



# IOS NEWSLETTER

Vol. 23 No. 05

May 2016/Rajjab-Shabaan 1437 H

## Thought for the Month

O mankind! We created  
You from a single (pair)  
Of a male and a female,  
And made you into  
Nations and tribes, that  
Ye may know each other  
(Not that ye may despise  
(Each other). Verily  
The most honoured of you  
In the sight of Allah  
Is (he who is) the most  
Righteous of you.  
And Allah has full knowledge  
And is well acquainted  
(With all things).

Al-Quran- 49:13

### EDITOR

*Prof. Sanghasen Singh*

### CIRCULATION MANAGER

*Syed Arshad Karim*

### CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

162, Jogabai Extension  
Jamia Nagar, New Delhi  
PIN-110025  
India

Phone 26981187,  
26989253, 26987467  
Fax : 91-11-26981104

E-mail:  
ios.newdelhi@gmail.com  
Website:  
www.iosworld.org

## FOCUS

Islamic Studies has a rich tradition in India. It dates back to the advent of Islam in the Northern part of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. As is well known, Islam entered Northern India in a big way with Muhammad ibn Qasim, the conqueror of Sind. This was the time of great Islamic expansion, in fact, the second wave of conquests after the first ones achieved during the reigns of Umar and Uthman, the second and third rightly guided Khulafa. Historians of the time have, therefore, mainly focused on the territorial expansion of the Umayyad empire Khailafa and have paid little attention to what was happening in the world of knowledge. Indeed the seeds of many branches of knowledge that flourished in the Abbasid period were sown during the Umayyad period.

The early Muslims/Arabs, as can be expected, were very fond of knowledge. The Quranic emphasis on 'thinking', 'knowing' and 'learning' was destined to instill in its first followers a great quest for knowledge. The Muslims were further encouraged by the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) who considered wisdom as the lost property of believers and urged them to get hold of it wherever they found it. As a result, the early Muslims eagerly acquired the knowledge they could lay their hand on in the conquered territories.

Muhammad ibn Qasim opened the gate of India for Muslim scholars. The early records are not very well known. However, it is quite possible that his army might have included a good number of learned soldiers who might have narrated their observations and experiences of India to the interested scholars living in their home towns. The possibility is also that at least some might have known about the intellectual heritage of India much before they came here.

History has recorded Muhammad ibn Qasim's magnanimous attitude and policies towards his conquered subjects. It has also noted the peaceful preaching of Islam by some pious scholars among the people of Sind. At a later stage when mosques came into existence, at least primary education also started, for in those days scholars delivered their public lectures in Muslim places of worship. The tradition of establishing schools independent of mosques began at a later stage.

In fact, it were the Abbasids who first institutionalized education when they opened Madaris in Baghdad or elsewhere in their vast empire. This tradition was taken to India by Mahmud Ghaznavi (d. 1030) when he and his successors patronized education in Lahore by opening several scholars. Although much maligned for his destruction of Hindu temples, Mahmud Ghaznavi was a profound scholar and a great patron of knowledge and education. The famous Indologist, al-Beiruni worked under his patronage. Moreover, there were many great Sufi scholars in this period whose hospices served as centers of learning. Such a saint scholar was Shaykh Husayn Zanjani who lived and imparted religious education in Lahore in the early years of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Shaykh Ali Hujveri who succeeded Zanjani on his death in 1037 is regarded as being the author of the first book on Tasawwuf (mysticism), namely Kashf al-Mahjub.

*Contd. on page-6*

**Activities of the IOS Headquarters**

**Lecture on “Communal Violence and the Identity of Groups”**

A lecture on “Communal Violence and the Identity of Groups” was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies at its Conference hall on May 21, 2016. Delivering the lecture, Prof. Shamim A. Ansari, Professor of Psychology at Aligarh Muslim University, observed that communal violence was one of the most vulnerable conditions that not only widened the gap among the groups, but was also detrimental to nation’s growth and development. This was the tragedy of the Indian sub-continent that no one realised the cost of communal violence in terms of men, material and economic resources, he said. Emphasising the need for controlling communal violence for the sake of nation-building, he said that the identification of reasons for such a national social evil was very important. In this connection, he cited identity crises as the most important reason adding that it weakened one’s psycho-social make-up so far as the perception about oneself and others was concerned.

Prof. Ansari held that post-Independence scenario witnessed frequent occurrence of communal tensions, usually turning into communal violence in which lives of innocent people and properties were lost. Such ugly, shameful and inhuman riots not only posed threat to psycho-physiological well-being, but also became instrumental in weakening inter-community relations and national

integration, he noted. He explained that factors like, personal identity, social identity, prejudice, social alienation in the form of socio-economic and educational deprivation, reservation of Muslims, chauvinism of the majority community in the form of self-righteousness and perceived cultural superiority contributed to the eruption of communal violence. Besides, identities of the groups were responsible for cultivating communal tension and disharmony which subsequently turned into communal violence. Thus the genesis of a group’s identity was important in analysing the

property and loss of human life. The first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had asked Gardener Murphy from the UNESCO to study the causes that led to communal violence after partition. He went into the causes and came out with a book titled *In the Minds of Men*. He said that the identity of a community was instrumental in communal violence. Identity crisis was the source of communal violence. According to him, sometimes, the feeling of insecurity in the majority community and need to protect itself caused communal violence. Categorisation of people as good and bad at home grew deep among children who took another lesson from the school teacher. The teacher who taught his students from school textbooks that glorified one national hero and showed the other in poor light. This called for resource material in textbooks to be value-based and positive in approach, so that students learnt lessons of brotherhood and



L-R: Prof. Shamim Ahmad Ansari, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam and Prof. Z.M. Khan

reason for communal violence, he insisted. He also said that there had been several reasons for group identity crisis that might be seen in the light of historical perspective of groups residing in a particular society and the nation at large.

Tracing violence to the killing by Qabil of his brother, Habil, both sons of prophet Adam, Prof. Shamim said that violence was an old instinct in the human being. Partition of India was a turning point in Indian history as the exchange of population between the two countries led to the killings of thousands of people belonging to both the communities. The partition brought in its wake large-scale destruction of

communal harmony and respect for all religions.

Prof. Ansari pointed out that the sense of belonging to the nation too had a role to play in certain situations. He proved his point by saying that the output in private sector was bigger than that of the public sector. This was due to the pressure on the workers to work maximally for the greater profit of the company. But no such thing happened in the public sector which incurred heavy losses due to non-performance of its workers. This showed the need for full utilisation of human resource. As the saying went, “An empty mind is the devil’s nest”,

one must achieve efficiency suited to the job. He said that despite the use of state-of-the art technology in automation where the size of the workforce had gone down considerably men were still in a commanding position. Stressing the need for proper planning, he said that optimal utilisation of human resource must be made. Holding that education and employment were co-related, he opined that the deprived must get an opportunity to develop. Owing to the presence of the holy Quran and Hadith, Muslims had a strong identity. Their teachings made the Muslims not to be fearful of death which was not found in any other religion. While lamenting that the media had failed to play an important role in creating an atmosphere conducive to peace and harmony, he said that the government, too, was found failing in its duty to promote brotherhood, communal and social harmony.

The Secretary General, IOS, Prof. ZM Khan held that the communal violence was multi-dimensional. It could be studied from the angle of psychology, politics and sociology. Several scholars had studied the subject and drawn their conclusions. With the advancement of science and technology, the reach of social media was not bound by country or continent. Messages of various sorts on the facebook were scanned, studied and then spread across the globe. Islamophobia was such a falsehood that gripped the world today, he said. He felt satisfaction that India was still safe from the scale of strife that was being witnessed in Syria and other countries of the Muslim world.

Chairman, IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam in his presidential remarks announced that the IOS would

hold a national dialogue programme in the first week of September in which representatives from major religions would be invited to deliberate on communal harmony. He said that the pattern of communal violence had changed between 1947 and 1997. An effort was made to put an effective curb on communal violence by bringing the Anti-Communal Violence Bill in Parliament, but the stiff resistance put up by the then main opposition party and the complicity of members of the BJP stalled the bill. He said that the communal forces in the country used violence as a tool to



A view of the audience

come to power. They successfully polarised Hindus against Muslims in their bid to attain power. They knew when and how to use a person in their sinister design to spark off communal violence. The rioters took advantage of the fact that the Muslims by nature were uncompromising on their identity. He held that during India's freedom movement, the RSS had advised Hindus not to waste their energies on it and keep their power reserved for use against Muslims and the Christians when the time came. Calling Islam a religion of peace and well-being of the entire mankind, he noted that the Prophet of Islam

(PBUH) freed the maximum number of slaves.

Earlier, the lecture was preceded by the recitation of a verse from the Quran by Hafiz Athar Husain. The proceedings of the lecture were conducted by Dr. Aftab Alam, Asstt. Prof., Zakir Hussain College, Delhi University. A large number of scholars, university teachers, social activists and prominent citizens, including Ammama Sabri, Prof. Shafiq Ahmed Khan Nadvi, Kamal Ahmad, Col. (retd.) Abdul Rasool Khan from USA, Dr. Tariq Ashraf, Mushtaq Ahmad Wani, Syed Ahmadullah,



Afroz Alam Qasmi, Rashiduzzafar, Abdul Hafiz, Abdul Haq Falahi, Nihal Ahmad, Mohd. Minhaj Ahmad, Shakeelur Rahman, Qamar Ashraf, M. Shamsuddin, Safi Akhtar, Waseem Ahmad Fahmi and Dr. Bismil Aarfi, were present on the occasion.

**IOS organises Symposium on Nationalism Today: Issues and Challenge**

A symposium on "Nationalism Today: Issues and Challenges" was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies on April 30, 2016 at the Deputy Speaker's Hall, Constitution Club here. Justice Rajinder Singh Sachar, former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, who presided over the symposium, said that nationalism implied that all citizens of India irrespective of their religions, caste, creed, etc. were equal.

The Preamble to the Constitution too states that India is a secular and



democratic society. Referring to the last Haj sermon of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), he said that the prophet (PBUH) emphatically stated that the white skinned would hence have no precedence over the black skinned and vice-versa. There was unequivocal message of Islam, he observed. Similarly Jesus Christ said that he would not embrace the wealthy. Holding that Hinduism was not superior to Islam, he noted that any government formed on religious basis would not last long.

Lambasting the Central government for mishandling the JNU issue, he said that it was a disaster. He charged the government with a design to destroy the JNU. Commenting on the existing law of sedition, he maintained that as president of the People's Union of Civil Liberties he had appealed to all political parties to press the government for its repeal. He wondered as to why political parties were not moving ahead to demand withdrawal of the sedition law. He said that due to this obnoxious law, a number of Muslims languished in jails for years together and were ultimately freed for want of evidence during the trial. This had badly affected such youth whose precious years had gone down the drain.

Lauding the role of Brigadier Usman during the Indo-Pak War in 1965, Justice Sachar said that though the veteran freedom fighter and India's first Education Minister, Maulana Azad was proud to be a devout Muslim, he never spoke for Muslims only; he pleaded for equal rights to Hindus, Muslims and Christians. In 1921 Mahatma Gandhi had also described Hindus and Muslims as his two eyes. If one of his eyes was lost,

he would lose half of his vision. Raising the problems faced by the weavers of UP he said that during his last visit to Lucknow he had urged the state chief minister to address their issues, particularly the difficulty in procuring yarn.

Social activist Harsh Mander expressed concern over the phase of aggressive nationalism India was passing through. Tracing the idea of nationhood, he said that gender, faith, etc. did not matter when such an idea emerged. Two ideas, viz, the idea of Pakistan and the Idea of India emerged. While the idea of Pakistan was driven by lack of security to Muslims, the idea of India then was based on confidence among the people, respect for each other's culture

echo in the writings of VD Savarkar who belonged the Hindu Mahasabha. This idea came into conflict with the concept of liberty, equality and fraternity. He said that the Ayodhya movement was a flashpoint. Being a temple town, Ayodhya had a large number of temples, quite a few of them believed to be the birth place of Shri Ram. But the protagonists of the temple movement persisted with their view that the place where the Babri Masjid once stood was the precise birth place of Shri Ram.

They held that it was a matter of their faith and demanded that the mosque be removed in respect of the sentiments of the majority, the Hindus. He said that they treated Muslims as the enemy within. The idea that the nation belonged to the Hindus who were in the majority was contrary to the spirit of the Indian Constitution. At a time when the RSS had completed 90 years of its existence, it had become more outspoken and virulent. Though there were various castes within the Hindu fold, it was the Hindutvadis who

declared that they would determine who was a Hindu. There was a difference between Shri Ram of the Hindu nationalists and Gandhiji. On one hand it was Shri Ram of Nathu Ram Godse who killed Gandhiji, on the other it was Ram of the latter who uttered "Ram" while falling to the assassins' bullet. Thus the question arose who represented the real Ram, he noted.

Harsh Mander observed that India's unity lay in its diversity, its different



L-R: Mr. Abdul Hameed Nomani, Mr. Harsh Mander, Justice Rajinder Sachar, Mr. John Dayal and Dr. Hilal Ahmad

and religion. He explained that the idea of Pakistan with one religion was challenged in several ways. This idea collapsed with the separation of East Pakistan and emergence of an independent country called Bangladesh.

It was alleged that some three million Bangladeshis were killed by the Pakistani establishment. Similarly, Muhajirs (migrants) faced persecution in Pakistan despite professing the same religion. In India, Hindutva found an

religions and languages. There was a community in Arunachal Pradesh which had a population of only 300. But that survived; their language and culture were intact. On the contrary, BJP's idea of nationalism was exclusive as it called for the homogeneity of Hindus. He stressed that it should be within the four walls of the Constitution. He said that the state had a duty to intervene if the Constitution was flouted. He called for preserving the idea of friendship, brotherhood and mutual caring.

Senior journalist and activist, John Dayal raised the question of conversions by saying that the Constitution did not prohibit it. But, of late, Christians were being accused of organising forcible conversions. Referring to the persecution of Christians by the Ravi Shankar Shukla government in Madhya Pradesh decades ago, he said that the first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had advised him against playing with fire. He held that raids were organised against churches in MP and the Christian community was under extreme stress due to threats. He said that the persecution of Christians was more than that of the Muslims.

Due to the scattered population of Muslims, attacks on them were not as organised as on the Christians. He noted that the Christians were charged with receiving money from the West for conversions. Voicing concern over the systematic undermining of the independence of various institutions, he said that the Constitution was under threat. Holding that the rights guaranteed to Muslims and the

Christians had for all practical purposes come down to 50 percent, he said that though there was no caste system in Islam, Christianity and Buddhism. Yet, the people belonging to Scheduled Castes lost the benefits they enjoyed as a sequel to their conversion to these religions. He also raised the issue of fishermen of the Gujarat coast who were mostly Christians. He said that their livelihood was threatened by the deployment of trawlers and dumping of nuclear waste. He called for urgent attention to this problem.

commitment, the caste system had not yet been outlawed. Any attempt at curbing the freedom of speech must also be fought. Laying emphasis on the change of public discourse, he said that access to the media should be increased. He noted that fundamentalist forces were formidable and they could be confronted only when a united fight was put up against them.

Senior journalist and broadcaster, Urmilesh opined that the idea of India had several shades before and after independence. This had now emerged as a problem with language and economy, its other constituents. That today's idea of India was full of contradictions was obvious from the fact that both Sardar Bhagat Singh and Dr BR Ambedkar were removed from public perception. He said that the emergence of BJP's nationalism was the failure of Gandhi-Nehru model of nationalism. He explained that the Hindu upper castes were behind the idea



A view of the audience

Prof. Achin Vanaik of Delhi University held that nationalism was comparatively a modern phenomenon. Nationalism was not inherited from the past. He said that nationalism was more powerful than religious nationalism. Nationalism was identified with the community of citizens. He maintained that the state had to be secular while dealing with different religious groups. It had to respect the imperatives of religion. He pleaded that there should be a democratic nationalism. While calling for the fight for democratic justice, he said that it should be fought at the political, judicial and the citizens' level. He deplored that despite

of Hindu nationalism and this found favour with them irrespective of their party affiliations. They might be conservative or progressive, but they gave full support to the idea of Hindu nationalism. He said that it was Kanshi Ram who for the first time made Dalit assertion a focal point in Indian politics. He brought Ambedkar to life. But Mayawati frittered away all gains he had made. He believed that something positive could emerge if the ideas of Bhagat Singh and Dr Ambedkar were put together. Stressing the need for a better connect with the people, he said that a big movement must be launched for the purpose. He also held that a course correction

would have to be made if the RSS had to be marginalised.

Prof. Rizwan Qaiser of the JMI said that the question of nationalism was as old as 100 years. Earlier Muslims were dubbed as Arabian progenies, but it had now changed. There was no need to prove our nationalism as 95 percent of the Muslims were Hindus 4-5 generations ago, he said.

Dr Hilal Ahmed from CSDS held that the word Hindutva was first used by the Hindu Mahasabha leader Veer Savarkar. The BJP put the term into its election manifesto after 1996 when Justice JS Verma, judge of the Supreme Court, defined it in his judgment. Later, it was used by Arun Shourie in his book and Narendra Modi during the electioneering in 2014.

Maulana Abdul Hameed Nomani, Secretary, Jamat-i-Ulemae Hind, remarked that nationalism threw up several questions that needed to be answered. Hindu nationalism was being renamed as Indian nationalism. He explained that while Hindu religious texts had no mention of patriotism, the country was being sought to be divided in the name of Hindu nationalism. This concept of nationalism was based on hatred. He said that if this nationalism was positive in its nature then every Indian without regard to caste and creed was a nationalist. In order to establish its identity, RSS was trying to divide society by using hatred as a tool. We are still undecided about our strategy to counter this move. Referring to Guru MS Golwalkar's book *A Bunch of Thoughts*, he said that during a meeting Golwalkar and Nehru agreed to work towards the consolidation of Hindus.

On this occasion, IOS publication based on the research study on "Weavers: Struggle for their Survival" by Ashok Kumar Sinha, Development Professional was also released. This book objectively looks into the

different dimensions of the lives of the weavers in Northern India and their struggles for survival. With the advent of new technologies in the growing globalised world and the policies of privatization, globalization and liberalization, the weaver community has been facing enormous challenges to remain afloat and survive.

The book analyses the impacts of various services / schemes and initiatives of the governments for the weaver community. After the assessment of their situation and efforts by the government, the book recommends the areas of policies and intervention programmes to provide effective relief and rehabilitation to the weavers to handle the adversities that they are facing today.

Earlier, the Secretary General, IOS, Prof. ZM Khan welcomed the guests and explained the topicality of the subject. He hoped that the deliberations at the symposium would send a message which would go far and wide. The symposium began with a recitation from Holy Qur'an by Hafiz Nazeerul Hasan. While Asstt. Professor of Political Science, Zakir Husain College, University of Delhi, Dr Md Aftab Alam conducted the proceedings, Advocate on Record, Supreme Court of India, Mushtaq Ahmed proposed a vote of thanks. A large number of social activists, human rights activists, social scientists, academics and prominent citizens were present on the occasion.

*Contd. from page-1*

However, education through Madaris on a large scale was organized during the Sultanate period that began in 1206. The slave Sultans of Delhi established a good number of Madaris two of which, Shamsiyya and Nasiriyya became very famous. The Mongol invasion and sacking of the Muslim heartland from central Asia to Iran and Baghdad in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century compelled many a great scholar to escape to India and Spain. The celebrated scholar Qazi al-

Siraj came to Sind in 1236 and served as the principal of Dar al-Uloom Firoziyyah at Uch, a famous seminary of the time. When Itutmish occupied Uch, he took al-Siraj with him and appointed him as the Qazi of Gwalior. Later on during the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud he became principal of the famous Nasiriyya College of Delhi. Due to his deep and thorough scholarship he ultimately became Qazi al-Quzat, the Chief Justice of the Kingdom. In recognition of his profound learning the king conferred on him the coveted title of Sadr-e-Jahan. Qazi Siraj's greatest scholarly contribution was *Tabaqat-e-Nasiri* which he had dedicated to Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud.

However, Islamic scholarship had started even before the emergence of Qazi Siraj on the scene. Mention must be made of the earliest history of Sind, *Minhaj al-Masalik*. The original Arabic text of the book has been lost but its Persian version, *Chach Nama*, prepared in 1216 by Ali Ibn Hamid Abu Bakr al-Kufi has survived to our time.

But we shall come to the world of book later on; for now let us concentrate on the spread of Islamic education in Muslim India. Education through a chain of well-managed Madaris continued to flourish and spread during the Khilji period. Alauddin Khilji was uneducated who paid little attention even to the education of his own children. But even in his time Delhi continued to be a great center of learning. Many notables of the Khilji dynasty championed and patronized knowledge by welcoming the scholars from Baghdad and other major towns of the Islamic World. The Khilji era also saw the establishment in Delhi of hospitals and colleges that imparted Graeco-Arab medicine. The Madaris and hospitals of the time were host to some great Islamic scholars and physicians. Scholars taught and wrote books on such subjects as history, jurisprudence, theology, linguistics, Tafsir and Hadith etc.

The rulers of the Tughlaq dynasty proved to be even greater patron of knowledge. In his book, *An Intellectual History of Islam in India*, Aziz Ahmad has said that at one point Delhi alone had over a thousand Madaris. Firoz Tughlaq who succeeded the greatly educated Muhammad ibn Tughlaq paid special attention to Islamic studies. As a result, some great works of jurisprudence such as *Fatawa Tatar Khani* were prepared under his personal supervision and care. He authored his memoir or a kind of history of his own kingdom, *Futuh-at-e-Firoz Shahi* and hired many scholars to translate Sanskrit works into Persian. He opened schools, gave them grants or made special *Awqaf* for them. The idea was to popularize education through well-managed Madaris some of which had separate residential quarters both for students and teachers. The Sayyid dynasty also continued the valued policy of patronizing knowledge. Badaun, a district town in Western UP near Delhi became a great set of learning during this period. In fact, the last two Sayyid rulers lived in Badaun in order to enjoy the intellectually rich company of the learned.

Madrassa education underwent a landmark change during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi (1489-1517). He made it compulsory for his civil servants and military officers to acquire a certain level of education. He also made Persian the official language of administration even at lower level. This policy compelled the Hindu subjects of the kingdom to learn Persian for whom new Madaris were opened which had a new syllabi that contained a great deal of rational sciences. In a sense it was a humble attempt at "secularizing" the curriculum of the Madaris which reached its zenith under the Great Mughal, Akbar, Sikandar Lodhi's fascination with rational sciences forced even the Madaris attached with mosques to include them in their syllabi. He opened schools all over his

kingdom, encouraged scholars to go out of Dehi, spread across the country and impart education to the students, both Muslims and Hindus. He also invited reputed scholars from various parts of the Islamic World to disseminate knowledge and promote education in his kingdom.

The Mughal emperors from Babur to Aurangzeb were great patrons of knowledge. In his brief reign Babur took great interest in building new Madaris and colleges. However, the disturbed period of his son, Humayun saw no progress in this area. It was left to his son, Akbar who established a large number of Madaris and colleges whose gates were open both for Hindus and Muslims. Under him the syllabi underwent drastic changes as he urged to reduce theological content and include rational science. This trend continued well up to Aurangzeb who put equal, if not greater, emphasis on theological contents of the syllabi. Aurangzeb helped in establishing two great Madaris, one by Shah Abdur Rahim, the father of famous Shah Waliullah and the other at Firangi Mahal in Lucknow. The thinking and syllabi that these two Madaris developed continue to dominate even the modern day Madaris. Mullah Nizamuddin who taught at Firangi Mahal prepared a new syllabi which, more or less, is taught even today. The Mulla picked up one or two books for any particular subject and included them in the syllabi. Since then one or two books of a subject are taught in Madaris while the practice before the Mulla was to deliver lectures and read and benefit from any number of sources. The Mughal Empire fell apart after the death of Aurangzeb. The successor states, however, continued his educational policies upto the establishment of the British rule in India. In their early period the British, too, continued with the Madrasa education. It took over half a century to undermine the Madrasa education. It was the rebellion of 1857 that, in fact, gave a jolt to the Madrasa system because in its aftermath the British

specially targeted the Ulama for revenge. Moreover, until then Madaris were financially supported by notables, Muslim rulers, even by the British in some cases. However, after the rebellion the situation changed as meeting the expenses. Moreover, during the Muslim rule Madaris produced civil servants and military officers and other components of the ruling elites. The onset of the British rule, however, changed all these and the purpose of Madaris now became to preserve the religious identity of Indian Muslims.

The purpose of the above brief summary of Madrasa education during the long Islamic period is to show how Muslims popularized education, specially the Islamic studies. A look at the syllabi of the Madaris would suggest that Islamic studies, and not theology, have been the dominant component of Madrasa education. The following passage is worth reading:

The development of the medieval educational curricula can be divided into three periods. In the first period that of the Sultanate and its successor states in the provinces until 1500 the subjects taught were theology, jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and its principles (*Usul*), exegesis, Hadith, Sufism, grammar, rhetoric and logic. The chief emphasis was on the study of the principles of jurisprudence and their application. The second period ranges from the reign of Sikandar Lodhi to the early period of the reign of Akbar, from 1500 to 1575. This is the phase of growing emphasis on the medieval rational sciences, logic mathematics, medicine and astronomy. The third phase begins with the age of Akbar, when there was even greater emphasis on rationalism, though this process was reversed to some extent under Aurangzeb. Ethics seems to have been the chief area of concentration in this period..."

The Madrasa education in modern India has, more or less, followed the *Dars-e-Nizami* developed at Firangi Mahal during the reign of Aurangzeb. However, with the changing time some



Ulama felt that the Dars-e-Nizami pursued at Dar al-Uloom, Deoband was established and nurtured at Lucknow by a number of scholars including the renowned author/thinker Allama Shibli Nomani (1857-1914). The states purpose was to bridge the gap between the religious and “modern secular” education. At a later period the great scholar of Quran, relative and disciple of Shibli Nomani, Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi, became dissatisfied with the syllabi of Madaris. He felt there was an overemphasis on Hadith, Fiqh, logic and grammer etc. and the primary source of the Sharia, the Holy Quran, was neglected in that its Tafsir was not taught in a sufficient way. He found that instead of thinking (literally Tadabbur) over the verses of the Quran they confined themselves with teaching of Tafsir (commentary) of one or another commentator which was written in the distant past. With such an ideal in mind he initiated what is known as Farahi School of Tafsir at Madrasa al-Islah, Sarai Mir, Azamgarh.

**From *Status of Islamic Studies in India: An Overview* published by the Japan Foundation, New Delhi, pp. 19-23.**

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OPINION

The Evil Within
by Ishtiyaque Danish

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

Evil is both, internal and external. Normally people seek and find evil or its shades in others and ignore its presence in their own souls. Yes some ignore, and many others are just unable to see the evil within. Seeing and fighting against the evil within has been described in a Hadith as Jihad-e-Akbar, the greatest war. This greatest Jihad is not fought with weapons made of iron and explosives. You need will power to defeat this internal enemy with the help of your pious deeds. And this piety is not a momentary phenomenon; it is a life-long experience; it is always alive, it never dies. The enemy within is powerful, intelligent and scheming. It corrupts one's mind, his or her eyes and also the soul. When mind becomes corrupt, it orders all the parts of body to indulge in corruption; when your eyes become corrupt, you become blind to truth and when the soul is corrupted, the evil becomes attractive, even seductive and almost destroys the man surreptitiously. The evil within or the internal enemy appears in many forms. It may be false pride, base, selfish desire, greed and self-gratification etc. But the most dangerous evil is the passion within that all the time encourages you to do a wrong and find a joy in it. This is Nafs-e-Ammara, the passion within that overpowers man and takes him to the joyful world of

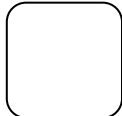
evil. It is, therefore, most difficult to fight against. Fortunately, man also has another passion or force in him which is called Nafs-e-Lawwama. This force tries from within a man to fight and defeat the false passions that seek to destroy men from within. Thus inside every man there is a battle ground, his Zameer or conscience where forces of evil and good are always engaged in a fierce battle to capture his mind and soul. In Islamic tradition, religion and civilization this battle within is tackled with the seriousness it deserves. A believer or Muslim is always reminded that Nafs-e-Ammara is his greatest enemy which has to be defeated at any cost. He prays five times a day, so he remains God conscious through day and night. Remembering God strengthens one's Nafs-e-Lawwama, the passion within which continuously fights against Nafs-e-Ammara. Paying the poor due is also a means to fight against the evil within. Similarly, the fasting helps a man become more God-conscious so that he is able to defeat Nafs-e-Ammara. Often man thinks that he alone is pious, he alone is right and all others are wrong. This evil within may be called self-righteousness. This is a dangerous disease and destroys man completely. A man afflicted with this disease gradually develops a very dangerous feeling or thinking that those who do not agree with him are

not just his enemy, rather they are the enemy of God. This thinking makes him intolerant towards things different. Often such a man is overpowered with extreme kind of piety and he starts thinking that his mission in life is to correct by force every wrong he sees or comes across. He never thinks that he may also be wrong; he never concedes that others may also have a point of view. His worldview is very narrow. The world for him is either white or black. Obviously he thinks that he is white, the good and those who are not like him are black, the evil. He doesn't know that there are other colours, green, yellow, pink, brown and many more, and all these colours have their own significance and may not see white as good or black as evil. So the man, overpowered with self-righteousness not only sees the world in black and white but also thinks that he is duty bound to try to eliminate evil. So he becomes the Warrior with capital W and the rest of world his enemy. We can imagine that this kind of extremist thinking is doomed to failure from the beginning. And we can also imagine that this extremist thinking is the most dangerous form of the evil within.

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