of the World; (ii) Supplementary edition of 1000 Great Muslim Leaders of the World; (iii) 1000 Great Muslims (Thinkers, Scientists, Inventors, Medical Scientists, Engineers, Poets, Musicians etc) a committee has been formed to publish revised edition of 100 Great Muslim Leaders. The Committee will be as follows

1. Dr. Ausaf Ahmad Convenor

2. Mr. M. Zeyaul Haq Member
3. Mr. Raju Mansukhani Member
4. Dr. Sharifa Bano Secretary

The above committee will look after all the matters related to the above publications.

It was also decided that a cheaper edition of "100 Great Muslim Leaders of the World" would come out on the occasion of 25th Anniversary of the IOS.

A decision has also been taken to take up the project entitled "1000 Great Muslims" the Governing Council, after deliberations, resolved to constitute a committee to prepare the Concept Note for this project. The composition of the Committee is as under:

1. Prof. A.R. Momin Convenor
2. Prof. S. Jamaluddin Member
3. Prof. M.Y. M. Siddiqui Member
4. Mr. Raju Mansukhani Member

After deliberations the G.C. decided that a new project, 'The Enduring Legacy of Muslim History in Indian Sub-Continent' will be started.

It was also decided that this project would be assigned to a Non-Muslim scholar preferably from Delhi.

Prof. Refaat Ali Khan is requested to contact the scholar so that the project might be assigned to him/her.

Some members were of the view that on the occasion of Silver Jubilee a Special Lecture should be held. The same was approved in principle. The topic will be decided later on.

Prof. M. Afzal Wani suggested that Legal Literacy Programme should be organised in collaboration with Indraprastha University, Delhi. The same was also approved in principle.

In the end Dr. Ausaf Ahmad, Finance Secretary of the IOS proposed a vote of thanks.

North Carolina Students Delegation in IOS Headquarters

A delegation consisting of graduate students at North Carolina University, USA, visited the IOS Headquarters on May 25, 2010. The students, male and female, hailing from the Faculty of Asian Languages, are learning Hindi and Urdu and were visiting India, its historical sites and cultural heritage as a

part of their graduate course. They were led by their two teachers including Prof. Afroz Alam, an alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University.

The students were welcome with flowers. Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Chairman IOS, addressed the students and said that you, the students, are the future of the world. May be, some of you become Abraham Lincoln or Obama tomorrow. The Chairman also introduced the IOS and informed the delegation about its various activities. He specially highlighted the forthcoming programmes, seminars and conferences as well as the Silver Jubilee Celebration which would be held very soon.

The American students introduced themselves, one by one, and also recited a few lines of their university anthem. Prof. Afroz Alam recited a few lines of the AMU anthem. The American students showed a good deal of interest in Urdu poetry and literature. A female student sang a number of Urdu songs; her Urdu, specially the accent was amazing.

Mr. Asrar Jamai, a noted Urdu poet of satire, recited a number of his satirical poems to entertain the audience. The American students appreciated his poems and cheered him loudly. In the end, the Chairman of the IOS gave precious advice to the students and informed them of the challenges ahead.

The IOS Minaret

Launched in May 2006, the IOS Minaret has completed four years. During this short period the website has been greatly appreciated by readers—whose numbers are steadily expanding—as well as scholars and research organizations from around the world. During the past four years, the website has been accessed by nearly a million visitors. In April 2010, the Minaret had more than 37,000 visitors.

The Minaret combines several distinctive features. The themes, subjects and issues covered by the website encompass contemporary changes and trends in the Islamic world as well as the historical legacy of Islamic civilization. Thus the website not only critically focuses on themes

and issues in the present-day context but also highlights the highly important and enduring contributions of Islamic civilization to wide-ranging areas, including science and medicine, technology, architecture, philosophy and literature, and arts and crafts. More importantly, this is done in the light of recent and current researches as well as exhibitions, museums and art festivals.

The Minaret addresses themes and subjects pertaining to Islam and Muslims in a global, international and cross-cultural perspective. The website takes due cognizance of the enormous diversity that characterizes Muslim communities around the world. At the same time, it looks at this diversity through the prism of the fundamental unity in beliefs, moral values, rituals, institutional structures and cultural



patterns that moulds the multiplicity of Muslim communities around the world into a global, trans-national, trans-ethnic *ummah*.

The Minaret eschews a partisan, sectarian, polemical or narrowly denominational view of issues and challenges faced by Muslims around the world. While it makes no secret of its commitment to the Islamic worldview, it believes that issues and problems need to be addressed with an open, critical mind, with a sense of balance and in a spirit of dialogue, conciliation and engagement.

The Minaret not only keeps abreast of issues and challenges faced by Muslims around the world but also promptly responds to them in a reasoned way. The Minaret was the first international website to carry a detailed analysis and critique of the Swiss ban on minarets approved by Swiss voters in

a nation-wide referendum on 29 November 2009, soon after the controversial vote. Similarly, the Minaret published a detailed, analytical review on the Arab Human Development Report 2009 shortly after its release. Most of the articles and features published in the Minaret are listed on Google.

The Minaret has been listed under “Research Resources” in the website of the International Institute of Islamic Thought, Washington DC. Dr Ahmad Totonji of the IIIT has been greatly appreciative of the contribution of the Minaret and has circulated some of the articles published in the website among Muslim scholars and researchers.

Some of the articles published in the Minaret have been cited in the websites of universities and research organizations. Thus, the French website of Chaire de recherche en immigration, ethnicite et citoyennete (CRIEC), Faculte des sciences humaines at the University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada mentions Professor Ricard Zapata-Barrero’s original paper “Multiculturalism on Trial: The exclusion of Muslims and the construction of national identity in Spain,” published in the Minaret in December 2006. An article on the hijab controversy in France, written in Indonesian by Win Wan Nur and published online in Kompasiana (<http://sosbud.kompasiana.com>) in 2010 mentions as one of its sources an article “Unveiling France’s Islamophobia,” published in the Minaret in July 2009. The Minaret also finds a mention in a Persian website.

The Minaret is avidly read and greatly appreciated by the faculty at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University, Malaysia.

Some of the articles published in the Minaret have been translated into Urdu and Hindi.

Book Review

CHRONICLING A GREAT UPHEAVAL

The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi, 1857 by *William Dalrymple, XXVII+578 pages.*

WILLIAM DALRYMPLE'S account of 1857 is meticulously documented and makes absorbing reading

As we prepare to observe the 150th anniversary of 1857 events we are once again apt to ask ourselves the same old, unanswered questions: Was it a mutiny, first war of independence, or Jihad for the sake of Islam? William Dalrymple's account clearly shows that it had elements from all the three.

By the time the Meerut cantonment broke into a sepoy mutiny the Mughals had virtually lost the whole of India and were confined to Delhi. Much before Bahadur Shah Zafar's reign began the saying about his grandfather's rule was: *Sultanat-e-Shah Alam, Az Dilli ta Palam* (The realm of Shah Alam stretches from Delhi to Palam).

By the time Zafar's days on the Great Mughal throne began their effective control did not extend even up to Palam (where today's airport is located), because the British Resident had firmly established control over this small area as well. Even within the Mughal court nothing could happen without the permission of the British Resident.

Well before the 1857 revolt the entire royalty, including the emperor, had an undeclared status of prisoners, their source of sustenance being the pension that the British East India Company condescended to give them. Gradually the courtesies due to the emperor were also withdrawn and officials were no longer inclined to pay even the customary respect to him. The Delhi Resident wrote to the British Governor General that there was no point in continuing the hollow ritual.

Shorn of all power and every source of income, the House of Timur, the Great Mughals of India, also forfeited respect of the British. However, Indians -- both Muslims and Hindus -- held him in great respect. This is a point that Dalrymple repeatedly emphasises. Many simple folk thought that Zafar was a sufi and came to get his blessings as a spiritual mentor. The Mughals, right from Babur till Zafar (with the exception of Aurangzeb), were some kind of syncretists who held sufis and saints in great regard.

The Mughals always visited sufi shrines and practised a syncretic, folk version of Islam, which was a cause of annoyance for purists like Shah Waliullah and his successor Shah Abdul Aziz. This school of thought, though annoyed with Mughal syncretism, stood

To make matters worse, the British had recently seized the rich and important nawabdom of Avadh on the silly pretext that the dynasty had no heir to the throne. This they called the Doctrine of Lapse. Dalrymple gives documentary evidence of the British planning to terminate Mughal rule in Delhi after the octogenarian Zafar died, which meant within the next few years. To this end they refused to recognise any heir apparent to the Mughal throne despite repeated pleas from Zafar. That means the British were determined to terminate the Mughal dynasty. They would have done that even if there was no uprising.

Around this time a crucial element was introduced into the volatile environment. The Company had introduced the newly built Enfield rifles, whose cartridges were unfamiliar to the sepoys. They had to bite away a part of it before using it. The greasy cartridges had an offensive smell and taste, and the sepoys loathed having to bite them. Then the rumour spread slowly all over north India that the new cartridges had lard and tallow in them.

Power-drunk British officials refused to withdraw them in view of the Hindu taboo on putting beef fat in their mouth and a similar Muslim taboo about pork and lard. That turned out to be the last straw on the proverbial camel's back, and there was an outbreak of revolt at Meerut Cantonment, which quickly spread all over north India. Dalrymple says the tallow and lard episode was not the figment of somebody's imagination, but something real.

Soon the mutineers began to pour into Delhi. Despite its best efforts the Mughal court failed to keep them out of the city walls. From the second week of May 1857 the Company's sepoys erupted into a rebellion, putting to the sword and shooting their officers, their families, and every white person in sight. They began to pour into Delhi as the disturbances spread to other areas.

In Delhi also they killed every white they found and burned down all Company establishments. The whites

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QUICK LINKS
VISTAS: Financial Inclusion: A Comparative Study of Conventional and Islamic Approaches
By Dr. Sayed Atzal Peerzade

An attempt is made in this paper to study conventional and Islamic approaches towards financial inclusion in a comparative framework. The paper has a two-fold objective. First, it seeks to demonstrate that Islam has an in-built mechanism of financial inclusion. Secondly, the paper argues that financial inclusion in Islam is not an after-thought of pro-poor governments. Here...

Perspective: Israel &

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for overthrow of East India Company rule, through armed Jihad, if need be, as the Company was actively promoting deracination and religious conversion of Indian Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. The aggressive proselytising and arrogance of European missionaries was a source of great tension. Muslim fears, suggests Dalrymple, were not unfounded.

Before the outbreak the Company had stopped paying *nazr* to the emperor and also stopped stamping Company coin in his name. Nobles from outside Delhi were prevented from visiting with the emperor without the British Resident's permission. Nobody was allowed to present gifts to or receive from him either. This was the background against which the revolt occurred.

fled towards Punjab, but Gujjar tribes just outside the Delhi borders attacked and looted them, even stripping them of the clothes on their body.

In the meanwhile, the sepoys billeted themselves in the Red Fort, in the emperor's gardens, the Diwan-e-Aam, even the emperor's private quarters, and in shops and other premises all over the city. Soon they began to intimidate common people, started stealing and robbery. Some began a protection racket, others refused to pay for goods that they bought from shops. They refused to leave the city when the emperor told them that he had no weapons to fight the British, nor money or other resources to feed them and sustain such a large force. They did not listen to him and forced him to "bless" the rising and accept its leadership. He had to accept because they would not budge from his palace, garden, or city. They were so disorderly that they called him *Arrey Badshah*, *Arrey Buddhey*. In reality, it was not the king who was leading the mutinous sepoys but the other way round. Zafar's prime minister advised him to accept their proposal as rejecting it would invite a disaster for the Mughal dynasty.

To the extent that everything began with the rebellion of the Company's sepoys, it was a mutiny. But soon another element entered the arena -- droves of *mujahideen*, fiercely determined to fight the British and lay down their lives, if need be. Supreme sacrifice (shahadat) being their preferred way of meeting with death turned out to be a great challenge for the Company.

By September the British had begun the counter attack. Sikhs, Gurkhas and Pathans in the company army saved the day for the British. These troops constituted nearly three-fourth of the British army. Hence Dalrymple questions the very basis of the British pretensions of having fought and won the 1857 battles on their own.

In the process of narrating the fascinating (and, sometimes horrifying) story of 1857 Dalrymple questions many myths and presumptions. One of these is the contemporary Hindu chauvinist propaganda that Mughal rule was some kind of external imposition that did not enjoy popular support.

Dalrymple forcefully argues that the Mughals enjoyed great popular support. Despite the fact that most of them were believers and reposed faith in Islam, they truly respected other faiths of India. They did not discriminate between their subjects on the grounds of religion.

At the end of it the British emerged victorious and unleashed a reign of terror. Towards the end of the book Dalrymple makes an important observation. The Jihadis of 1857 were like Jihadis of today: the 1857 Jihadis had risen to fight European (British) highhandedness as today's Jihadis are the products of Western highhandedness against the Muslim world.

Reviewed by Zeyaul Haque

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There is a misperception about heroism. In common parlance a hero is one who does unusual things. Doing the routine or ordinary and normal things is not considered to be heroic. Jumping into a flooded river and saving a sinking child or woman is, no doubt, an act of bravery but equally heroic should be the performance of a man who opens and successfully runs a school and brings the light of education and enlightenment to the people living in slums and villages. Retired but healthy middle class men have an opportunity here to be the real hero.

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The democratic form of government gives two distinct advantages: (i) it permits an open debate and gives every section of society an opportunity to articulate its point of view, and (ii) to vote at an election to choose their representatives. If members of the Muslim minority exercise this right carefully and do not get carried away by emotion, rhetoric and/or tempting promises while exercising their franchise, I am sure they would be able to send the right type of representatives to the legislative bodies who would ensure their interest.

(From "Flow of Thoughts" by Justice A.M. Ahmadi, pp. 302-303)

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OPINION

Making Retirement Meaningful

by Ishtiyaque Danish

The views expressed in the article do not necessarily reflect the editorial policy of the Newsletter (editor)

Life can be more enjoyable and may have a deeper meaning if we just manage our time and utilize our resources properly. For an average middle class man life comes to an end the moment he retires. He thinks the busy days are over and the period of leisure has set in. But he is grossly mistaken, specially if he is still fit, mentally and physically.

Retirement is a technical word to mean the end of the routine job you have been doing since long. It, however, does not mean to be lazy or inactive. Life may continue to be active and meaningful even after retirement.

Most middle classmen become free of routine responsibilities of parenting by the time they retire. They have a house and pension to live on and their children are married and settled. This gives them abundance of time to serve the larger society they are living in.

Our developing societies have a lot many problems which government agencies alone are either unable to solve or they neglect their duties. Retired middle class men can step in here and become the conscience keeper of the society.

Take the case of a retired teacher, for example. He is healthy and alert and can contribute to the wellbeing of the society. He has the option to pass his time with his grand children. But a better and more meaningful option would be to get busy with disadvantaged children struggling to join the race of life. His teaching experience can help them in a varieties of ways as he could be their tutor, counselor and guide.

Relatively well off middle class men can do even better. They can launch NGOs, join welfare associations and take up common causes to serve the public at large. Our system of governance is plagued with corruption and inefficiency and the country is facing problems of all kinds. Retired but

healthy middle class men can help the country in overcoming many obstacles and provide leadership to the civil society of which they are proud members. There are men engaged in numerous projects that they have launched to clean the environment we are breathing in. There are also people who are rendering selfless services to the disadvantaged and the marginalized. And there are many areas where neither any government agency nor any NGO or private organization is active to attend and solve people's problems. Retired people can find works here to keep themselves busy and continue being useful to the society.

The Muslim community in India has a tiny middle class. Historically speaking, they took to modern education quite late which delayed the emergence of a Muslim middle class. Then happened the Partition in 1947 whose shock waves were felt well upto 1960 and beyond causing the flight of the Muslim middle class to Pakistan, England and other places. The loss to the Muslim community can just be imagined.

A new Muslim middle class, though small in size, has emerged recently. In fact, the ones who braved to be in schools and colleges even in the depression period of 1950s and 1960s have either retired today or are on the verge of retirement. There is no denying the fact that this middle class is not very rich nor many of them have the satisfaction of their children being happily married and settled. In fact, a good number has problems at personal or family levels to solve which keep them preoccupied. Thus we can imagine that only a small minority of the tiny Muslim middle class is truly in a position to help their community as well as the country.

Social service is a daunting task, specially if one has to work among the uneducated or semi-educated poor whose level of awareness is pathetically low. This scares many middle class men

who prefer to remain idle and lead a boring retired life. These are the men who need to be impressed upon that being in the thick of affairs would not only keep them healthy but would also provide them with opportunities to enjoy life in a better way, even make their retirement more meaningful and beneficial to the society.

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