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Thought for the Month

The unbelievers will be
Led to Hell in groups:
Until, when they arrive there,
Its gates will be opened.
And its keepers will say,
“Did not messengers come
To you from among yourselves,
Rehearsing to you the Signs
Of your Lord, and warning you
Of the Meeting of this Day
Of yours?” The answer
Will be: “True: but
The Decree of Chastisement
Has been proved true
Against the Unbelievers!”

Al-Quran- 39:71

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FOCUS

We may begin a discussion of why rights are important, by simply asking the question what would a world without rights look like? Or we can grasp the immense power of rights, I suggest, only if we begin to imagine what would happen if we dismissed rights. Will something of significance be lost; will this impoverish our political understanding irremediably? Can we dispense with the language of rights, and still say everything we need to say about our relationships with each other? Or, if rights are taken away from us, will we be rendered powerless, dependent or vulnerable? Alternatively, what if we base our conception of our desired moral and political world on duties or obligations? In any case, why should be not appeal to these virtues instead of relying on the muscular belligerence of rights talk?

One possible answer to the later set of questions can be that whereas duties, obligations, care, trust and toleration are good things in themselves, they also happen to be symptomatic of deeply paternalistic societies. Certainly, in such societies some people may well consider themselves obliged to care for their fellow beings. However, unless the recipient possesses rights, unless obligations correspond to a right held by the recipient, she will be rendered dependent. She will be dependent on the care-provided, such care is forthcoming-of others as well as on how other people construct care in their own vocabularies and on their own terms. As the recipient of obligation, the person will simply lack status.

Consider this: if I am dependent on others for the satisfaction of my needs, they may well either think that these needs are superfluous, or that they are immaterial. Note that I am not in a position to assert the right to the satisfaction of my needs irrespective of what others think of them and of me. Unless I am in a position to assert such a right, others can easily believe that I do not deserve to be treated with respect because my opinions do not deserve to be honoured; my demands are not worthy of being heeded and my status as a moral being is neither here nor there. I may just be irrelevant or invisible for them.

Admittedly, there is absolutely no reason why people should not be charitable or altruistic towards each other in a good society, or that societies should not be marked by the ethos of care, and by the need to feel responsible for one's fellow beings. Every society is characterized by different kinds of moral transactions-affection and love on the one hand, rights and entitlements on the other. But whereas a world without thoughtful care and concern would be morally impoverished, a world without universal rights would lack self-respect. Certainly, or society may well be benevolent, and people may think that giving charity via religious traditions is part of what one owes to oneself. Note, however, that the performance of this act has nothing to do with the rights of the recipient. Consider the problem that arises here: though q may have a duty due to her tradition of being charitable to p, she may, however, disdain her duties, or she may be a reluctant giver: the problem is hers and hers alone. Note that the performance or the non-performance of this obligation does not flow from any right commanded by p. or, there is no obligation on q that corresponds to the right p holds and exercises in her own right.

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Activities of the IOS Headquarters

IOS Lecture on "Quran, Sunnah and Medicine"

The Institute of Objective Studies (IOS), organised a lecture on "Quran, Sunnah and Medicine" in its Conference Hall on November 12, 2014. Delivering the lecture, noted ENT specialist of Saudi Arabia and the former Vice-President, Saudi Otorhinolaryngology Society, Dr. Abdulaziz Abdullah Jifrey noted that the Quran and Hadith had offered wonder drugs for treating "all diseases, except death". Referring to the early life of Muslims, he said that the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), after realising the hardships faced by them, prescribed treatment for various ailments. These formed part of the Hadith. Similarly, the Quran was a repository of knowledge of plants, flowers, fruits and agri-products that had medicinal attributes, he observed.

Dr. Jifrey maintained that the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) contained in the Bukhari offered sure shifa (cure) for not one, but most diseases. Muslims had been traditionally using prescriptions of Tibb-i-Nabvi (treatment prescribed by the Prophet) for curing diseases. He remarked that the Quran and the Hadith called for observation, which led to advancement of knowledge. While claiming that the Quran contains science, medicine and other branches of knowledge, it calls upon the faithful to possess imaan (unflinching faith in Allah) and have love for Allah, the Creator of every living being, he said that it urges the human kind to acquire knowledge.

The Quran also calls for increasing knowledge. He informed that the researches conducted on the vegetations referred to in the Quran and the Hadith revealed that they had immense healing power. He maintained that hundreds of research

papers on the subject had so far been published. In this connection, he mentioned honey and kalonji as having the magical power to boost immunity. He showed visuals of several plants, flowers and leaves in a power-point presentation to explain that they could be used as antioxidants. He listed several herbs that leave positive effect on our immune system and protect against ultraviolet in the sunrays. These medicinal herbs had anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties, besides being effective in the removal of excess metals from the body.

Dr. Jifrey held that the Prophet (PBUH) left behind a rich legacy of medical knowledge which could be enhanced with further experiments. He quoted a Hadith to buttress his point by saying that diseases like eczema, blood



Dr. M. Manzoor Alam presenting memento to Dr. Abdulaziz Abdullah Jifrey

pressure, diabetes anaemia, cancer, failure of kidney, hypertension, infertility, etc. could be treated with prophetic medicine. He informed that capsules, extracts of certain plants, kalonji oil and shampoos produced from the items prescribed in Hadith were being used in several countries. He said that though there was some resistance from the practitioners of modern medicine in Saudi Arabia, they had started reconciling to the treatment prescribed in Hadith with Hijama (cupping) being used in several parts of the country. He said that certain fruits, including grapes, had preventive and curative effect on human body. He also described camel milk as highly nutritious.

Dr. Jifrey explained that the Prophet (PBUH) did not receive formal education as he was ummi (unlettered), but he gave us medicines for the benefit of suffering humanity. He was Rahmat-ul-lil Alameen, i.e., benefactor of the whole humankind. He pointed out that the Prophet (PBUH) gave his stamp of high quality by categorising the herbs as best, fine and good. According to him the treatment available in the Quran and Hadith is both preventive and curative.

The function opened with the recitation of a verse from the Quran by Maulana Abdullah Tariq. Associate Prof. of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia, Dr. Eqbal Hussain, who conducted the proceedings and introduced the guest, briefly explained the link between law, Islam, Shariah law, and medicine. He listed five purposes of Shariah,

including preservation of life, protection of deen, progeny, intellect and wealth. He pointed out that while medicine contributed to health and preservation of life, they could not prevent death. Prof. Altaf Ahmad Azmi, who presided over the function, opined that Dr. Jifrey's lecture was fruitful for treating diseases in the light of the prescriptions in Quran and Hadith.

The Chairman of IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, briefly gave an account of the activities of the Institute in the past 27 years of its existence. He stated that the Institute was engaged in holding seminars, symposia, discussions, lectures and other functions on educational, social and economic issues of the common people in general and Muslims in particular, adding that health was one of them. He specially referred to the international conference on 1000 years of the legacy of the great surgeon and physician, Abu-al-Qasim Al-Zahrawi, organised by the IOS in Delhi last year. He suggested that a national and international conference be organised on Quranic and Prophetic medicine. He also pleaded for setting up a centre for research on the medicines

contained in the Quran and Hadith. He strongly pitched for India as a suitable country for such a centre.

Scholars, students and teachers from the Jamia Millia Islamia attended the lecture. Prominent among those who attended the function were Prof. Afzal Wani, Dr. Ausaf Ahmad, Dr. Khalil Ahmed, Dr. Aftab Alam, Dr. Mohd. Ashfaq Ahmed, Dr. Mohd. Mushtaq Tijarwi, Dr. Parvez Alam, Firdaus Jahan, Mohd. Kamran Siddiqui, Javed Ahmed, Dr. Mariyam, Dr. Nuzhat Jahan and Dr. Rehan Badar.

IOS Lecture on Ghadar Movement

A lecture on "Ghadar Movement and Need for its Commemoration", was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) here on November 15, 2014. Dr. Onkar Mittal, President, Civil Society Network, New Delhi, who delivered the lecture, pointed out that the study of the history of Indian national movement would not be complete till it was understood in the context of the Ghadar and Reshmi Rumal movements from 1913-1915.

The study of the history of freedom struggle in its proper perspective would lead us to conclude that the real heroes who relentlessly fought for throwing off the British yoke died unsung. He said that the seeds of discontent against the British Empire were sown in the First World War (1914-18) when the mobilisation of some 10 lakh Indians was made. This war claimed the lives of about 1 lakh of them. Terming the First World War as the bloodiest during the 20th century, he contended that out of 7 crore soldiers mobilised, one crore were killed. He also pleaded that after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the attitude of Indians, including the Congress, had changed and the freedom movement gathered momentum with the participation of common people.

Dr. Mittal said that while the ruling class and the middle class remained passive about the freedom movement, folk participation provided it strength. He held that roots of the First World War lay in the hegemony over the people of the Third World countries. He opined that from the First War of Indian Independence in 1857 to the transfer of power and the Partition of India in 1947, the revolutionary forces across the country belonging to different ethnicities and religions made ceaseless struggle for liberation from the British Raj.

Despite success of the British imperial power in defeating these movements one by one, the rebellion continued. After the defeat of 1857, renewed efforts began with movement against the partition of Bengal under Lord Curzon in 1905. He said that in



Dr. Onkar Mittal delivering his speech; sitting L-R: Dr. Manzoor Alam, Prof. Refaqaat Ali Khan and Prof. Z.M. Khan

the First World War, the large-scale mobilisation of Army in India was critical to the British victory in 1918. The divergent political forces realised the anti-national character of British Rule in India and some made exemplary efforts to militarily fight against the British.

He maintained that that the Ghadar Party of India established in California in 1913 and the concurrent Reshmi Rumal movement were glorious examples of these efforts. He noted that these struggles failed in making any immediate impact, but their sacrifices created a national consciousness and moral and intellectual force for the Indian

Independence movement between the years 1919-1947.

Dr. Mittal explained that while the mainstream national movement was led by the Congress party and the Muslim League, the efforts of revolutionaries under different banners of Hindustan Republican Army, Azad Hind Fauj and Khaksar Tehrik, made important contributions in developing and providing the will and impetus to the struggle for independence. He said that the mainstream Indian Independence movement was based on a premise of accepting the British suzerainty and reaching a compromise with the British Imperialism. On the contrary, the Ghadar Party and other revolutionary movements were aware of the militaristic character of British imperialism and wanted to wage a military war against this global evil force. He insisted that the First World War changed the course of world history, the Ghadar Party and the related forces, despite their immediate failure, made immense contribution in changing the course of the history of British Imperialism in India.

Dr. Mittal argued that now that the world

was observing the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War, India as a nation should also observe the centenary of the Ghadar Party and the Reshmi Rumal Tehreek. Analysing the reason why the firing was ordered by Gen. Dyer on unarmed gathering at Jalianwala Bagh in Punjab, he said that he was afraid of the repeat of an 1857-type situation. Gen. Dyer had told the Sedition Committee set up in the wake of Jalianwala Bagh firing that as the promises made by the British government remained unfulfilled, he feared that it might lead to wide-spread discontent in the country.

Dr. Mittal said that American hegemony was collapsing and the United Nations' authority was being undermined. Greek and Spanish

economy was in bad shape. Similarly, European trade was competing with the American trade. He lamented that our policy was being still dictated by the United States. He expressed confidence that 80 percent of the problems of the country could be solved if the leaders reached a consensus on various issues.

The Chairman of the IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam in his address said that there were several aspects of Ghadar and an insight into them could unravel many hidden facts. These facts could awaken us to take lessons from the past. Referring to Maulana Abdullah Tariq's recitation of a Quranic verse, he said that Pharaoh had ordered killing of boys and sparing of girls. It appeared that RSS slogan to "bring brides and save daughters" was on the same lines.

He quoted Justice Rajinder Sachar's observation that those who played no role in the freedom struggle were now ruling the country. He said that it was for us to decide which model our country would like to adopt.

The Vice-Chairman of the IOS, Prof. Refaqt Ali

Khan said that the Indians fighting for freedom had gone to Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan and Indonesia to enlist support. The Secretary General of the IOS, Prof. Z M Khan observed that IOS had resolved to organise specialised lectures, instead of conferences. He said that India's freedom struggle was unique in the sense that people irrespective of caste, religion and faith participated in it. Freedom movement was inclusive in terms of common people's participation, he concluded.

Dr. Nakhat Husain Nadvi conducted the proceedings.

The function was attended by teachers and students of Jamia Millia Islamia and Delhi University, besides

scholars, journalists and social activists.

IOS Lecture on "Orientalism and Empire Building: A Study of British Scholar-Travellers to Arabia (20th Century)"

A lecture on "Orientalism and Empire Building: A Study of British Scholar-Travellers to Arabia (20th Century)" was organised at IOS Conference Hall here on November 22, 2014. Delivering the lecture, Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish, Professor of Islamic Studies, Jamia Hamdard, noted that the Orientalists of the 19th century concentrated more on art, literature and culture, and the British travellers who travelled to China and Arabia did the same. In the later years, the study of the Muslim world developed into a specialised field. What contributed to



Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish delivering his lecture

the interest of the Britishers in the study was their thinking that they were superior to the Arabs. He argued that such scholarship was always backed by imperial purposes. This was the reason why Britain and the West did not view the Muslim world from a realistic angle, but treated it as a problem, he pointed out.

Prof. Danish held that prior to Edward Said's pioneering work, *Orientalism*, the common understanding of the term was to study the art, literature and culture of the East, particularly the Muslim world. But after the publication of Said's celebrated work in 1978, it came to the knowledge of scholars that such works had generally implied a patronising

Western attitude towards the Muslim societies, their religion, culture and civilisation that flourished in the Middle East and North Africa. Said proved that the West believed the East, particularly the Islamic world, was static and underdeveloped which could be studied and analysed. He maintained that Said even charged that the West created, even fabricated, the Orient as static, traditional and mired in history, which implicitly meant that the West was flexible, developed, rational and consequently superior.

Focusing on three scholar-travellers of the 20th century - Gertrude Bell, St. John Philby and Lawrence of Arabia (TE Lawrence) - he said that they played a role in shaping the modern West Asian nation-states. He observed that Bell and Lawrence went to Arabia before World War I and Philby was sent to the region from India towards the end of the war. Bell and Lawrence were agents of the British Empire, though apparently they championed the Arab cause. Philby, an Indian Civil Service Officer, believed in the virtue of the British Empire and wanted to embark on a "civilising" mission, he added.

Prof. Danish opined that Philby clashed with his own government, often bitterly criticising it for its failures. Later on he embraced Islam. He said that it was mainly Lawrence of Arabia who damaged the Arabs the most, though for years he was celebrated as an Arab champion. He planned to divide Islam against itself and almost succeeded in it. Prof. Danish pleaded for the study of Lawrence's legacy from a Muslim perspective as it might help in addressing the issues facing West Asia today.

Prof. Danish explained that Britain provided Oriental scholarship in order to elicit information about the Muslim world. Britishers believed that only

sending troops there was not going to serve the purpose.

Issues like different tribes, their loyalty to tribal headmen, leaders who could be contacted and their support sought, dominated the decision of the British government to send its Generals to the Arab world as travellers for collecting information which formed the basis for devising an imperial strategy. In this connection, he referred to Philby, who belonged to a respectable British family. He remarked that it was Winston Churchill who changed the course of history of the Middle East after acting on the advice of Lawrence, adding that even today only those ruling families were ruling several Arab states as were liked by Britain. He said that Lawrence desired that Islam be divided in order to save Britain from any potential threat. This policy was pursued by dividing Islam into Turkish and Arabian Islam, so that both of them continued to fight, leaving no scope for danger to the British government.

He said that Lawrence was a member of the Round Table Conference. He maintained that though the sun never set on the British Empire for a long while, Arabia was not part of it. Since it was impossible to include Turkey in the colonial rule of Britain, attempts were made to include Arabs as a brown dominion of the British Empire. Besides being a young soldier, Lawrence was a traveller who worked as a spy in Arab countries for Britain. Winston Churchill gave him an opportunity to present his views before the Cairo Conference, so that the map of the Middle East could be changed, he concluded.

Earlier, introducing the topic of the lecture, the Secretary-General of the IOS, Prof. Z.M. Khan, commented that the issue was concerned with the history and image of Muslims. He regretted that today Islamophobia was the global sentiment and every evil was attributed to Muslims. Muslims contributed positively to the development of civilisation and Islam's influence was reflected everywhere,

from philosophy to calligraphy. This was continuing even today.

A verse from the holy Quran was recited by Maulana Abdullah Tariq to mark the beginning of the lecture. Dr. Nakhat Hussain Nadvi conducted the proceedings. Those who were present at the lecture included: Vice-Chairman of the IOS, Prof. Refaat Ali Khan, Professor of Law, Gurugobind Singh Indraprastha University, Prof. Afzal Wani, Dr. Aftab Alam, Mohd. Shafi, K.P. Salim Ahmad, Safi Akhtar, Bismil Arifi, Wasim Ahmad, Ms. Nilofar Khan, Anis Mansoori, Pervez Ashrafi and Sayed Ashraf.

It is our duty to protect the Constitution: Dr M. Manzoor Alam

The Indian Constitution in its Preamble has made it very clear that there is no distinction among the citizens on the basis of religion, language or region but the Sangh Parivar is trying to undermine these basic precepts since BJP came to power, said Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, the Chairman of IOS. He was addressing a largely attended meeting organized in his honour on during November 29-30 by the Muslim Association, a prominent educational and cultural NGO in the state capital. It is not surprising as the people in power never took part in the country's struggle for independence. They want to restore the *Varnashrama Dharma* but in the process are working against Article 25 of the Constitution, Dr Alam continued.

Mr. Rajnath Singh, the Union Home Minister says that he and Mr. Narendra Modi come from the same organisation and both closely associate with Zionists as both believe in racial discrimination. RSS has no faith in human brotherhood or equality. The country is slowly moving from democracy to tyranny, but we have the Constitution in our defence, he said. It is our duty to protect the Preamble, articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution. He reminded the audience that Kerala was not an island and would not be able to escape the fatal political changes the Sangh Parivar wanted to introduce.

"Muslims, unfortunately, are groping in the dark. They have neither a leader to lead them to safety nor ladder to climb out of this predicament. But they are a community with inherent energy and dynamism drawn from the holy Quran and Hadith. It is their religious duty to fight slavery and exploitation" Dr. Alam concluded.

Adv. A Sharafudeen, the Secretary of the Association, welcomed the Chairman IOS and other guests. Haji K M Salih, the President, chaired the function.

E Abubacker, former secretary of All India Milli Council, Prof P Koya, member of the Governing Board of the institute, M A Hameed, Dr O Abdul Rahman, Dr Ahamed Pillai and Ibrahim Moulavi also spoke.

The next day the Chairman had discussions with prominent Government officials, journalists and professionals. He also attended a reception organised by Trivandrum Educational and Service Trust, another development organisation working in the city.

IOS Book Media in Our Globalizing World Released

The Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) organised a function at the Deputy Speaker Hall, Constitution Club of India Annexe, New Delhi on December 9, 2014 to mark the release of the book *Media in Our Globalizing World*. The book, brought out by the IOS, deals with various aspects of the media in the present context. Delivering a lecture on the theme, former Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and currently member of the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar remarked, "We are in a globalising world, but the Indian media is not in the globalising world".

He explained it by saying that we were unaware of what was happening around us. Citing the example of the Sri Lankan President, Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, who ordered election of the new President, he said that the Indian media could not report that the President was challenged by five of his

ministerial colleagues. Similarly, Indian media was silent over Imran Khan running the "biggest show" in Pakistan. He observed that the Indian media failed to properly report the sate of 40 Indian labourers, the whereabouts of whom in Iraq was not known.

While one witness said that they had been killed by ISIS, the Ministry of External Affairs still maintained that they were alive. "We did not distinguish between the terms used for Gulf countries", he said. He explained that the West called it the Middle East, but we called it West Asia and North Africa. He pointed out that while reporting in Delhi, our media failed to report on the world outside the city. That meant that our media was not globalising.

Mr. Aiyar said that the rate of interest in the U.S. was 2 percent as against 12 percent in India. Because of this a lot of money (dollars) is parked in India. It would be taken back if the interest rate was decreased in India. He said that since advertisements contributed the main revenue of newspapers the space for news was shrinking. This put the readers in a disadvantageous position.

He briefly referred to major world events that made news, but was not reported in India.

Eulogising India's role as a major player in international relations, he held that India stood by Egypt when the Suez Canal was nationalised. He opined that India mattered to the world because the world mattered to India. Tracing the genesis of the Second World War, he said that Hitler had become Chancellor of Germany in 1933, leading to the country's dismemberment in 1945. Britain and France were almost finished at the conclusion of the war. Describing the pitiable economic condition of Britain in the wake of the war, he said that the living standard of Britons between 1945-47 was worse than that during

the war. Referring to the partition of Palestine, he observed that India was the only non-Muslim and non-Arab country to support the cause of Palestine in the wake of the war. India opposed the partition of Palestine and creation of Israel.

Mr. Aiyar was critical of the reporting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the U.S. by the Indian media. He ridiculed the Indian media for describing the visit as a huge success adding that the U.S. media ignored it. He criticised Indian media for blacking out the news of Nepali people's protest against Modi's visit to Janakpur temple in Nepal. He said that the Nepali press had termed Modi's visit to the temple and his advice to the Nepali Constituent Assembly to draft the new Constitution soon as an interference in their country's internal affairs.



Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Chairman IOS being felicitated at Trivendrum

He held that barring the economic dailies and economic magazines, daily newspapers hardly touched upon economic issues. He lamented that the newspapers subsumed the interest of the middle class as this class was a major consumer of goods advertised by a minuscule section. Newspapers today ignored issues that concerned 77 percent of the population. While a sharp jump in the sensex made news thousands of times, malnutrition among children in rural and semi-urban areas missed the headlines. While calling for introspection by the media, he insisted that it was premature to say that the Indian media was globalising.

Former Chief Minister of Delhi, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, who spoke as a guest of honour, said that the credibility of written and visual word was at stake. She observed that visual media's news reporting was instantaneous and in real time, the impact it created was far-reaching. She referred to the attack on World Trade Centre in New York. Emphasising the need for maintaining media's credibility, she wanted to know why the news of rape and other crimes in the country was being dished out by the media. She said that so many good things in India and the world were worth reporting but that made no news. She believed that what was important was not knowledge but the quality of knowledge.

The Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities, Mr. Naseem Ahmad opined that the media could not afford to be biased, particularly in a multi-religious society. He expressed the confidence that the deliberations at the function would be positively taken by media persons.

Senior journalist and Member, National Integration Council, Mr. John Dayal pleaded that

advertisements were also necessary for a newspaper to support it. He recalled the days when the national press was called "jute press" as the newspapers were owned by jute mill barons. Group Editor of the Rashtriya Sahara daily and the Alami Sahara News Channel, Syed Faisal Ali said that when he came back to India in 2011 after a gap of 22 years, the media had undergone tremendous change by that time. Indian media was plagued by multiple ailments and required transplant of vital organs to survive. He pointed out that the relationship between media, media houses and viewers had changed and it was money that ruled the roost. He was dismayed to observe that the Fourth Estate had failed. He shared his experience in the Gulf by saying that

unlike in India, the Khaleej Times, Gulf News and the Arab News carried separate pages for India and Pakistan.

The ex-Union Minister for Minority Affairs, Mr. K. Rahman Khan, warned that the Indian media was diluting values and ethics of journalism. He said that advertisers advertised their products at the cost of readers. It was aimed at inducing consumers to buy their products. He regretted that the media was not discharging its duty to properly inform the people. The coverage of poor people in the media was scant.

In his presidential speech, the Chairman of the IOS, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam briefly traced the history of journalism. He said that the enslavement of humanity, regions and geography were consequences of Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution, even though they had produced some good effects. Hegemony and cultural dominance were also offshoots of these revolutions. He maintained that the 20th century saw the struggle for liberation from slavery, exploitation, aspiration for good governance with justice, equality, liberty and fraternity as the main objectives.

He said that the 20th century also witnessed struggles for the removal of hegemony and racial and cultural domination. Media played a critical and crucial role in highlighting the struggle. He pointed out that from the last quarter of the 20th century our globalising world has been caught up in a vortex of contradictions.

There were contradictions of democracy vs. tyranny, right vs. wrong, equality vs. discrimination, humane values vs. racial supremacy, justice vs. selective justice, brotherhood vs. enslavement, fair distribution of wealth and income vs. exploitation, dignity of humanity vs. inhumanity, development vs.

enslavement or exploitation of the poor and the weak. Besides, there was harmony and co-existence vs. discord and conflict, love and appreciation vs. hatred and disturbances and powerful vs. voiceless majority. He concluded by saying that from the beginning of the 21st century, media was gradually, knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally, supporting powerful people. Independent journalist and film-maker, Mr. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta and senior journalist and consultant, Mr. Raju Mansukhani also spoke on the occasion. These two, along with Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam and Mohammad Zeyaul Haque are the editors of the book.

Earlier, in his welcome address, the Secretary General of the IOS, Prof. Z.M. Khan informed that the IOS had

of the IOS, Prof. Refaqt Ali Khan, senior journalist, Mr. Mohammad Zeyaul Haque, political and social activists, journalists, students from various institutions of journalism and prominent citizens.

IOS organises lecture on medical ethics in Islam

A lecture on medical ethics in Islam was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) at its Conference Hall here on December 20, 2014. Delivering the lecture, Honorary Secretary, Muslim Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation (MESCO), and Chairman Health India Hospitals Consultancy, Hyderabad, Dr. Fakhruddin Mohammad said that medical ethics was an integral component of the profession and the Islamic character and principles of a Muslim medical professional made it more steadfast and imbibe piety. He defined medical ethics in Islam as good character and talked about its practice, duties and responsibilities. He also explained how to maintain good practices, provide quality assurance, follow and ensure legal obligation, duties towards patients, colleagues, attendants (relatives), society, human rights, etc.



L-R: Prof. Z. M. Khan, Mr. Naseem Ahmad, Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar, Mr. K. Rahman Khan, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, Mr. Syed Faisal Ali, Mr. John Dayal, Mr. Mohammad Zeyaul Haque

planned to bring out 11 volumes on various subjects that were relevant to the contemporary world. The present book on media was the first of such volumes. He said that the IOS specialised in research on epistemology and Islamic thought. He maintained that the Institute collaborated with universities and other institutions of higher learning.

The function began with the recitation of a verse from the Holy Quran by Dr. Nakhat Husain Nadvi. The proceedings of the function were conducted by Asstt. Secretary General IOS, Prof. M. Afzal Wani. Those who attended included the Vice-Chairman

Dr. Fakhruddin Mohammad noted that Islamic medical ethics took shape gradually from the seventh century and developed by the eleventh century. He maintained that by the 15th century it was amalgamated from the Quran, Sunnah, Shariah and Fiqh. It was also influenced by pre-Islamic Arabic, Persian and Greek practices. He said that medical ethics could be classified as drugs, medical peer review etc. Elucidating further, he said that ethics, sometimes known as moral philosophy, was a branch of philosophy that involved systematising, defending and recommending concepts of right and

wrong conduct, often addressing disputes of moral diversity.

The field within philosophy known as axiology included both ethics and aesthetics and was unified by each sub-branch's concern with value. He opined that medical ethics was a system of moral principles that applied values and judgments to the practice of medicine. As a scholarly discipline, medical ethics encompassed its practical application in clinical settings. Referring to the history of Western medical ethics, he said that it could be traced to the guidelines on the duty of physicians in antiquity such as the Hippocratic Oath and early Christian teachings. The first code of medical ethics, "Formula Counties Archiatrorum", he added, was published in the 5th century, during the reign of the Ostrogothic King Theodoric the Great.

In the medieval and early modern period, the field was indebted to Muslim medicine such as Ishaq ibn Ali al-Ruhawi, who wrote the Conduct of a Physician, the first book dedicated to Islamic medical ethics and Muhammad ibn Zakariya ar-Razi (known as Rhazes in the West), Jewish thinkers such as Ibn-e-Maimun (Maimonides), Roman Catholic scholastic thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas, and the case-oriented analysis of Catholic moral theology. He said that these intellectual traditions continued in Catholic, Islamic and Jewish medical ethics.

Tracing the history of Islamic medicine, Dr. Mohammad observed that it passed through three main phases. The first phase saw collection and translation of existing knowledge during the seventh century. While the original research and practices by Muslim physicians responded with new procedures, invention and discoveries in the second phase, the 14th century witnessed preservation of large volumes of phenomenal work of Muslim physicians in the third phase.

He said that several bodies had prescribed oath for physicians, which included sincerity, proper diagnosis, every effort to save the patient from diseases, etc. Describing medical profession as a wholesome and noble profession, he said that in the present times, several moral issues had come to the fore.

While noting that Islam made the medical profession moral, he regretted that Muslims did not take the lead in furthering research and modalities of treatment. Similarly, the West deliberately refrained from disclosing the contribution of Muslims to medical research for some 1000 years. He said that the outcome of that research was still relevant. "As practitioners of Islam, we believed in morality as our religion was based on morality", he pointed out. He maintained that the



Press and media persons attending the function

UN's body, WHO had come out with a medical code as well as oath to be taken by a physician. Similarly, Islamic Association of North America had prescribed the oath for Muslim physicians. Medical Council of India (MCI) had also come out with a declaration for practising physicians, he said. Underlining the importance of medical ethics, he said that it was going to be introduced as a subject of medical curriculum.

Presiding over the function, Prof. Altaf Ahmad Azmi said that the 4th century BC physician Hippocrates was also a philosopher who compiled works on Greek medicine for the first time. But he restricted the knowledge of Greek medicine to medical doctors'

families fearing that this could be misused. It was Hippocrates who rationalised the knowledge of Greek medicine and later allowed others to acquire it, but with a rider. It was offered to those who could swear that they would be patient, tolerant, moderate in decision-making and compassionate. It was in fact, a great revolution in medical history. Making a distinction between Western and Islamic ethics, he said that while the former believed in the physician as a healer, the latter believe that Allah is the Healer. He remarked that the works of Hippocrates translated in Arabic as Al-Mualijaat-al-Boqrataiah, differed from the original Greek text. He referred to the first book on the conduct of physician written in India by Mulla Abdul Qadi Badayuni in 1590. This was Nijaturrashid written in Persian and hailed as a monumental work.

Earlier, the subject was introduced by the Secretary-General of the IOS, Prof. Z M Khan who informed that the lecture was part of a series of lectures planned during the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the IOS. As a follow-up to the decisions taken during the Silver Jubilee celebrations, several lectures on specialised

subjects had been planned. He noted that so far 14 international conferences had been organised in different parts of the country on various issues. These conferences generated much interest among those who attended them, particularly youngsters. He expressed dismay that despite being a noble profession, medical profession was beset with unethical practices like commercialism, corruption, etc. It called for thorough enquiry and investigation. Islam is a repository of varied knowledge and need to be preserved. He said that the lectures being organised by the Institute would be published in book form.

The function began with the recitation of a verse from the Quran by Hafiz Mohammad Athar Husain. Dr. Nakhat Husain Nadvi compered the proceedings. Those who attended the function included Prof. Mohammad Mushtaq, president, The Origin, Mr. Sharique Nadeem, Mirza Zaki Ahmed Baig from Tameer-e-Millat Foundation, Research Scholar at Jamia Millia Islamia, Mr. Gowhar Quadir Wani, Asstt. Professor at Tibbia College, Mr. Shoaib Ahmed, Research Scholar at Tibbia College, Dr. Mohd. Shahabuddin and Dr. Mohd. Nauman Saleem, associate editor of the Urdu weekly, *Chauthi Duniya*, Mr. A.U. Asif, senior Journalist, Mr. Mohd. Zeyaul Haq, Asstt. Professor in the Faculty of Dentistry, Jamia Millia Islamia, Dr. Nafis Ahmad and Dr. Syed Ansar Ahmad, besides prominent citizens and social activists.

The programme was conducted by Prof. Mohammad Muqim, coordinator of IOS Aligarh Chapter. A few verses from the holy Quran were recited by Mr. Abdus Salam. The programme was presided over by Prof. Salahuddin Qureshi. Dr. Mufti Zahid Ali Khan, Chairman of Sunni Theology, extended vote of thanks.

IOS organises symposium on Human Rights Day

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the Aligarh chapter of Institute of Objective Studies organised a symposium on "Contemporary Threats and Challenges to Human Rights" on December 10, 2014 on its premises which was attended by a large number of undergraduate and postgraduate students, research scholars, university teachers, human rights activists and social workers.

governance as the main cause of human rights violations. Khap panchayats, domestic violence and dowry deaths and lack of human development were the new threats to the realisation of human rights.

Mr. Sabir Rahi, divisional president Rashtriya Manav Adhikar Sangathan, lamented that we remembered human rights only once a year on December 10. He said every month a human rights programme should be organised, especially in schools and colleges to sensitise people about their significance.

Dr. Nagma Azhar, Assistant Professor in the Department of Commerce at AMU, spoke about the origin of human rights from Magna Carta to the framing of human rights provisions in the Indian Constitution.

She also dealt with landmark judgments of the Supreme Court of India to enforce fundamental rights.

Maulana Sultan Ahmad Islahi, an Islamic scholar and working president, Parcham Party of India, spoke on the double standards of great power politics on human rights issues. He highlighted how these

great powers were disregarding the rights of Muslims, especially of Palestinians and Rohingyas in Mayanmar (Burma), and Tibetans. He passionately argued that this state of affairs would continue till all Muslim states, especially the Arabs united politically like the European Union to emerge as a great power to counter the hegemonic designs of Western imperialist states which were determined to discover enemies in Muslim States in the absence of the communist USSR.

On India, he said Naxalism was a great threat to human rights. Marginalised, landless people are attracted to the extremist ideology of Naxalism. If landless people were empowered and land was given to

Activities of the IOS Chapters

ALIGARH CHAPTER

Lectures on 'The Impacts of Interfaith Movement on Peace, Justice and Sustainability', and 'An Islamic Approach to Terrorism'

Two lectures were organised by the Institute of Objective Studies, Aligarh Chapter and the Department of Sunni Theology, Aligarh Muslim University on December 2, 2014 at 11:00 am in the Lounge of Faculty of Arts, AMU, Aligarh.

The first lecture was delivered by Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid, presently the Chairman of the Council of Parliament of World's Religions, Chicago, USA on 'The Impacts of Interfaith Movement on Peace, Justice and Sustainability' and the second one was delivered by Dr. Aslam Abdullah, the editor of Muslim Observer, USA on 'An Islamic Approach to Terrorism'.



L-R: Dr. Fakhruddin Mohammad delivering his lecture, Dr. Nakhat Hussain Nadvi (in the left), Dr. Altaf A. Azmi and Prof. Z.M. Khan (in the right)

While welcoming the audience and speakers Mr. Mohammad Serajuddin Khan, assistant coordinator of the chapter, expressed concern over the flagrant violations of human rights in every nook and cranny of the globe, in one form or the other, and exhorted all and sundry to come forward to fight violations of human rights tooth and nail. He requested Dr. Rachna Kaushal, Assistant Professor in Human Rights at Aligarh Muslim University, to initiate the discussion.

While highlighting the importance of right to life, which is mother of all rights, she stressed the lack of good

them, the problem of Maoism would come to an end. He advocated that labour rights in Aligarh lock industry should be recognised and child labour should be banned. He also said that Muslim NGOs should have the political vision to fight for rights.

Mr. Farhat Usmani was the last speaker. He talked about Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) sermon during his last Hajj to highlight equality of all races. He said duties were also very important. He lamented that sometimes lower courts in India took 20 to 30 years to deliver judgments. The Supreme Court and High Courts were the only hope and had best record to protect human rights.

The Programme was chaired by Professor Abdulrahim Vijapur, former Chairman, Department of Political Science, and Director, Centre for Nehru Studies, AMU, Aligarh and Visiting Professor to India Chair (instituted by Government of India) at Carlton University, Ottawa, Canada. Before commenting on the five speakers, he lamented that Aligarh Muslim University's various departments failed to organise Human Rights Day event. He appreciated the IOS for taking the initiative. While delivering his remarks he noted that two human rights activists from India and Pakistan – Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousuf – got this year's Nobel Peace Prize at the same time when we were observing Human Rights Day at IOS.

He said that all humans are important as they are the soul of modern political system and that they are indivisible, interdependent and inalienable. He concurred with Maulana Islahis's analysis of super power antagonism with the Muslim world. Elaborating on this point he said that when in 1980s the UN General Assembly was having its Special Session on Palestine, the U.S.

government denied visa to Yasser Arafat to attend the session as PLO representative (as Palestine was given Observer Status by the General Assembly) stating that PLO was a terrorist organisation, the General Assembly decided to shift its venue to Geneva to enable Yasser Arafat to attend the special session.

This was the unity of the world. However, when the proposal of expulsion of Israel from the United Nations was under discussion in the Security Council in 1974, three vetos by US, UK and France were used to defeat the proposal. Prof. Vijapur said that there were many new challenges and threats to human rights. According to him fundamentalism of both the majority and minority community in India was a great threat.

He advocated political consensus to adopt a law of compensation to



L-R: Dr. Mufti Zahid Ali Khan, Prof. Salahuddin Qureshi, Dr. Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid and Prof. Mohammad Muqim

address the issue of unlawful arrest or detention of people, who were mostly from minority communities, Dalits or tribals. He forcefully argued for deleting Article 22 of the Constitution which permits preventive detention (under which PDA, TADA, POTA, MISA and NSA had been adopted by Parliament, which enabled the police to arrest any person merely on the basis of suspicion and keep him/her under detention up to 90 days without producing the person before a magistrate to determine the lawfulness of his/her detention).

While concluding his speech, he recalled the words of Father of the Nation, who had said, "A civilisation

can be judged by the way it treats its minorities". In the light of the mahatma's views he said that the forcible conversion of people from minority communities to Hinduism in Agra this week and the proposed plan of RSS to convert many Christians to Hinduism in Aligarh on December 25, 2014 was the greatest challenge to minority rights. He recalled the Charter of Madina, drafted by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in consultation with the leaders of Jews and Christians, which granted freedom of religion and application of their religious laws in the first Islamic state more than 1400 years ago.

The programme ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. Mohammed Serajuddin Khan of the IOS.

Contd. from page-1

Now Pufendorf and, more famously, Bentham had argued that all propositions involving rights can with ease be translated into propositions based on duties. We can call this a *simple theory of beneficence*. Here if the duty bearer q fails to perform her duty, p's right is not violated, for p possesses no corresponding r (a right) to what q is distributing. For the goods that q is distributing belong to her by right; p has no right to them.

Alternatively, q's obligations do not establish that p has a right to whatever she is giving. The relationship that clusters around the rendering of an obligation, is, therefore, substantially different to one that clusters around rights. This relationship is not q-centred, but p-centred.

From Beyond Secularism: The Rights of Religious Minorities by Neera Chandhoke, pp. 188-190.

Calendar 2015

The IOS calendar 2015 has been published. Agents, Shop-keepers and others may place their order with the IOS Headquarters.

The Four-Page calendar has the following feature:

Page-1 Mosques through the Ages
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Page-2 Country-wise Global Peace
Index-2014

Page-3 India: Percentage of SRCs
in different Educational
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Page-4 India: Work Participation
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Rethinking Jihad by *Ishtiyaque Danish*

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

The Muslim world is passing through a very difficult period. There seems to be turmoil everywhere. Extremism and intolerance are eating into the vitals of the Ummah. And the biggest problem is that there seems to be no towering and far-sighted leader who can be entrusted with redeeming the situation.

From Osama and al-Zawahiri to al-Baghdadi there is no dearth of self-appointed leaders of the Ummah who interpret the verses of the Quran dealing with Jihad in a parochial and partisan manner. Interestingly the verses Osama had used to justify Jihad against the Russians and the Americans are being used by Baghdadi to wage "Jihad" against Muslims themselves. It may be noted here that the Sangh Privar intellectuals also quote, more or less, the same verses to malign Islam as a religion of violence.

Verse five of Surah Tauba is often used both by some so called Islamic champions as well as anti-Islamic elements to justify their apparently diverse and contradictory stands. But first let us quote the verse below:

But when the forbidden months
Are past, then fight and slay
The *Mushrikin* wherever you find
them,
And seize them, beleaguer them,
And lie in wait for them
In every stratagem (of war);
But if they repent,
And establish regular prayer,
And pay Zakah

Then open the way for them;
For Allah is oft-forgiving,
Most merciful.

This is a time and situation-specific verse and its command is not general. The verse is about the people or infidels of Makkah whose enmity towards the Prophet (Pbuh) is well-known. When Muhammad claimed to have received holy revelations from God to call people to Allah, the Makkans rejected and persecuted him. When the persecution failed to stop the spreading of Islam, they decided to kill the Prophet and thus forced him to migrate to Madeenah. Instead of taking the Prophet's migration as a 'good riddance', they launched several attacks on Madeenah. After failing in wars, the Makkans signed treaties with the Prophet which they promised to keep but betrayed him time and again. It is this unfaithful and bitter enemy against whom the above verse was revealed. The command of the verse is not general but Osamas, Baghdadis and anti-Islamic elements mistake and misinterpret it to mean a general order to Muslims to kill anyone who does not believe in Islam.

It may rightly be argued that if a similar situation arises today when Muslims are severely and bitterly persecuted, forced to migrate and militarily attacked time and again in their country of exile, they will surely be allowed to follow the command of the verse quoted above. Even the international order which is in

place today allows such bitterly persecuted people to resist and defend themselves.

The verse quoted above has never been understood as sanctioning the killing of non-combatant innocent people such as women, children and the aged. What Taliban in Pakistan and ISIS in Syria and Iraq are doing is not holy jihad. We do not deny that often the state and its forces wage wars against its own civilian population and mostly kill innocent people. The Americans and Europeans have also committed crimes when they bombed Iraq, Syria and Libya and killed thousands of people. In order to establish democracy in Iraq and Libya, the Americans and the Europeans bombed the two countries extensively, destroyed relatively tyrant but stable governments and, as a result, have unleashed abominable violence and anarchy in Iraq and Syria. Some people may feel that the Americans have killed innocent Muslims including women and children and therefore waging jihad against them is permissible. But then one has to be sure if he or she has the required resources to take on Europe and America. Jihad is not a blind step; instead it is a noble mission and methodology which can be applied in specific situations.

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