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# THE SIMPLE TRUTH MONTHLY

MARCH, 2025  
RAMAZANUL MUBARAK, 1446 A.H.

## WATER AND GLOBALISATION

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## HOW NOT TO INVENT LIES

“We sent Abraham and he said to his people; Serve Allah and fear Him. This is better for you if you only knew. Those that you worship instead of Allah are merely idols, and you are simply inventing lies (about them). Indeed those whom you worship beside Allah have no power to provide you with any sustenance. So seek your sustenance from Allah and serve only Him and give thanks to Him alone. It is Him that you will be sent back”

(Al Quran; 29:16-17)

# The SIMPLE TRUTH

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Editorial:

## WATER CONSERVATION

The Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), as a matter of principle, enjoin the believers not to be extravagant. The Quran categorically terms those who tend to indulge in extravagance as brothers of Satan.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) not only enjoined his followers to conserve water but also did so in his practical life. His practice of water conservation is an ideal for the suffering humanity today when we are facing serious water crises at the global level. He used to take a bath with one Sa'a of water viz just 2.03 litres of water. Abu Jafar relates: "While my father was with Jabir Bin Abdullah, some people asked him about taking a bath. He replied. A Sa'a of water is sufficient for you. 'One of them said. A Sa'a is not sufficient for me. Jabir said: "A Sa'a was sufficient for one who had more hair than you and was better than you. (He was referring to the Holy Prophet).

Ibn Qayyim writes that the Holy

Prophet (S.A.W.) used to take an ablution with a very little amount of water, and warn his followers against wasting water.

Today when the world is experiencing lopsided growth of science and technology and people are trying their level best to raise their standard of life even of the cost of religiosity, spirituality, and morality, et.al, many people will not agree to this level of water conservation. They are in fact hostile to any kind of restraint in life. They may wonder whether this level of water conservation can be translate into practice in this age of scientific and technological advancement. But this is the thinking of western lifestyle. In today's world, this level of water conservation practiced by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has become a necessity.

A.H. Ashraf

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## WHY YOU TURN AWAY FROM HIM?

*“Your Lord is He who drives your vessels across the seas that you may seek of His bounty. He is ever merciful towards you. When a calamity befalls you on the sea, all those whom you invoke forsake you except Him. But when He delivers you safely to the shore you turn away from Him, for man is indeed thankless”. (Surah Bani Israil; 17:66:67)*

Satan misleads man so as to prove that the latter does not deserve the exalted status which God has conferred upon him. The only way for man to defeat Satan’s design is to remain firm in obedience to God, to turn to Him for guidance and help, and to place reliance on Him alone. Any other course means that man will end up falling into Satan’s trap.

From all this is quite obvious that those who reject it is quite obvious and persist in their polytheistic beliefs. It is in this context that the doctrine of

monotheism is here reinforced and that of polytheism repudiated.

God has enabled man to make seagoing vessels such that he can obtain the economic, cultural, scientific and intellectual benefits which accrue from such voyages.

This proves that man’s true nature has an inherent consciousness of the only One True God. In the very depths of his heart, man is well aware that God has the power to cause benefit or harm. This is why man turns to the One True God alone whenever he is in serious crises and when he desperately needs effective support.

It is well known that the power enjoyed by the human race on earth has not been granted by any jinn or angel, nor by any heavenly body, saint or Prophet. Beyond doubt, all the power that has been granted to man is from God and is by way of a special favor.

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Pearls from the Holy Prophet:

## CONCEALMENT OF FAULT

*“Abu Huraira reported Allah’s Apostle (S.A.W.) as saying: The servant (who conceals) the faults of others in this world, Allah would conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection”. (Saheeh Muslim)*

The exhortation mentioned in this tradition is very valuable and precious for the sustenance of a society and to save it from erosion. Actually, all Muslims are brothers and sisters. So one should not unearth and publicise the faults and shortcomings of one brother or sister and should not assassinate his character and sully his reputation in the society. These measures may be helpful in establishing peace and tranquility in a society and can, pave the way for the betterment of the sinner. And it may become the cause of one’s salvation as is stated in the tradition.

It does also not mean that one should provide a covering to all the faults of all persons and should not let them be known to anyone at

any cost. In case there is a genuine necessity one should readily disclose them and if one hesitates in doing so one would be answerable and accountable for it on the Day of Resurrection. For example, if a person has committed any cognizable offence, and another person knows it, he should inform the authorities about that. If a ruler or a person in power commits evil deeds, it should be published, as concealment of these leads to the ruin of the Ummah. As for matrimonial proposals, it is the duty of the person whose counsel has been sought for to give the correct information. But it is crystal clear that there should not prevail ill talking about a person in his absence. A Muslim, is brother of a Muslim so he deserves his help, co-operation and assistance, not contempt, disclaim, mockery and backbiting.

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Fatawa:

## A YOUNG MAN WORSHIPS ALLAH BUT COMMITS MISDOINGS TOO

By. Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah B. Baz  
Translation by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

**Question:** *A young man observes all the basic tenets of Islam in the spirit as they have been legislated by Allah, but, he also commits certain misdoings. What are the Islamic injunctions about such a man?*

**Answer:** The door of Tawbah is open and shall remain so till the sun rises from the West. Whether an infidel or a sinner, it is necessary for each one to perform Tawbah with a true heart and such a manner that he be ashamed at his previous infidelities and misdoings, abandons such acts out of fear of Allah and determines faithfully not to commit the same thing again. When a subject of Allah performs Tawbah in this manners, Allah forgives all his previous sins.

As Allah, the Most High, said:

*“And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful. (Surah An Noor: 31)”*

*Again Allah, the Most High said: (And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My*

*Oneness) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death) Surah Al Tauha; 82)*

The Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: “Embracing Islam (sincerely) burns all his past sins and Tawbah eradicates his previous deadly sins”.

The condition of perfect Tawbah is to return the wealth has taken to its right owner or let the offended pardon the offender. The Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said: “Whoso has done a wrong affecting his brothers honour or anything else, let him ask his forgiveness, therefore, he will have neither silver or gold coin. If he has got good deeds, the like amount of his wrong doing will be taken from him, and if he has got no good deeds, they will be taken from the bad deeds of other and laid on him”. (The tradition is reported by Imam Bukhari). There are numerous verses and traditions regarding this topic.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS AYAH (WA-INMINKUM-ILLA WAREDUHA)...**(Cong. On page.9)**

From Darkness to Light:

# EAGERNESS FOR TRUTH LED ME TO ISLAM

By. David Pudarelli

I came to Islam pretty much on my own. I was born and raised Roman Catholic, but I always had a deep fascination with the spiritualities of other cultures.

My journey started when I desired to have a relationship with my Creator. I wanted to find my spirituality, and not the one I was born with. I spent time in the Catholic religious order known as the Franciscans. I had many friends and enjoyed prayer times, but it just seem of to be relaxed in faith, and there was, in my opinion, too much arrogance and hypocrisy.

When I returned from the order into Secular living, I once again was searching for my way to reach God. One night I was watching the news on television, and of course they were continuing their one sided half-truth reports on Muslims

(always in a negative light instead of balancing it by showing the positive side as well) with images of violence and terrorism.

I decided long ago that the news media has no morals whatsoever and will trash anyone for that “juicy story”, and I pretty much refused to believe anything they said, I decidea to research Islam for myself and draw my own conclusions.

What I found paled all the negative images that the Satanic media spewed forth, I found a religion deep in love and spiritual truth, and constant God mindfulness. What may be fanaticism to one person may be devotion to another. I picked up a Small pakerback Quran and began devouring everything I wonder and mercy of Allah, I found the



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fascination growing every day... it was all I could think about. No other religion including Catholicism impacted me in such a powerful way.... I actually found myself in God-awareness 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.... Each time I went to my five daily prayers, I went with anticipation.... Finally. What I have been searching for all of my life.

I finally got enough courage to go to a mosque and profess the *Shahadah* before my Muslim brothers and sisters. I am now a practicing Muslim and I thank Allah for leading me to this place. *Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah wa ashhudu anna Muhammadarrasool Allah*. This means; I believe in the Oneness and totalness of Allah and that Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the chosen Prophet of Allah. I now also accept Jesus as no longer equal with Allah, but sent as Muhammad was Sent to bring all of mankind to submission to the will of Allah!

May all of mankind find the light and truth of Allah.

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**(From Page No. 7)**

**Question:** *I have read these verses in Surah Maryam:*

I want to know the meaning of this verse and specially of the word. "WAROOD" because I have read Hafiz bin Rajab Hanbalee's *Al-Takhweef minan Nar* in which he says there is some difference of opinion among "Aimma" in the exegesis of "warood" So, does it mean "entering into "Jahannam" i.e all of believers and in infidels will enter into Jahannam and therefore Allah, the Most High, will oust the believers from Jahannam? Or does it means "crossing over the bridges of Sirat "which will be like the edge of a sword whereon one group shall pass on with the speed of lightening, second one with the speed of winds, third one with the speed of a horse, forth one with the speed of a camel and rest of them with the speed of animals, whereas angels shall be proclaiming. "Pease! O our Lord! Peased, "When these people shall be passing on?

**Answer:** It is proven by sound traditions of the Holy Apostle that "Warood" means crossing over the bridge of Sirat which will be hanging over jahannam. May Allah shelter us from as well as all Muslims in His refuge. People will be passing over it according to the worth of their activities as it is narrated in many traditions.

# RIGHTS OF MINORITIES IN A SECULAR STATE: THE INDIAN SITUATION

Dr. M. Rafat

The Constitution of India was framed on the basis of the ideas evolved during the freedom struggle. Though all sections of the Indian people participated in the freedom movement, it is a fact that there were various shades of opinion among them on political questions. It was the Indian National Congress particularly the mainstream section of the Congress that emerged the key player in the freedom struggle. Consequently, the Congress ideology became the ruling ideology of Independent India. The same ideology became the basis of the Constitution. The three core ideas constituting the Congress ideology were secularism, democracy and nationalism.

## **COLONIAL IMPACT:**

Among the leaders of the freedom movement, many were educated in the west. A significant number among them were trained in law and became practising lawyers. They were familiar with the western political and legal notions and were influenced by the

major ideological trends present in the western world at that time. Since the west enjoyed political, technological and military supremacy, its ideas gained and added respect in the colonised minds. It would be fair to say that through the freedom struggle was directed against the colonial rulers, it was not against the colonial ideas. Indeed, the exact opposite was the case. The leaders of the freedom struggle had wholeheartedly embraced the western political thinking and wanted to develop the post-Independence free Indian State on the basis of the western political nations. Their aim was to build political institutions similar to the ones existing in the west.

## **SECULARISM:**

Secularism was one core idea. The ideal of secularism was to run the public affairs without reference to religion, purely on the basis of rational considerations. This did not necessarily imply disrespect towards religion. The actual

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purpose was to separate State and public affairs from religion or in other words to lay down boundaries within which religion might be allowed to operate; outside such boundaries, however, its influence must cease. Indeed there were people in the Congress who in addition to the secular State ultimately wanted a “secularised” society as well. Some utterances of Nehru can be given this interpretation. But the dominate view in the Congress was not anti-religious. It simply wanted religion to remain continued within the boundaries laid down for it, by the secular State.

The other core idea was democracy. In principle, it implies unlimited sovereignty of the people. However it was tacitly understood in India that the people would exercise this sovereignty in such that the basic ideological framework of the Constitution is not altered. This tacit understanding can be seen in the political debates of today as well; and is brought into sharper focus, whenever a suggestion is mooted from some quarters, to modify the Constitution in a basic way or to redraft it.

#### **NATIONALISM:**

The third core idea was “nationalism”. The Indian leaders were aware of the ground reality

the India consisted of a large variety of religious, cultural, linguistic and ethnic groups. They wanted to evolve, through political and legal measures and through planned use of the educational system, a “culturally coherent nation” in India. The objective was to evolve a new “national” identity which might “absorb” within in the various religious and linguistic identities. This objective has been recognised in a recent Supreme Court judgement. The court on August 10, 2005 said that the National Commission for Minorities should suggest “way and means to help create social conditions where the list of notified minorities is gradually reduced and done away with altogether.” (*The Indian Express*, August 11, 2005).

The above quoted report also mentions the remarks of the three-member bench of the Supreme Court. The bench consisted of the Chief Justice R.C. Lahoti and two other judges Justice DM Dharmadhikari and Justice PK Balasubramanyan. The bench said among its remarks, ‘The objective of a democratic society ought to be to eliminate majority and minority...’ (op. Cit)

The report on the *Deccan Herald* website is more explicit. According to it, the bench of the Supreme Court said: ‘The Minority

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Commissions set up by the Centre and the State Governments should suggest ways and means to help create social conditions, in which the list of notified minorities is gradually shortened and, then, done away with altogether. These commissions were set up to maintain the integrity and unity of India by gradually eliminating the minority and majority classes. These panels should keep working in the right direction with the constitutional perspective, principle and ideals in views.’ (*Deccan Herald*, August 10, 2005)

#### **COMMUNITY IDENTITIES:**

At this point, the relevance of the Islamic view can be mentioned. According to the Islamic worldview, all human beings are one brotherhood. The boundaries of nations among them merely reflect the existing administrative arrangements and do not enjoy any permanent sanctity. On the other hand all human beings, irrespective of the country they happen to reside in, have the basic right to practise their religion as individuals and also as communities. Hence the collective identity of a community based on religion, is to be respected, according to the Islamic view. No attempts should be made by the ruling State to dilute or destroy the independent identity of a religious

community.

In contrast to the Islamic attitude, the secular State regards the separate identity of religious communities as undesirable, in principle. It wants to do away with these identities, at some point in the future. Comparing the two attitudes, one may clearly see that the Islamic approach is reasonable, human and rational and is in consonance with the basic human right of religious freedom. Indeed one may ask the crucial questions, why does the secular State want to do away with the separate identities of the religious communities? If these identities continue to survive, how will it affect the security and integrity of the State? If people allow various religions and live as law abiding citizens, while maintaining their religious identities, why is this undesirable?

#### **COMMUNITY RIGHTS:**

In India, the debate on human rights has focussed attention on the rights of individuals; the rights of communities have not received the attention they deserve. However, the global debate has matured to some extent and talk has begun of the human rights of cultural entities, in an addition to the rights of individuals. It is now being recognised that parents have the right... (**Cont on page No. 17**)

# HOW ISLAM SAFEGUARDS RIGHTS OF DALITS

JamilFarooque Presents Islamic Solution of Dalit Problems

Islam is an egalitarian system that regulates and guides all aspects of human life. It is based on equity and justice and tries to maintain human dignity at all levels and in every sphere. At the very outset Islam condemns division of human beings into high and low, superior and inferior, privileged and unprivileged groups. Islam treats all human beings equal as they are the creatures of Allah the Lord of the universe and the progeny of the same father and mother. The Prophet said: "All of mankind is (like) the family of God. The dearest among them in the sight of God is the one who is the most helpful to His family (mankind)". All persons, rich and poor, king and pauper stand together shoulder to shoulder for prayers. Islam tries to unite the entire humanity into one ideological community, which is dedicated and committed to the Divine order and tries to establish it on the earth. Thus, Islam roots out the source of the emergence of inequality in general and of dalits in particular in society. There is no

possibility of the emergence of a group, which may be characterised as dalit or may be subject to such condemnation in an Islamic society. The Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, categorically instructs people not to make any derogatory remark to other or consider them inferior because they are brethren and have to respect one another. In an Islamic set-up it is the duty of society in general and of the government in particular to maintain and safeguard the dignity and honour of individuals and groups. If these organisations fail to perform their duties they have to face punishment from the Lord Almighty.

Poverty, backwardness and social disability are not the result of the past life of individuals. They are also not considered hereditary in Islam. As such they do not attach any stigma to the incumbent. They are the products of unjust system and inefficient planning as well as of human nature of grabbing all privileges and denying them to others. They are the social problems, adequate

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planning proper measures, mutual help and developing a distinct attitude among the people. Islam sets up a system where everyone has right to live, grow and survive according to his/her own choice. In this process no one has any superior right and no one is permitted to suppress and exploit others for his/her own sake or interest. It is a sin for which he/she will be accountable before the Lord. Instead, it is the duty of each individual to take care of the needs of others and extend all possible material and spiritual help to them to live adequately and survive meaningfully. A person earn merit and award by doing this act. In this way Islam creates an environment based on harmony, peace and tranquility where humans through love, sympathy, mutual understanding and help meaningfully interact with one another, materialise the purpose for which they are created and perform their role on earth.

Islam by its ideological bases removes the conditions that create groups like *dalits* in a society. It is against its basic principles and as such it never allows such conditions that deprive individuals or groups of individuals from their basic right of existence and development. However, if there exists a group which is poor,

downtrodden, undeveloped or backward, Islam guides, helps and brings it to the mainstream through three sub-systems: social, economic and political.

Social system provides adequate and sound guidelines according to which one has to live in this world along with other fellow human beings. The problem is to determine the nature and purpose of human operation in this world. How one has to interact with animate and inanimate objects and establish relation with them? Generally most of us are interested and busy in meeting biological needs. Humans are so much engaged in this act that they consider it the sole purpose of life and want to attain as much material gain and comfort as possible even at the cost of others. In this attempt they forget their basic duties as human beings and often go wild. They do not hesitate even to shed the blood of their own brethren, deny them their basic rights and make their lives miserable. The result is the division of society into privileged and unprivileged sections or groups. The privileged one manoeuvres the entire situation in its favour, grabs all power and privileges and subjugates the other. The one becomes more and more powerful and the other weaker and weaker

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day by day, and reaches the lowest ebb of society. Islam stops this process and impresses upon human beings that the satisfaction of human needs is not the purpose of human life but is the means to attain the most noble and sublime purpose that is to lead life according to the guidance of Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe as well as to establish His order on the earth. Grabbing power and privileges cannot give one contentment and peace of mind because there is no limit of these substances, the more one has the more one wants and ultimately develops lust and greed. Moreover, the excess of these things corrupts a person and damages his human quality. Islam keeps a tight rein on human desires and ambitions and directs human beings to lead a righteous, virtuous and moral life. Humans have to give the same right of existence to others as they enjoy themselves. They have right to live but at the same time should also let others live.

Human relation in Islam is not based on 'give-and-take' principle. It is based on the relation of human with the Creator. A human being has to establish relation with others not to get one's own pleasure or to satisfy one's ego or to get some kind of benefit or advantage but only to seek the

pleasure of Allah, which is the most auspicious act. This principle determines the entire gamut of human relations and actions in this world. Islam encourages human to live in peace and harmony, join together and cooperate with each other in good faith and with goodwill to follow the Divine guidance and implement it on the earth. The social life that emerges through this process is based on the fear of Allah and thus, full of love, sympathy and understanding. It is devoid of suppression, exploitation and oppression. There is no room for discrimination. Humankind is a large family where all have to struggle jointly to fulfill the purpose of their creation.

Islam is not a religion restricted only to certain acts of worship or performance of certain rituals. It is a comprehensive system encompassing all aspects of human existence. It is a way of life and tells us how one has to live and make one's stay more beneficial and comfortable in this world. It lays down guidelines in whose light one has to earn subsistence, perform economic activities and initiate economic transactions. Human beings have to generate means of subsistence within a particular framework. Economic activities are not determined by the availability of goods and the nature of

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demands with a view to earning maximum profit but by the benefit and welfare of people and society at large. As such no one is allowed to extract undue advantage and benefit from the critical situation as well as from the weakness and helplessness of others. Hoarding and unnecessary rise prices are condemnable acts. Economic transactions should be made in the larger interest of society and in a judicious way. Proper wages should be given to the workers, preferably immediately after the end of the work. Those who have enough resources should take care of the needs of others and extend all possible help to them. Before taking meal one has to provide it to neighbour if he/she is hungry. These principles stop economic exploitation and enable weaker sections to share the joy and privileges of life with others. Further, the institution of *zakat* checks the hoarding of wealth and creates a proper avenue to help the needy. Moreover, these provisions help to remove poverty voluntarily.

Most of the problems relating to the low status of people are due to the unequal treatment of the government, which, by and large, tilts towards its constituent elements and serves their interest in one or the other way. The government neglects those who are unable to play a determinant role

in its formation. The government does not pay much attention towards the progress and development of such groups. Sometimes the government intentionally formulates such policies as do not permit such groups to change their condition and achieve high status. In the political structure of Islam power rests with Allah. Humans are only representatives who have to act on His behalf. They have to execute His will and administer the affairs of the state according to His laws. Thus no question of domination of a group arises. Those who are in charge of the administration face wrath of Allah if they fail to discharge their duties, or do injustice and discriminate people on any ground. In Islamic system sovereignty lies in God and not in state or in people. God in Islam is not a parochial or racial deity but the Lord of the universe and Master and Saviour of all mankind. He does not want that persons who execute His laws deprive any section of its basic rights.

It is the foremost duty of the state in Islam to take care of the people and cater to their needs. The state provides social security to its citizens irrespective of caste, creed and color. Caliph Umar used to go round the city to know the welfare of the citizens, and at the time of need supply the necessary



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materials. The protection of life and property as well as the welfare of citizens falls under basic responsibilities of the state. The preponderance of Islamic law assures the safety and welfare of citizens including minorities and minimizes the possibility of suppression, repression, exploitation, discrimination and injustice. It is evident from the annals of history that caliphs and administrators fully safeguarded even the minorities during their reign. Khalid ibn Walid during the caliphate of Abu Bakr assured Christian population that no harm would be done to the churches and cathedrals and granted them full religious freedom to practise their religion particularly ringing of church bells. Similarly Amr ibn al-Aa's during the caliphate of Umar allowed Christians to possess all properties of churches and use them as they liked. The government in Islam is the government of Allah, which, cutting across all human barriers, assures over all development and welfare of humankind in this world and in the hereafter. The fact is that there is no concept of dalit in Islam as all human beings are the creatures of Allah and deserve His benevolence and bounties.

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**(From Page No. 12)**

..... to provide education for their children, according to their religious and cultural precepts. Similarly, the rights of a community to establish all necessary socio-cultural institutions, required for the full expression of its community life, should be recognised. A community should be permitted to have its own educational system as well as its own dispute resolution mechanism, applicable to the community members, in all matters of civil law. The rights of a community should be given as much regard, respect and sanctity as is given to the individual rights.

**EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS:**

Under the present constitutional provisions, the right to establish, manage and run their own educational institutions is given only to the "minorities". There is no harm if this right is given to all communities irrespective of whether they are regarded as a "minority" or not. This would be a good solution to the problem that more and more sections of the people may aspire to be recognised as minorities to get educational rights. They may simply be recognised as a "community" and given all the rights that a community should enjoy. In an erstwhile "sect" of a "community" wishes to be regarded as a separate community, it should be allowed to do so. It should not be compelled to accept the status of a sect of a community to which it does not want to belong!

Feature:

# WATER AND GLOBALISATION

By. Dr. Fatima Shahnaz

On April 7, this year, this United Nations humanitarian Chief Jan Egeland appealed for \$426 million to provide help for the worst drought crises afflicting Africa. At least 7.5 million people are suffering from Somalia to Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Djibouti, Livestock is dying, and human lives are in grave jeopardy with 40 percent of the region's population under-nourished, thousands more dead of hunger and related ailments. But there are sinister economic overtones to this war of haves and have-nots as the debate is "globalised" between affluent nations and the developing sector as each "passes the buck," shedding responsibility for aid.

This grim scenario is merely of the macro level of world governments. The harsh realities at the grassroots level in drought-afflicted areas symptomatic of an even uglier situation where the global water crises has become a pawn in the "commodities wars" between corporate speculations, profiteers, investors, inter-state governments and the neoliberal marketers of privatization of the

world's direly needed resources. The Africanisation process is not exclusively confined in the dark continent. Kjeli Magna Bondevik, a former Norwegian prime minister and the UN special envoy for the Horn of African has sent out an appeal to Arab nations that, he claims, have benefited from soaring oil prices to help millions suffering from prolonged drought in Africa as most aid has allegedly come from Europe. At feeding centers and camps for displaced people he visited accompanied by militias armed with assault rifles, Bondevik Commented; "Countries in the Arab world could do a lot more. Some countries bilaterally, but they do not join the multilateral efforts." Rain in the region was "too little to avoid the crises, but with proper aid it is still possible to avoid a catastrophe, he said "Who will pick up the tab for the world's drought, affected areas"? has now become a universal litany, with central governments casting the responsibility on state administrations, the private sector, MNCs (multi-national corporations), NGOs or

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international agencies like the IMF (International Monetary Fund) whose recipe for disaster seems bankruptcy. Developing countries afflicted with dire poverty (including India and Pakistan, have been criticized for their bloated defence budgets and neglect of the water crisis. In Africa, Eritrea's meager resources are spent on border security due to the war with neighbouring Ethiopia. It is a tragedy they use so much on military resources," according to Bondevil. In Somalia, efforts to deal with drought failed as there was no effective central government for 15 years, although the prime minister of this wartorn country declared that his government was now making efforts to patch up internal differences to work toward reconstruction.

Meanwhile, India faces its own water-challenge with drought areas and an agricultural crises extending from Rajasthan to Gujrat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The recent controversy over the displaced population at the Narmada Dam project is merely one tip of the iceberg. The inter-state debate runs the gamut between federal and state government, with government at all levels accused of failing to invest in adequate infrastructures to cope

with the water shortage and farming water resources to corporate interests. Farmer suicides in India have reached an all time high exceeding 400 in Vidharba alone in May. Last year (October), a new government promised the price of cotton would be Rs. 2700 a quintal, but this fell to a thousand less Rs 1700. The Journalist, P. Sainath, points to the root of the national crises:

"The damage is not only in Vidharba but across the land. Why is the Indian State doing this to its formers. Isn't farming, after all, the biggest private sector in India? Ruthlessly, each policy, every budget moves us further towards a corporate take-over of agriculture. Large companies were amongst the top gainers from distress Sales of cotton in Vidharba this session. The small private owners called farmers must be sacrificed at the alter of big corporate profit. The clearest admission of this came in the Mckinsey authored Vison 2020 of Chandrababu Naidu to Andhra Pradesh. It set out the removal of millions of people from the land as one of its objectives. Successive governments at the Centre and in many States seem to have latched on to that vision with much zeal. In some ways, the present united progressive Allience takes up where Mr. Naidu Left off.

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A ten-year plan initiated by former prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's government to interlink India's major rivers, the Ganges and Brahmaputra, to channel water to drought areas, has also hit road blocks, raising hackles in diverse sectors and extraneous forces including the governments of Bangladesh and Nepal. Widening the Ganges to bring surplus water from the Brahmaputra river basin would necessitate digging canals through Bangladesh, which the Dhaka government rejected in the 1980s; and the Kathmandu government and Nepali communist parties opposed building water storage facilities in Nepal Himalayas to facilitate water supply to the Ganges. In 2002, C. Rammanohar Reddy did a reality-check against river linkage raising budgetary concern comparing the consensus on river linkage to the dissent over the Pokhran II under tests. A large institutional consensus has developed in support of an agenda that could turn out to be only a little less dangerous than the acquisition of nuclear weapons; the grandiose proposal to link the rivers of India with each other," he wrote; History will not forgive us if we do not take a decision after a careful examination of the costs and benefits of linking rivers. Seeing these "gigantic proposals" as

a favorite of the powerful," he suggests, "A once in a century project like a linking of India's rivers satisfies, grandiose aspirations, and it will be too much to expect the task force to put this proposal under the microscope". The contentious issues in the project are "the very inter-state disputes over water that have breathed fresh air into the linking proposal stand with the way of its execution. If water is to be moved from the Mahanadi to the Godavari and then to the Cauvery basin, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh must agree to the transfers. But neither state agrees that there is surplus in the two rivers, so how then can there be any sharing of water? More generally, the states and regions within a state are loath to share water with one another. Incomplete projects have already consumed huge budgets in the irrigation sector and could take Rs 180000 crore over the next 10 years. While Parliament declared that linking of rivers is only a part of the solution to flood, drought and drinking water problems, the solution lies in a conjunctive, holistic and integrated water management," the political establishment" is prepared to invest the country's energies and finances in one single project," Reddy concludes.

## TIPS ON HELPING OUR CHILDREN RESPECT THE MASJID

By BushraZaibak

When my daughter was about a year and a half, I dared to venture to the masjid for Taraweeh one night. I had been trying to stay away from the masjid when she was younger because she was harder to control and I knew she would be disruptive.

Although she was still young at one and a half, I thought she was ready. She knew not to speak to us when we were making Salah and always waited for the second tasleem to talk, whine and even cry. She absolutely love to take out her miniature salah rug and pray along with us at home.

I chose to try this on a weekday, since there would be less people but my brilliant plan went wrong. After the first takbir, she looked at me, smiled and stood beside me. At the end of Surah of Al-Fatiha, she let out a roaring "AMEEN". When the Salah was over, I told her what a great job she did and gave her a big hug. I was so happy that after two years of pregnancy and motherhood, I could finally come back to the masjid.

Just as I stood up to make the Sunnah Salah, a woman approached me and told me that bringing children to the masjid is completely unacceptable and causes disturbances.

Utterly shocked, offended and crushed, I left the masjid and headed home. All the way home, I was thinking of the little things that my daughter could have done to casue a disturbance. Was it when she said "Ameen"? The men said that pretty loudly, too. Could that really cause such a disturbance that the sister would entirely lose her concentration? For some people it could.

Was I wrong to bring her to the masjid? Was my daughter too young? I always wanted to expose my children to the masjid as early and often as I could so that it would be as comfortable as a second home for them when they got older.

As the night progressed, my confusion turned into resentment. How dare she ask me to leave the house of Allah in the blessed

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month of Ramadhan? Did this woman not have any children? Did she even base her comment on pure, authentic Islamic knowledge or was it merely her personal preference?

I ran to my computer and started searching Quran and Hadeeth databases. After a little while, I found the hadeeth I was looking for.

The Hadeeth reports that the Messenger (S.A.W.) was leading one of the afternoonSlaah with one of his grandsons. He put the child down by his right foot and commenced the Salah. During the Salah, he made a very long prostration. One of the Companions raised his head to see if every thing was o.k. and saw the child on the back of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). After the salah was completed, the people said, "O Messenger of Allah! In the middle of your Salah, you performed prostration and lengthened it so much that we thought either something had happened or that you were receiving revelation!" To that he replied, "Neither was the case. Actually, my grandson made me his mount, and I did not want to hurry him until he had satisfied his wish." (Nasai)

One of the Companions witnessed the Messenger of Allah

(S.A.W.) praying and carrying his grand daughterUmmah; the daughter of Zainab. When he prostrated, he put her down, and when he stood, he carried her on his neck. (Bukhari and Muslim)

These were not actions or justifications from an Imam at a local masjid. This was the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.).

I did not stop there, I continued searching and found another Hadeeth. Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) once said, "When I stand for salah, I intend to prolong it, but on hearing the cries of a child, I cut it short, as I dislike to trouble the child's mother." (Bukhari)

These Ahadeeth, among others, proved that not only were there women at the masjid, but there were young children as well.

I am sure I am not the only mother who has had this sort of negative experience. If Islam teaches us to show love and mercy to our children, why are our Islamic Centres and their people so intolerant to them?

The problem is not our Islamic Centres or their people. It is we, the parents. Some of us have absolutely no control over our children – of any age – when we bring them to the masjid and its events. We let them yell, scream,

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damage, destroy and disturb with very little or no disciplinary action taken. Unfortunately, as some of us have experienced, it has gotten to the point where people actually cringe at the sight of kids. The sister who approached me was probably trying to stop a problem before it started.

In order to run an efficient and kid friendly masjid, it starts with the parents. We have to teach our children how to respect the masjid and its people. My daughter, now four years old, and my son, who is two and a half, know fully well that they should not whisper when they are in the masjid. Does this mean that they never let out a loud sound? Absolutely not. Do they always walk around and not in front of the people making salah? Most of the time they are still very young. All this means that is fully possible for children that young to learn to respect the masjid.

Here are some tips on planning a family trip to the masjid:

□□ Clearly explain to the child what behaviours are unacceptable at the masjid. Be sure to state the consequences and fulfil them if these behaviours are exhibited.

Out of respect for others, please do not bring your children to the masjid if they don't feel well. This will not only cause them to be

abnormally cranky, but will put other people's health at risk as well.

Be prepared to leave if your children, especially babies, become uncontrollable. You don't necessarily have to leave the masjid, just leave the room.

If possible, involve the child in what you are doing. Making Salah, reading Holy Quran or making du'a together.

For all this to be possible, wisely use your judgement as to whether your children are ready or not. Practice by taking them to the masjid when there are less people around. I think it's nice for children to attend maghrib prayer a few days in a week. Not only does this give them the opportunity to practice whispering and good behaviour in the masjid, it will also help them memorize Surah Al-Fatiha since it is recited out loud in maghrib prayer.

Children are the future of our Ummah, children are also just that – children. If we chase them out when they are young, we don't know if they will come back when they are older. Always remember the Hadeeth, "He who does not show mercy, no mercy would be shown to him." (Muslim)

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# MADARSA EDUCATION: MYTH AND REALITY

Asghar Ali Engineer

Madarsas have been at the centre of controversy since the 9/11 attack on the New York towers. It was thought that the attacks had been planned by the Taliban who were students of the madarsas. Although it was the madarsas in the North West Frontier Province that were in focus as far as the 9/11 attack was concerned, madrasas in India too, came under fire, especially from those who were politically motivated but also from a section of the media which took a biased view.

Most of the views were expressed by those who had hardly any first hand knowledge of the madarsas system or what is taught in them. What is needed is a well informed and well studied opinion.

I am glad that Ms. SaralJhingran has made an attempt to conduct a systematic study of the system in historical perspective.

“Madarsa” is an Arabic word, meaning ‘place of *dars*’ (teaching). In Islamic countries, even institutions of higher learning are

known as madarsas. In Kolkata, the MadarsaAliyah (higher institution of learning) has now been given university status by the West Bengal government. It is interesting to note that these madarsas were open to students of other communities as well. Raja Ram Mohan Roy studied in the MadarsaAliyah and was as much a scholar of Persian and Arabic as of Sanskrit and the Hindu religion.

Thus, in many cases madarsas in fact fulfilled both religious and secular needs and taught what was necessary for a secular as well as a religious life. In a way, they can be compared to the Medieval Age Christian seminaries, which also taught whatever was required to fulfil vital scholarly, religious and secular needs in those days.

The question now is: how relevant are these madarsas today? Some would say they are highly irrelevant and should be abolished and replaced by modern secular educational institutions. Those who subscribe to the rational, secular point of view would easily subscribe to this position.



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A large number of Muslims in India, in fact a vast majority, is of the poor and illiterate variety. Most of them are converts from low-caste Hindus and still pursue their ancestral vocations. Very few have emerged successfully from their inherited position to take up modern professions. Even if they want to, these poor Muslims cannot afford to send their children to secular educational institutions. Moreover, they have religious needs and madarsas can fulfil not only religious needs but also provide free education and what is more, they are conveniently located.

Also, we should not homogenise all madarsas. They need to be divided into different categories i.e. preliminary, known as *maktabs*, where only preliminary religious teaching is imparted; the middle level, where the Arabic language, the Quran, commentary on Quran, and Hadith, etc. are taught ; then the higher levels which can be compared to graduate and post-graduate studies, and where Arabic literature, Islamic theology, Kalam philosophy and Greek sciences are also taught. This syllabus in India is based on what is known as the *Dars-e-Nizami*, devised by Mullah Nizami in the eighteenth century. Today, orthodox and modernist Muslims are debating whether the *Dars-e-Nizami* should be continued.

There is a movement for modernisation of madarsas and many have already opted for this course.

As to Jhingran's study, I should say that it is quite an objective and systematic one of madarsas in India. The first chapter, "Society, Religion, Education and Modernity," defines, discusses and clarifies these topics. While defining religion, particularly Islam, she observes, "Religion is a very complex phenomenon, which is impossible to understand in a few pages. In as much as our main interest here is in Islam, we can generally say that it regards itself as: possessing God's final revelation, as well as being a comprehensive whole which includes not only the Holy Quran but also the Sunnah as recorded in the Hadith. As such, religious education is more important and detailed for Muslims, especially the orthodox ones."

Right at the outset of the second chapter, Ms. Jhingran discusses the possible number of Muslim children attending madarsas. She quotes the various sources and estimates available. Not satisfied with the estimate given by the Sachar committee – that about four per cent Muslim children go to madarsas – she tries to work out her own and says, "The

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feedback that I have got from my frequent talks with the madarsas pass-out now studying in JNU, or those who have roots in villages, put the number of madarsa-going children much higher. Generally they estimate that, at least in villages, about fifteen to thirty per cent Muslim children go first to *maktabs*, then to madarsas, if only for a few years.”

Well, fifteen to thirty per cent is a wide variation and to me it appears to be on the higher side. It may be so at the *maktab* level but not at the higher madarsa level. I do not think so many *maktabs* and madarsas are available for that kind of number. But that is not important. What is important is that the madarsa continues to be an important institution for the poorer rural, and to some extent, the urban Muslims.

The author also discusses reasons for the preference for madarsa education among Muslims. Among these, she points out: 1) paucity of modern schools in Muslim majority areas; 2) lack of separate girl's schools and even female teachers in co-educational schools; 3) the cost of modern education and the poor quality of government schools; 4) the poor quality of education in government schools; and 5) the genuine grievance in a Hindu bias in school textbooks. Then she comments,

“Though such biases have a tendency to creep up even in supposedly objective statements, any such pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim bias is unfortunate and must be avoided with utmost sincerity as it would cause further resistance to modern education among a particular section of Muslims.”

Jhingran discusses these reasons extensively and therefore this chapter is quite important as it can remove many misunderstandings about madarsa education among non-Muslims.

In the third chapter, she discusses the historical background of madarsa education. She traces its origin from the time of the Prophet of Islam: he established the first madarsa in his mosque, where he taught the tenets of Islam and explained the contents of the revelations he received. The formal establishment of the madarsa institution came into existence much later; the first being established in Nishapur in Khurasan and the second, the Nizamia, in Baghdad, both in the eleventh century. Al-Azhar, the now famous Islamic university, came into existence during the Fatimid rule in Egypt around that time.

She then discusses the establishment of madarsas in India and the teaching of rational sciences (*maqulat*) during Akbar's period by Fatehullah Shirazi, who

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introduced (she says) and popularised such sciences, which became major part of the madarsas curriculum. It must be pointed out that rational sciences included astronomy, geography, physics and philosophy, mostly derived from Greek sources. Unfortunately all this continues to be taught even today under the general rubric of *maqulat* though at best they are of only historical importance now.

She then discusses the madarsa system from Aurangzeb's time until the arrival of the British in India, and says, "For the first time, Aurangzeb (seventeenth century) made a team of scholars prepare a digest of Islamic law, later called the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*. Then he granted Mullah Nizamuddin a mansion in Lucknow, known as the FirangiMahal, where he established a madarsa. It was a predecessor of later madarsas and become a renowned centre of Islamic learning. It was here that Mullah Nizamuddin developed a systematic syllabus which is known as the *Dars-e-Nizami* and is still taught in most of the higher madarsas. Mullah Nizamuddin had tried to create quite a balanced and flexible system by the standards of the time; it later on became quite rigid and no change was contemplated."

Ms. SaralJhingran then discusses madarsas after independence and also devotes one

chapter to their *nisab* (syllabi), making an effort to understand, as well as critique them. Her critique is also well informed. I must say that on the whole, the book is a learned and scholarly study of the madarsa system and what is taught in them, how relevant those teachings are and what reforms are needed.

This book will help greatly in dispelling the many misunderstanding prevalent among non-Muslims and, to some extent, among Muslims themselves. Her critique invites orthodox Muslims to reflect seriously on what modern madarsas should be like. Many Muslim modernists have also developed such critiques. The book on the whole will be quite useful for scholars as well as for lay people.

Her fears about the madarsa system seem to be that it creates a sense of separate identity among Muslim children. While this criticism may be valid from her point of view, the question is: in a diverse and now polarised society such as in India, can we avoid such a separate sense of identity? Our whole political system is thriving on religious, caste, ethnic and linguistic identities and sub-identities. Although there is nothing wrong with separate identities, what is wrong is their politicisation.

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Press Release:

**TOAY INDIA HAS BECOME A GREAT REPUBLIC  
COUNTRY DUE TO ITS COMPREHENSNE  
CONSTITUTION SO IT'S PROTECTION IS  
EVERY BODY'S RESPONSIBILITY /**

Maulana Asghar Ali

Imam Mahadi Salafi

New Delhi; 27 January 2025

Today India has become a great Republic country of the world due to its Comprehensive Constitution. So its protection is everybody's responsibility. Regardless of language, culture, and progeny, every citizen's rights are protected in it. The said constitution gives equal opportunity of peaceful living, advancement and development in the country. Apart from this it also lay on certain accounts regarding mulku-millat's building and development. All citizens are morally bound to follow it. The said views were uttered by Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi, the Ameer of Jamiate Ahle Hdeeth Hind at the Republic Day function at Al-Mahad Al-Aalee litakhassus fil Darasatil Islamiya situated at Ahle Hadeeth Complex Abul Fazal Enclave, Okhla New Delhi after hoisting the tiranga flag.

The constitution expect to execute it whole heartedly any status, post or position we are holding. The government and public all are equally, responsible to execute it practically. This is the message of Republic Day. He further said that Madarsas, Jamiat, schools and other educational

institutions celebrate Republic Day so that they can learn the importance of constitution from their elders. Because they will be the future leaders of the country and protecters the spirit of constitutin as a responsible citizen. The Ameer congratulated the country men on this occasion and asked them to follow the constitution. Only the Executive, Judiciary and Legislative cannot terminate injustice, atrocity and violation.

On this occasion Hafiz Mohd Tahir, editor of Islahe Samaj and Mohd Hishamuddin, Administrative Judicial officer of Delhi High Court also addressed the gathering. Dr. Mohd Sheeth Taimi thanked them all. The Indian flag was hoisted, National anthem and song were uttered. The occasion was attended by teachers, students and servants of Mahadul Aalee as well as Muftee Jameel Ahmad Madani, Qamaruz Zaman Engineer, Dr. Abdul Wase Taimi, Ayez Taqi, Shamsuddin, Anwar Abdul Qayyum etc. It should be noted that Al Mahad Al Alee celebrates the said ceremony every year.

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News from Headquarter:

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF MARKAZI  
JAMIAT AHLE HADEETH HIND  
THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ALL INDIA REFRESHER  
COURSE WILL BE HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> May  
2025 to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (5<sup>th</sup> Zul Qaidah  
to 12<sup>th</sup> Zul Qaidah 1446 A.H.)

AT

Ahle Hadeeth Complex, Abul Fazal Enclave Jamia  
Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi

This is a happy news for Duat, teachers and Imams  
that under the auspices of Markazi Jamiat Ahle  
Hadeeth Hind there will be 15<sup>th</sup> All India Refresher  
Course for Imam, duat and teachers from 4<sup>th</sup> of May  
2025 to 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2025 at Ahle Hadeeth Complex,  
Okhla, New Delhi.

The men of letters, researchers, preachers, lawyers  
and social workers would address the participants.

The state Ahle Hadeeth Ameers and Secretaries are  
requested to send two selected names as a participant in  
it.

Note: The inaugural ceremony will take place on 4<sup>th</sup>  
of May 2025 at Ahle Hadeeth Complex, Okhla, New  
Delhi at 8 O clock Morning where participants presence  
is necessary.

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- \* To teach the principles of mutual benevolence, brotherhood, love of the country and respect of human values.
- \* To propagate and publicise the Islamic principles, values, culture and ideas to all mankind according to the accepted path of our righteous Salaf'.
- \* To conduct courses and training for individuals, Dua't and members of Jamaa't to regain the intellectual, cultural and civilizational identity of the Ummah through Qura'n and Sunnah.
- \* To strengthen human, religious and social relations among Muslims at both individual and collective levels, achieving brother-hood and cooperation for mutual benevolence, piety, unity and rejecting the causes of conflict and disunity.
- \* To confront the ideological onslaughts and deviant behaviour among Muslims and build their personality on sound Islamic lines.

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