



IOS NEWSLETTER

Vol. 26 No. 06 & 07

June-July 2019/Shawwal-Ziqadah 1440 H

Thought for the Month

Those who avoid
Great sins and indecent deeds,
Save lesser offences,—
Verily thy your Lord is ample
In forgiveness. He knows
You well when He brings
You out of the earth,
And when ye are hidden
In your mother's wombs.
Therefore hold not yourselves
purified:
He knows best who it is
That guards against evil.

Al-Quran- 53:32

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FOCUS

As to the Gandhi-Jinnah talks which took place at Jinnah's residence between 9 and 26 September, 1944, I mentioned the fact that they had failed. And since they played no further part in the transfer of power to India, I did not go into the details of those talks because they would have distracted the reader's attention from the central theme of *Legend and Reality*. However, in a review of *Legend and Reality*, Mr. Rajmohan Gandhi wrote: "Seeravi withholds what Gandhi offered and Jinnah demanded... during these talks Gandhi was prepared, on tow conditions, to concede an autonomous Pakistan area identical to the area Jinnah obtained in 1947". The criticism does disservice to Gandhi and proceeds on a failure to analyze critically the documents relating to the Gandhi-Jinnah talks. These will be found in a Booklet of 104 pages ("the Booklet") published by the *Hindustan Times* in October, 1944 entitled *Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, Text of Correspondence and other Relevant Matter* with a Preface by C. Rajagopalachari. The Booklet makes sad reading. It shows that the Gandhi-Jinnah talks were foredoomed to failure, and when they failed, they further embittered the relations between the Congress and the Muslim League.

What was the starting point of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks? It was the "C.R. formula" which according to C. Rajagopalachari gave the Muslim League the substance of the League's Lahore Resolution of 1940, later called "the Pakistan Resolution". Jinnah did not give his personal support to the C.R. Formula, but offered to place it before the Working Committee of the Muslim League. Thereupon, Rajagopalachari broke off personal negotiations, and released the correspondence between himself and Jinnah so as to awaken public opinion. The C.R. Formula and the Lahore Resolution of 1940 are set out at the end of this Introduction. The C.R. Formula shows that it did not give Jinnah the substance of the Lahore Resolution. However, the present discussion relates to Rajmohan Gandhi's statement that "during the Gandhi-Jinnah talks Gandhiji was prepared, on two conditions, to concede an autonomous Pakistan area identical to the area Jinnah obtained in 1947". Therefore, we must inquire, what did Jinnah obtain on partition? Jinnah obtained, first, areas of the Indian territory in which, in most cases, the majority of the population were Muslims; *secondly*, those areas formed part of Pakistan as an *independent sovereign State*. Gandhi's offer would not have given Jinnah the *territory* comprised in the sovereign State of Pakistan. It is generally assumed that the C.R. Formula and the Gandhi Formula were, in effect, identical. But this is contradicted by the documents contained in the Booklet on the Gandhi-Jinnah Talks. To Jinnah's question, "What is the meaning of 'absolute majority'?" (Booklet, p. 4) Gandhi replied: "absolute majority" means a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province." (ibid. p. 6) Reaffirming his definition, Gandhi again wrote to Jinnah: "Rajaji tells me that 'absolute majority' is used in his formula in the same sense as it is used in ordinary legal parlance, wherever more than two groups are dealt with. *I cling to my own answer*. You will perhaps suggest a third meaning and persuade me to accept it." (ibid. p. 9. Italics supplied).

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Activities of the IOS Headquarters

Two-day IOS National Conference on "Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi: Life and Contributions"

A two-day national conference on "Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi: Life and Contributions" was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies on July 6-7, 2019 at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi. The conference discussed different aspects of life and works of the Islamic scholar of the twentieth century.

Inaugurating the conference, Maulana Saeedur Rahman Azmi, principal, Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow, praised the chairman, IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, for remembering Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi, whose works made a mark not only in India, but also the Arab world as one of the scholars of Hadith in the Islamic world.

Recalling Allama Azmi's services, he said Maulana Habibur Rahman started his career as a teacher of Hadith at Darul Uloom at Mau in UP, where he spent four years. He was endowed with the rare distinction of profound knowledge of Hadith and its authentic sources. He was a living embodiment of Islamic scholarship and research. He helped every scholar who visited him to seek his guidance on the veracity and interpretation of some Hadith.

His life became a resource for a generation of ulema and interpreters of Hadith. He said that whoever came to the maulana for clarity on an issue with regard to Hadith returned fully satisfied. He described the maulana as a mobile school of Hadith. His term as

Amir-ul-Hind afforded him an opportunity to undertake a countrywide tour. During this tour, he met a cross-section of people cutting across schools of jurisprudence and earned their appreciation and respect. His organising capabilities came to the fore when he was elected as a member of Jamiatul Ulema-i-Hind under the leadership of Sheikhul Hind, Maulana Syed Husain Ahmed Madani.

He became so popular that some Muslims joined the organisation due to him. He had close association with the top ulema of his times, including Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi. He was in regular correspondence with the latter on matters of Islamic jurisprudence and Shariah. This led him to be

in eastern UP, known for its handloom industry. Maulana Habibur Rahman lived a frugal life, but his work is highly valued in the subcontinent, Egypt, Hejaz and Iraq. He received elementary education at home and in his home town, and went to Bahadurganj (District Ghazipur), Gorakhpur, Banaras, and Darul Uloom, Deoband (all in UP). He learnt the finer points of the Quran and Hadith from Maulana Karim Baksh who was then the principal and Sheikh-ul-Hadith of Darul Uloom, Mau.

He said that the maulana's life was fully devoted to the study, teaching and dissemination of religious texts. He continued this work till his death.

He wrote dozens of books in Arabic and Urdu which proved his erudition and deep knowledge of Islam.

In his keynote address, Prof. A. R. Momin, former professor of sociology, University of Bombay and editor, IOS Minaret (a web journal), remarked that Islam was the only

religion in the world which preserved its faith, worship, law, values, etiquette, manners and morals throughout its history of 1400 years. This historical continuity and the belief in Oneness of God was deeply rooted in the Quran and Sunnah. The ulema unceasingly strived to preserve this precious heritage by transferring it from one generation to another. They displayed rare interest in it and made extraordinary effort in teaching of the Quran and Hadith.

He said that Muslims should be highly indebted to their forefathers and remember their services by praying for their high place in heaven. He warned



L-R: Prof. Ishtiaque Danish, Prof. Z.M. Khan, MI. Mohammad Abdullah Mughesi, MI. Saeedur Rahman Azmi, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, MI. Syed Mohammad Wali Rahmani, Prof. A. R. Momin, and Dr. Masood Ahmad Azami

nominated as member and chairperson of several academies and institutions of learning. He was never found wanting whenever the ulema faced a challenge. It was his life's mission to promote the learning of and research on the Quran and the Hadith, and strict adherence to the Sunnah. The maulana also served as a member of the Uttar Pradesh state assembly for one term and received an award from the President of India in recognition of his contributions, he added.

Presenting a profile of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi, his grandson, Dr. Masood Ahmad Azami, held that the maulana belonged to Mau, a town

that those who forgot their forefathers were destined to pale into oblivion. Referring to Western orientalist's claim that the collection and writing of the Quran and Hadith began much after the death of Prophet (PBUH) in the third century A.D., and thus its genuineness was not above board. Prof. Momin said, our forefathers who now lay buried had already disproved their theory by forcefully arguing with unimpeachable evidence that the collection and writing of both the Quran and Hadith had begun during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) himself. The late Dr. Mohammad Mustafa al-Azmi wrote that about 2.5 lakh complete and incomplete manuscripts of the Quran had been preserved. Most of them belonged to early first and second centuries A.D., he noted. A number of Indian and Arab ulema and scholars of Hadith benefited from his deep knowledge of the subject. Maulana Abul Ma'asir's worldwide popularity was due to his service of Islam, and above all, he did it for the pleasure of Allah. He said that Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi secured photocopies and microfilms of rare books on Hadith, and compared them with other manuscripts in order to test their genuineness. One of his noticeable works was to take out different manuscripts and present them by using modern methodology.

These books remained inaccessible to the ulema and interpreters of Hadith for several centuries. His devotion to research could be illustrated by the fact that he discovered the difficult interpretation of Imam al-Tharvi at the young age of 29 years. He observed that Maulana Abul Ma'asir was deeply imbued with the knowledge of Hadith and this was proved by his works in which he differed with Imam Bayhaqi,

Imam Dar Qutni, Hafiz Ibn Hajal al-Asqalani and Hafiz Hashmi on several points. Dr. Mohammad Hamidullah, Dr. Fuat Sezgin, Sheikh Mohammad Fuad Abdul Baqi and Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi held a balanced view of the researches of orientalist. He said that Maulana Abul Ma'asir's opinion about the works of orientalist exemplified his sense of accommodation, fairness, broad vision and a balanced eye. One of the most noteworthy contributions of the maulana was his work on Islamic International Law. It was Dr. Hamidullah who proved that the scholar of international law, Hugo Grotius was not the first writer on the subject. It was the Muslims who first

explained that Hadith was the interpretation of the Quran, adding that an *aalim* was dispatched to Thane in India to spread the message of Quran and Hadith by the second Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Omar Farooq (RA). This showed that the Muslims landed on Indian shores some 1400 years ago to teach the message of Hadith. He said that the contribution of Shah Waliullah Mohaddis Dehlavi to the teaching of Hadith could not be underestimated. But, it was his son, Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlavi, who formally started the facilities for the teaching and study of Hadith. Maulana Abul Ma'asir was last such Islamic scholar who was conferred the title of Amir-ul-Hind. Hazrat Abu Huraira (RA) had

memorised as many as 5,000 Ahadith and the knowledge of Hadith would continue to flourish till the Day of Judgment, he said.

Delivering the presidential address, the chairman, IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, announced that two seminars – one national and the other international – would henceforth

be organised by the Institute every year. He added that a function on the life and contribution of Prof. Fuat Sezgin, an eminent historian of science in the world and heading figure of scholarship in Islamic science and civilisation, would be organised on December 21-22, 2019 at New Delhi. He also announced that if the manuscripts of Habibur Rahman Azmi's unpublished works were made available to the IOS, they would be published by it. Commenting on the contributions of Maulana Abul Ma'asir Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi, he said that besides being an *aalim* of Islam par excellence, he was a gifted writer and established himself as an



A view of the audience

codified international law, he added.

Speaking as a guest of honour, Maulana Syed Mohammad Wali Rahmani, general secretary, All India Muslim Personal Law Board, pointed out that Hadith was Maulana Habibur Rahman's field of writing and research. He said that it was the fourth Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Ali (RA) who first collected and compiled the Ahadith. He was followed by another companion Hazrat Abu Huraira (RA). Thereafter, the compilation of Ahadith received a boost, he concluded.

Another guest of honour, Maulana Mohammad Abdullah Mughesi, president, All India Milli Council,

authority on the interpretation of Hadith. While he headed the seat of Hadith at Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema in Lucknow, he served as a member of the advisory committee of Darul Uloom, Deoband. He had the distinction of being a student of Mohaddis-e-Asr, Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri and Sheikh al-Islam, Allama Shabbir Ahmad Usmani as far as the learning of Hadith was concerned. Dr. Alam noted that due to his works of rare scholarship, Maulana Azmi was counted among a few mohaddisin of the 20th century for exceptional scholarship. Books like Musnad Humaidi, Kitab az-zuhd, Kashful Asrar and Musnad Ahmad would survive to illuminate the Ummah till the Day of Judgment and the name of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi would be remembered in one way or the other. He said that a fitting tribute to the maulana would be to carry forward his legacy for the benefit of the younger generation of the ulema who could make best of both the worlds, he concluded.

Earlier, the conference got off to a formal start by the recitation and Urdu translation of a Quranic verse by the Secretary, Idara Umoor-e-Masajid, Maulana Abdullah Tarique. This was followed by the introduction of the theme and the IOS by its Secretary General, Prof. Z.M. Khan. He said that the Institute tried to remember those who contributed to Islamic research by organising programmes in their memory. The IOS focused more on research than criticism. Referring to research, he stated that those desirous of research were asked to present their topic of proposed research to get financial assistance from the IOS. "In case of any difficulty, we would ask

our experts to help him", he said. The IOS had completed 33 years of its existence and it had always been its endeavour to engage those who were willing to undertake research. The IOS also got them trained by its panel of experts. Besides, national and international conferences seminars, symposia and workshops were organised at regular intervals. The IOS also took help from various institutions while organising events in other towns of the country. "At the IOS, we believe in extending help to others and seeking help from other institutions and organizations", he said. The IOS had been publishing research books and translations of standard works. This became possible due to the strides made by technology. The IOS also got

Saeedur Rahman Azmi and another book titled *Alam-e-Islam Ka Bemisaal Mohaqqiq: Dr. Fuat Sezgin*, edited by Shah Ajmal Farooq Nadwi, by Maulana Mohammad Abdullah Mughesi. The proceedings of the inaugural session were conducted by the Prof. Ishtiaque Danish, finance Secretary, IOS, and a vote of thanks was proposed by Shah Ajmal Farooq Nadwi, in-charge, Urdu Section, IOS.

Business Session-I

The inaugural session was followed by the business session-I on "*Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi: Life and Personality*", chaired by Prof. Mohsin Usmani, former head, deptt. of Arabic, The EFL University, Hyderabad. The session began with the message from Maulana Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi, Rector, Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow, who could not make it to the conference on account of his ill-health, which was read out by Shah Ajmal Farooq Nadwi. His message centered on "Mohaddis-e-Jaleel, Qaid-e-Millat Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi: Ta'assurat wa Moshahadaat." Mufti Arshad Farooqi from Deoband was the first

speaker of the session, followed by Dr. Masood Ahmad Azmi, grandson of Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi, who threw light on "*Allama Azmi ki shakhsyat ke kuchh numaya pehlu.*" While Mohammad Nafees Khan Nadwi, research fellow, Daar-e-Arafaat, Raebareli, presented his paper on "*Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi: Jame kamalat shakhsiyat*", Mohammad Salahuddin, research scholar, MANUU, Hyderabad spoke on "*Ilmey Hadees mein Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi ki khidmaat-Eik tahqeeqi jayeza.*"

Business Session-II



A view of the Business Session-I on Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi: Life and Personality

surveys done for generating data on socio-economic status of deprived sections, particularly Muslims. Five regional centres of the Institute had been functioning in various towns of the country. These centres were provided inputs like funds and experts to make them self-sustaining. Usually, the Institute organised interactions and programmes on every fifteenth day.

He laid stress on taking the translation work forward. One of the highlights of the function was the release of the book titled *Dr. Mohammad Hamidullah ka Ilmi Warsa aur Uski Asri Manviyat*, edited by Prof. Mohsin Usmani, by Maulana Dr.

The second session devoted to “Evaluating the profound contributions of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi among Indian Mohaddisin”, was chaired by Prof. Mohammad Yaseen Mazhar Siddiqui, former director, Idaara Uloom-e-Islamia, Aligarh. While Prof. Mohsin Usmani discussed “Bisween sadi mein Hindustan mein khidmat-e-Hadees ka manzarnama aur Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi”, Dr. Nadeem Ashraf, asstt. professor, deptt. of Sunni Theology, AMU, Aligarh focused on “Kitabuz Zuhd ki tehqeeq-o-taleeq aur Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi”. Dr. Tamanna Mobeen Azmi, guest faculty, deptt. of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, presented the paper on “Abul Maasir Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi bahaisiyat muhaddis (Nusratul Hadees ke hawale se)”

followed by Junaid Ahmed Qasmi, teacher, Jamia Rehmani, Khanqah Munger, who spoke on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi: Ilm-e-Hadees ke bab mein imtiyazi khidmaat.” Mohammad Hammad, research scholar, deptt. of Sunni Theology, AMU, Aligarh, was the last speaker of the session who focussed on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi aur unki khidmaat-e-Hadees, tehqeeqat-o-taleefat ke tanazur mein.”

Business Session-III

This was the last session of the day with Prof. Ishtiaque Danish in the chair. Devoted to the theme “High profile of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi among ulema”, the session had Dr. Abu Sahban Ruhul Quds Nadwi, lecturer, faculty of Hadith, Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow, as its first speaker. He focused on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi key tehqeeqi asaar per eik nazar”. He was followed by Dr. Khurshed Afaq, guest faculty, deptt.

of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, who spoke on “Uloom-e-Islami mien Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi ki khidmaat aur unke afkaar ka tanqeedi wa tajziyati Muta’ala.” While Dr. Mohammad Usama, guest faculty, deptt. of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, threw light on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi ki baaz nadir tehqeeqat, Islami shakhsiyaat ke hawale se”, Md. Farooque Azam, PhD. scholar, JNU, New Delhi, touched upon “Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi aur Urdu shayari” Ms. Roohnuma Parveen, research scholar, deptt. of Islamic Studies, AMU, Aligarh, presented a paper on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi aur tasawwuf.” The last speaker of the session was Dr. Mujeeb Akhtar Nadwi, asstt. professor, deptt. of Arabic, University of Delhi,

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Tijarwi, asstt. professor, deptt. of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, who centered his talk on “Musnad Humaidi ki tahqeeq ka tajziyati mutaala”. Dr. Syed Abdur Rasheed, asstt. professor, deptt. of Islamic Studies, Aliah University, Kolkata, was the third speaker at the session who shared his views on “Makhtootat-e-Hadees ki tehqeeq mien Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi ka manhaj aur uski khusoosiyaat”. Ilyas Hashmi, research fellow, Dairatul Maarif, Hyderabad, was the last speaker, who talked on “Islami makhtootat: Muhaddis-e-kabeer Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi aur faqeehud dehr Allama Abul Wafa Afghani ki muraslat ke hawale se.”

Business Session-V

Chaired by Dr. Raziul Islam Nadwi, Secretary, Jamat-e-Islami Hind, the fifth session was devoted to “Allama Habibur Rahman’s vision of fiqh and interpretation”. Prof. Mohammad Faheem Akhtar Nadwi, deptt. of Islamic Studies, MANUU, Hyderabad, who initiated the



A view of the Business Session-II on Evaluating the profound contributions of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi

who focused on “Mohaddis-e-Kabeer Abu Ma’asir Hazrat Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi bahaisiyat shayer”.

Business Session-IV

The second day of the conference began with fourth business session, which focused on “Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi and Islamic manuscripts”. Maulana Ateeq Ahmed Qasmi Bastavi was in the chair. The first speaker of the session was Prof. Mohammad Yaseen Mazhar Siddiqui who spoke on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi ki tadveen Musannaf Abdur Razzaq”. He was followed by

discussion, spoke on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi ki fiqhi wa ijthadi Baseerat: Eik jaizah.” He was followed by Dr. Kamal Ashraf Qasmi, asstt. professor, deptt. of Sunni Theology, Aliah University, Kolkata, who discussed “Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi bahaisiyat faqeeh”. Dr. Nadeem-e-Sahar Ambareen, guest faculty, deptt. of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, focused on “Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi aur masla-e-kifaat.” Maulana Noorul Hasan Rashid Kandhalwi, director, Mufti Ilahi Bakhsh Academy, Kandhla, also spoke on the subject.

Business Session-VI

Chaired by the Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, president, Maulana Azad University, Jodhpur and professor emeritus, Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, the sixth session focused on “*Allama Habibur Rahman’s contribution in the present context.*” The talk, initiated by Dr. Ehsanullah Fahad, asstt. professor, deptt. of Sunni Theology, Women’s College, AMU, Aligarh, was focussed on “*Fitna-e-Inkaar-e-Hadees aur Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi*”. While Dr. Najmus Sahar, asstt. professor, deptt. of Islamic Studies, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, presented a paper on “*Islam mein Ustad ka maqaam wa martaba Maulana ki taleef Husn-e-Adab aur iski ahmiyat key tanazur mein.*” Dr.

Mohammad Nasir, asstt. professor, deptt. of Sunni Theology, AMU, Aligarh, spoke on “*Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi ki tasneefi khidmaat ki asri manwiyat.*” Dr. Mohammad Tahseen Zaman, guest faculty, deptt. of Islamic Studies, JMI, New Delhi, discussed on “*Maulana Habibur Rahman*

Azmi aur hujjiyat-e-hadees (Nusratul Hadees ke hawale se).” Saif ul Hadi, lecturer, Usul al-Hadith, Indian Institute of Islamic Studies, New Delhi, who talked on “An appraisal of Muhaddith-e-Kabeer Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi’s endeavors in answering modernist and orientalist scepticism of Hadith: Gleanings of Methodological principles from select academic writings”. The last speaker of the session was Shaikh Dr. Hashim al-Ahdal, former professor at Umm al-Qura University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Valedictory Session

In his valedictory address, Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, praised Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam for refreshing the memories of those scholars who contributed to the study of the Quran, Hadith and Islam by organising conferences, seminars and symposia without having regard to a particular school of thought. Referring to Azamgarh as a place where illustrious sons like Allama Shibli Noumani, Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi and Mufti Abdul Mannan were born and made it their field of work relating to Islamic learning, he said that he was fortunate to study there. Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi was rated among the top ulema of the 20th century and a great scholar of Hadith. He did not confine himself to the study of Islam and research on the Quran and

Speaking as a guest of honour, vice-president, All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Syed Jalaluddin Omari hailed the conference as refreshing the memory of Allama Abul Ma’asir Habibur Rahman Azmi. Calling the address of Prof. Momin superb, he said that Maulana Mughesi brought to light several aspects of Maulana Habibur Rahman Azami’s multi-faceted personality. Holding that the maulana had a broad vision on Hadith, and his works on it were of so high standard that dozens of doctorates could be awarded to researchers. He described the maulana as the uncrowned prince of the kingdom of knowledge of modern times. He inspired the younger generation of the ulema to go deeper into the study of Hadith. His aversion to money could

be understood in terms of the fact that he refused to accept a royalty of Rs. 16 lakh for one of the books he wrote.

Prof. Mohammad Yaseen Mazhar Siddiqui, in his speech as another guest of honour, said that the maulana was *shamsul ulema* (sun among the ulema). His work on Islamic caliphate was also significant. The relevance of his works

in today’s context lay in the application of appropriate research methodology. Commenting on the maulana’s writings on social issues of Muslims, like talaq and insurance, he said that Muslims appeared to be influenced by the Western culture. He called for distinguishing between the real Islam and the Islam practised by a *maulvi*.

Maulana Abdul Hameed Noumani, secretary general, All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat, held that a big debate on the relevance of Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi’s work in the present context was indisputable.



A view of the Business Session-III on High profile of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi among ulema

Hadith, but also served as a member of the UP state legislative assembly from 1952-1957. Prof. Wasey called for further study of his tenure as an MLA. While disavowing obsession with personality cult, he pleaded that one should be given his due.

Launching a scathing attack on casteism, he disagreed with the views held by Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in this connection. Instead, he said, the dignity of labour should be upheld. If one believed in Allah and His Prophet (PBUH), colour and geographical boundaries did not matter, he added.

Comparing the historicity of the Quran with books like Vedas, Puran and the Ramayana, he said that while the hand-written texts of the former are still available, no such record exist in the case of the latter. Expressing pleasure over the conference, he said that one could learn a lot from Maulana Azmi's works, particularly those relating to Muslim personal laws. Dr. Masood Ahmad Azami also spoke on various aspects of the Allama's personality.

In his presidential address, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, assured that the IOS would try to give a practical shape to all suggestions received at the two-day conference. He said that the idea behind such programmes was IOS bid to bring to light the scholarly legacy of great men.

Arguing that divergence of opinion should not be taken to the level of stiff opposition, he emphasised that Muslims should make difference of opinion public. Muslims should also highlight the difference of opinion on various issues at the international level from different angles. He announced that the IOS would award scholarships to researchers desirous

of doing research on Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi and enrolling themselves as Ph.D. scholars. He also offered to give financial support and other facilities to those who submitted a project to the IOS on the study of Hadith in modern context. He invited the translators to come forward and take up the translation of books published by the IOS, in 18 languages. He also announced that important voluminous books would be published in an abridged form and anyone interested in undertaking the work was welcome. He would be paid for it, he concluded.

A 7-point resolution unanimously adopted at the concluding session, was read out by Prof. Z.M. Khan. The resolution read:

1. Today, it is being strongly felt that the series of researches on eminent ulema and scholars undertaken by the IOS, should be carried on unhindered. Every possible effort should be made to give a fillip to it.
2. Work on the problems of the minorities should be taken up on a big scale in the light of the collected *fatawas* (religious decrees) of Indian ulema.
3. Complete lists and calendars based on the selected subjects of ulema and their life and contributions should be prepared.

to mobilise general opinion in favour of it.

6. Sincere efforts should be made to publish unpublished manuscripts of the works of Maulana Habibur Rahman Azmi.
7. Maulana Azmi's complete biography should be written in Arabic language in order to acquaint Arab ulema with his contribution to Islamic studies.

The conference came to a close with a vote of thanks by the vice-chairman, IOS, Prof. M. Afzal Wani.

IOS Discussion on Draft New Education Policy-2019

A discussion on the Draft National Education Policy-2019 was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies, on June 20, 2019, to seek opinion of stakeholders in order to be forwarded to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India till June 30, the last date for the receipt of suggestions. The IOS vice-chairman Prof. M. Afzal Wani, who initiated the discussion, said that the process of the new education policy began in 1915.

This was aimed at bringing about a paradigm shift by suggesting teacher-taught ratio and the development of a vision and understanding, among other things. He observed that the education policy should make provision for producing human resource according to qualification. He also suggested that a panel of experts drawn from different streams—social sciences, humanities, etc.— be constituted to make recommendations for necessary changes in the existing education policy.

India, being a diverse, pluralistic and



L-R: Shah Ajmal Farooqui, Prof. Z.M. Khan, Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam MI. Jalaluddin Omari, Prof. Mohd. Yasin Mazhar Siddiqui and Prof. M. Afzal Wani

4. Efforts should be made to present the current issues at its functions from religious and ideological point of view. The efforts of the IOS in this connection have been noteworthy. Hopefully, the Institute would continue to do this in future as well.
5. Efforts should be made to harmonise modern knowledge and religious studies on intellectual and ideological foundations, so that the latest means could be employed in research on old texts. Endeavours should also be made

peaceful society, education should define personality development and co-existence. There was a need for better utilisation of science and technology for human society. He maintained that the education policy should provide ingredients for a better society. Objectivity should be maintained to conform to international standards, he added.

In his keynote address, educationist and ex-professor, deptt. of education, JMI, Prof. Shoeb Abdullah held that the new education policy was being publicised for several years. Terming the classification of education as artificial, he said that the same policy could not be applied to primary and higher education. However, he welcomed the proposal to start schooling at the age of three years. Laying stress on the quality of education, he said that the steps to be taken to improve quality were missing from the Draft Education Policy. Explaining the new education policy, he noted that it had been divided into four parts, viz, school education, higher education, additional key focus areas and transforming education, he said that pre-primary education was a must.

He disagreed with the proposed five years of the foundational stage: 3 years of pre-primary school and grades 1,2-3 years of the preparatory (or later primary) stage: grades 6,7,8-4 years of high (or secondary stage: Grades 9,10,11,12.

According to him, talking of 8th standard was nothing because today an 8th pass could not secure the job of even a class IV employee. Attaching 8th 9th standard with 11th and 12th standard as a part of semester system

was not worthwhile. Referring to universal education, he said that it consisted of three parts-universal access, retention and quality of education, adding that without number three, the first and second were meaningless. Thus the quality of education was more important.

He raised the question over five big examinations, pointing out that due to this, it was difficult to continue school education. He said that the new education policy focused more on the outcome than on the learning process. The education policy also sought to lay stress on general education and on specialisation at the graduation level. Under these circumstances, it was difficult to collate of them. He wondered if someone was reading several subjects, how could he specialise in one subject. This would

of a teacher who completed a four-year course.

He called for a higher pay-scale for a teacher who completed the 4-year course. Or else, nobody could stop the pass-outs from being 'B' grade teachers. Under the new scheme, autonomy universities had been compromised. Universities would henceforth be forced to generate their own resources. To cap it all, a board would be in place to oversee the functioning and superintendence of the universities. It was not yet known as to who would be on the proposed board. He remarked that now no university would have its own parameters as somebody else would decide the matter. Identity of a university had thus been ignored he concluded.

Prof. Eqbal Hussain, Faculty of Law, JMI, suggested that invention-created knowledge should be given a push, adding that universities were already providing newer things. Prof. Ilyas Husain, department of educational studies, faculty of Education, JMI, echoed similar views. Convenor, Right to Education Forum, Ambrish Rai, questioned the rationale behind bringing education upto 8th standard under the RTE (Right to Education).

Co-locating of Aaganwadis with primary schools would create problems as they were not expected to give regular education. Holding that funding was the fundamental issue, he said that the education policy was guided by the prevailing political propensities. Here also the intention was clear as only 2.7 per cent of GDP was being proposed to be spent on education. He observed that if the states refused to fund the universalisation of education scheme,



L-R: Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Prof. Z.M. Khan and Prof. Shoeb Abdullah

become difficult also due to the non-availability of such colleges.

Commenting on the multi-disciplinary colleges for B.Ed., he said it must mean some discipline. If one subject was taught, then other subjects could not be on a par with the former. With regard to the proposal for vocational education, he said that a student could not attain specialisation in it. On teacher education he said that the course for teachers from one year to four years did not specify the status

it would be imprudent to put the burden on PSUS (Public Sector Undertakings).

He said that education was being centralised by appointing the National education Commission. Headed by the Prime Minister, the proposed Commission would have direct interference of the PMO. Higher education was destined to suffer as only 15,000 colleges would be allowed to function, with each college having a minimum of 5,000 students. He noted that school education was being centralised by way of opening more and more model schools.

This went against the spirit of RTE which said that new schools should be opened. It was a matter of deep concern that as many as about 1.5 lakh schools had been closed down and multinational

companies were making a beeline to come to India for opening schools. He said that India had emerged as a big market for education. This was the corporatisation of education, he insisted.

Education consultant Naaz Khair regretted that the requirement under Section 12, 1-C was not being fulfilled in about 50,000 private schools with a strength of 80 lakh students. She said that several states, including UP, had not filled the reserved quote of OBCs in admissions in schools. Even in the minority institutions, the OBC quota was not being filled. She noted that the present political dispensation wanted to discourage coaching institutions. Instead, they wanted to encourage model schools in the name of pathshalas, she said.

Qazi Ferdaus ul Islam from education faculty, JMI, welcomed the

policy and said that it was drawn from the previous one. She held that by promoting private schools, the state was shirking its responsibility towards making India educationally empowered. Responsibility devolved on government to provide necessary resources and infrastructure for educating the country.

Prof. S. Ali Mohammad Naqvi, faculty of Shia theology, AMU, pointed out that the policy should be thoroughly gone into. While suggesting that the new education policy should be looked at from the minority prism, he said that there was an ideological orientation in the centralization of education.

General Secretary, Federation of Muslim Educational Institutions of India, Jamaat Islam-i-Hind, Inamur

Maulana Abdul Hameed Noumani, observed that the new education policy was a deliberate attempt to reverse a process that intermittently continued for years by bringing Savarkar and Golwalkar into the realm of education. They were trying to foist a particular ideology on the people by re-inventing facts. History was being distorted to glorify Shivaji as an ideal. Instead of calling him a robber, they declared Mahmud of Ghazna and Babur as aggressors and plunderers. He said that the saffron ideology had gone too far to defeat Ambedkarism by creating hurdles before the SC/ST communities. Absence of resistance to activities of the saffron brigade had further emboldened them to communalise the atmosphere. Intellectuals were so frightened that they hardly reacted to ghastly incidents

that took place at regular intervals. Though there were several ideologies, the ideology of nationalism had superseded all of them. He said that under the prevailing circumstances, historical aspect of the issue should be highlighted.

President of All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat



A view of the Discussion on Draft New Education Policy-2019

Rahman, informed that the Jamaat was already seized of the matter and in this connection a meeting of 8 organisations had been called on June 23 to take stock of the situation. He described the draft policy as a tailor-made document to suit a particular ideology. He said that the government had cleverly steered clear of its responsibility to fulfill the basic need of the people. The policy was aimed at marketing education, he remarked.

General Secretary, All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat,

Navaid Hamid said that it was a matter of grave concern that 10 profit-making PSUS were being privatised. Proposal to ask the PSUS for funding educational institutions was a deft ploy to privatise school education to the detriment of poor sections who could not afford to send their wards to costly schools. He warned that Muslims would suffer most if the three-language formula was scrapped. He appealed to the Ministry of Human Resource Development to extend the last date for suggestions on the draft education policy beyond June 30 next

so that the stakeholders could discuss the issue more deeply.

The chairman IOS Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam remarked that the Institute had already published a book on saffronisation of education during the A.B. Vajpayee regime. Commenting on the proposed education policy he said that it was a move to implement the saffron agenda through education. If the policy was enforced in its present form, the minorities would be the worst sufferers. He urged all stakeholders to take the policy seriously and discuss it among themselves. He said that after receiving the suggestions and inputs from the participants, a three-member committee would be formed to go into them and prepare a memorandum to be forwarded to the HRD ministry.

Secretary General IOS Prof. Z.M. Khan, who presided over the meet, described the document as highly communal. If the provisions of the new policy were implemented, not only Muslims, but also we, the citizens, would suffer. Every attempt was now being made to dump the national credo "unity in diversity." This credo had shaped our thought processes, which was at the heart of India's heterogeneity. "Live and let others live" had been India's age-old tradition. Though the forces of doom had got empowered, they might not succeed in their designs to thrust a particular ideology on the people. Their manpower and manoeuvres would not hold them for long. He called for figuring out characteristics of India as a nation.

Earlier, the discussion began with the recitation of a verse from the Quran along with its Urdu rendering by Hafiz Athar Husain Nadwi. The

discussion ended with Prof. Afzal Wani extending a vote of thanks. The discussion attracted several educators, intellectuals, university teachers, NGOs, etc.

IOS Lecture on Western Epistemological Bias

A lecture on "Western Epistemological Bias" with particular reference to the book- *Epistemological Bias in the Physical and Social Sciences*, edited by Prof. Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri, and published by the Institute of Objective Studies was delivered at its conference room on April 27, 2019.

Prof. Arshi Khan, department of political science, AMU, Aligarh who delivered the lecture, held that the book under review was first published by the International Institute of Islamic

questioned. Singular and unilateral knowledge was also under question. Referring to Prof. Abdelwahab Elmessiri, he said that Elmessiri learnt about the identity of knowledge and culture, and propounded the theory of justice, which was later known as the theory of pluralism.

The paradigm he developed says "it is impossible for you to be biased". In this regard, he termed the western paradigms as "imaginary constructs". According to him, the reality was one, timeless, united and true. Western epistemologies kept on changing and material advancement of society was part of it. It was difficult to understand Western epistemology because of its being materialistic and excluding non-materialistic things like culture. Besides, it was egoistic, and like

Brahminism preferred one over the other.

He said that Prof. Elmessiri, unlike Western theorists, never used the word God. Instead, he used "Almighty" for the Creator of the Universe. Elmessiri used taqwa, which was the reference point for Arabs. He talked of domestic culture, values, non-domestic culture, universal culture etc.



L-R: Prof. Arshi Khan, Prof. Z.M. Khan and Dr. M. Manzoor Alam

Thought (IIT). The purpose of the book was to discover bias.

The book also sought to counter the materialistic paradigms that resulted from colonisation and thus, could not be described as universal. He also said that these paradigms were based on the value system of the European continent. Calling for differentiation between the particular and the universal, he noted that even the West was now questioning the reason for their epistemological paradigms and the purpose of knowledge was being

Commenting on the internationalisation of cultural paradigms, Prof. Arshi Khan warned that globalisation was dangerous not only for the economy, but also for culture and identity, adding that values, ethics and morality were more important for humanity.

Muslims had not jettisoned their own paradigms which, among other things, included individuality of the human being. They created paradigms that were inclusive of their culture and paradigm was monotheistic. Referring to the theory of flux, he said that the

Western paradigm did not look at absolute truth, but at relative truth. He observed that Elmessiri always held the view that the Western epistemology could not be universal.

The chairman, IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, advised the younger generation of educated Muslims to read the works of the noted Islamic scholar Prof. Fuat Sezgin, who died recently. His 18-volume work, *Contribution of Muslims to Science*, was acclaimed worldwide. He informed that with a view to giving a befitting tribute to him, the IOS had planned to hold a conference on him sometime this year. He also suggested reading of Sir Jack Goody's book *The Theft of History* which laid bare the Western bid to reconstruct the works of Orientalists. Laying stress on the need for studying the contribution of Muslims to social sciences, he said that Ibne Khaldun was treated as father of social sciences in Europe. The IOS had the privilege to be the first institution of its kind to publish a book on him. He questioned the audience if they had studied any of the books published by the Institute.

It was not machines, but the ideas taken from books that ruled the world. He urged scholars to read more and more books for spreading knowledge that knew no boundaries. He also called for developing a new university of paradigms. The moot question today was how to promote or improve the dignity of humanity at large. This included Muslims as well.

Voicing concern over the theft of the contribution of Muslims in various fields over the centuries, he emphasised the need for going deeper into knowledge as it generated the capability of questioning. Shallow knowledge provoked emotional response whereas deeper knowledge raised the level of questioning, he added.

Secretary General, IOS, Prof. Z.M. Khan, in his presidential remarks, described the works of Islamic scholars as part of the tradition to

counter colonization, which was the worst part of history. He impressed upon scholars to create new paradigms without ego and bias. According to him, bias indicated that one had a pre-judged notion. Muslims lagged behind the West in pursuit of knowledge was clear from the fact that the Muslims did not make any significant contribution to knowledge during the last 200 years. This necessitated opening of new institutions that could give new paradigms. Calling upon Muslims to create an independent paradigm of enquiry, he urged them to come forward and make it a mission. Earlier, the event began with the recitation of a Quranic verse by Hafiz Athar Husain Nadwi. Shah Ajmal Farooq Nadwi introduced the subject and conducted the proceedings.

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It is clear, therefore, that on the fundamental basis of division of territory between the two States, C. Rajagopalachari defined 'absolute majority' in its legal sense, whereas Gandhi gave it a special meaning, viz., "a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province". This meant a Muslim majority of about 70% or more in the area to be demarcated. If Rajmohan Gandhi had studied the population statistics (given in the Booklet) of the N.W. Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab and Bengal, he would have found, for example, that applying Gandhi's definition of an absolute majority, the Lahore district in which Muslims constituted 60.69% of the population, and the Sialkot district in which Muslims constituted 62.10%. (ibid. p. 101) of the population would have had to be assigned to India, and not to Pakistan. On Rajagopalachari's definition of absolute majority they would have had to be assigned to Pakistan, The Lahore and the Sialkot districts formed part of Pakistan on partition.

Before the talks started, Gandhi had said that "an ocean separated you (Jinnah) and me, in outlook." (ibid. p.

6) When the talks ended that ocean separated them still. Gandhi made his opposition to an *independent sovereign State* of Pakistan clear beyond doubt in a press conference on 28 September, 1944. Gandhi said: "But if it means an utterly independent sovereign State so that there is to be nothing in common between the two (States) I hold it is an impossible proposition. *That means war to the knife...*" (ibid. p. 45 italics supplied) to which Jinnah replied, "Here is an apostle and a devotee of non-violence threatening us with a fight to the knife..." (ibid. p. 52). The above analysis of the documents in the Booklet on Gandhi-Jinnah Talks establishes only one conclusion—that Gandhi did not offer to Jinnah a sovereign State of Pakistan which Jinnah obtained on partition. To have referred to Gandhi's "offer" during his talks with Jinnah would have been a distracting irrelevance in *Legend and Reality*, the central theme of which is the transfer of power from British to Indian hands. However, if Gandhi had offered to Jinnah the same, or practically the same, sovereign State of Pakistan which Jinnah got on partition, I would have referred to Gandhi's offer, and would have said that Jinnah and the Muslim League must bear the blame for the bestial massacres and the cruel mass migrations which preceded and followed Partition on 15 August, 1947. In connection with the "offer" which Gandhi made to Jinnah, I have analysed the documentary evidence relating to the Gandhi-Jinnah Talks in some detail. I have done so because Rajamohan Gandhi's criticism about my "omission" to mention that "offer" in *Legend and Reality*, and his violent attack on Maulana Azad in his recent booklet *India wins Errors*, raise serious doubts about his capacity to sift documentary, and even more, oral evidence, in pursuit of what he believes to be the truth.

From Partition of India: Legend and Reality by H.M. Seervai, pp. xxix-xxxii

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RNI NO. 59369/94

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NEW DELHI 110025