



IOS NEWSLETTER

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Thought for the Month

And verily the Hour will come:
 There can be no doubt
 About it, or about (the fact)
 That Allah will raise up
 All who are in the graves.
 Yet there is among men
 Such a one as disputes
 About Allah, without knowledge,
 Without guidance and without
 A Book of Enlightenment,-
 (Disdainfully) bending his side,
 In order to lead (men) astray
 From the Path of Allah:
 For him there is disgrace
 In this life, and on the Day
 Of Judgment We shall
 Make him taste the chastisement
 Of burning (fire).

Al-Quran- 22: 7-9

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FOCUS

Which Muslim, Christian or Jew does not know the name of Ibrahim (peace be on him)! Two-thirds of mankind revere him as their leader. The Prophets Musa, 'Isa and Muhammad, peace be on them, are all his descendants. It is the lamp of guidance lit by him that has for long illuminated the whole world.

Ibrahim was born in what is now Iraq, over four thousand years ago. At that time the people had forgotten the One God. No one recognized Him as the Master, no one lived in surrender and obedience to Him. The people among whom Ibrahim was born, while the most advanced in the world in art and science, industry and agriculture, were also the most steeped in ignorance and error. One simple thing they, despite their technological advance, could not understand: anything which has itself been created cannot be worthy of worship. Idolatry was the norm. Superstitions like astrology, idol-worship, divination, witchcraft and use of talisman and amulets were widespread.

A priest class controlled the temples, supervised worship rites and rituals, conducted marriage and funeral ceremonies, and claimed to be oracles, able to disclose the unknown, foretell the future, and determine Divine wishes. And the people, in general, believed that they indeed had such powers, that they had access to their deities, that they could intercede with them on their behalf or invoke their wrath to fall upon them. For them the priests were the lords of their fate.

The kings were in collusion with the priests, the two sides working together to keep the people under their servitude. They gave full backing to the priests, and the priests made the people believe that the king of the day, as well as being the owner of his country and complete master of his subjects, was also a god among other gods. His word was the supreme law; his power over their lives and properties was absolute. Indeed, worship rites were performed for and before the king so that the belief in his godhood came to be entrenched in the minds of his subjects.

In times like this, the Prophet Ibrahim was born into a family of privileged priests. His forefathers were high priests and it was quite natural that he should follow in their footsteps. He received the same education and training; the same gifts and offerings were awaiting him. Many adherents were eagerly waiting for the moment when they could bow their heads before him with folded hands. The ancestral seat of priestly power could be his for the taking.

In this dismal darkness, where not a single soul existed who knew or believed in the Truth, it would not ordinarily have been possible for a man like Ibrahim to find its light, nor break away from the life of comfort and power mapped out for him by his family.

From *Let Us Be Muslims* ed. by Khurram Murad, pp. 243-245

Activities of the IOS Headquarters

Three-day International Conference on Revisiting Abul Qasim Al-Zahrawi's Legacy in Medicine and Surgery December 13-15, 2013 at New Delhi, India

Concept Note

The seminal and wide-ranging contributions of Islamic civilization to science, medicine, technology, philosophy, architecture and arts have been amply documented and widely acknowledged by historians. A significant aspect of the intellectual history of Islamic civilization is the role of Muslims as intermediaries and interlocutors between different cultures and traditions and as synthesizers, catalysts and disseminators of scientific knowledge and technology. When Muslims came in contact with the legacy of the ancients, including Greek science and philosophy, Indian mathematics and medicine, Egyptian and Roman technology and Persian literary sensibility and political wisdom, they critically sifted it, imbibed its spirit, supplemented it with their own reflections, researches and innovations, and raised the level of knowledge in wide-ranging fields to unprecedented heights. Furthermore, they did not keep the fruits of their researches and innovations to themselves but made them available to large parts of the world.

It has widely been recognised that one of the most important contributions of Muslims to Western civilization was the transmission of the scientific and philosophical legacy of the ancient world to medieval Europe. A movement for the globalisation of science, medicine and philosophy was set in motion in Baghdad during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Mansur (754-775) and his great grandson al-Mamun (d. 833). This movement was marked by extensive translations of scientific, medical and philosophical works from ancient Rome, India, Persia and Egypt, a creative synthesis of the researches of Muslim scholars and scientists and those of the ancients,

the establishment of scientific institutions, the employment of Arabic as the lingua franca of scientific communication, and the creation of a multiethnic, multi-religious community of scientists and scholars. From 622 to 1492 Arabic replaced Greek as the international language of science and medicine. Roger Bacon (d. 1293) acknowledged that almost all of Aristotle's works were available only in Arabic translations and that without Arabic, Greek knowledge would have never reached Europe. The Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has remarked that "as leaders of innovative thought in that period in history, Muslim intellectuals were among the most committed globalisers of science and mathematics."

For more than five centuries, from 750 to 1258 AD – which is often described as the Golden Age of Islamic science -- the teaching and practice of medicine in Europe was heavily influenced by the works of Al-Razi (d. 925), Al-Zahrawi (d. 1013) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037).

Abul Qasim Khalaf ibn al-Abbas al-Zahrawi (940-1013), known as Albucasis in the West, devoted his entire life, in Madinat al-Zahra, near Cordoba, in Muslim Spain, to medical research and practice. He made an outstanding and original contribution to medicine, surgery, orthopaedics, gynaecology and obstetrics, pharmacology and dentistry. He has been described as the father of modern surgery. More than a thousand years ago, Al-Zahrawi diagnosed and treated many diseases, which came to be rediscovered and confirmed in later centuries. He described what later came to be known as "Kocher's method" for treating a dislocated shoulder, and the "Walcher position" in obstetrics. He described the method of ligaturing blood vessels almost six centuries before the French surgeon Ambroise Pare (1510-1590). He described tuberculosis of the spine, which is now known as Pott's disease (named after the English physician Percivall Pott, 1714-1788). He prescribed mastectomy for breast cancer.

Al-Zahrawi described, for the first time in medical history, a genetic disease transmitted by an unaffected woman to her male children, which is today known as haemophilia. The first description of haemophilia in the West was made by an American physician, Dr John Conrad Otto, in 1803. Al-Zahrawi advised the use of catgut, a thread made from the inner intestinal lining of animals that is capable of dissolving and is acceptable by the body, which is still used in modern surgical procedures. He was the first to use silk sutures to close wounds. He was also the first to use forceps in vaginal delivery, which greatly reduced the incidence of maternal and child mortality. He recommended the use of cotton in surgical dressings, in the control of haemorrhage, and as a padding in the splinting of fractures. Al-Zahrawi was among the first to prescribe a surgical procedure for migraine.

A significant aspect of Al-Zahrawi's multifaceted contributions to medicine and surgery relates to the diagnosis and treatment of women's problems and diseases. He instructed and trained midwives and wrote a section on midwifery in his magnum opus, *Al-Tasrif*. Some of the clinical and surgical devices and instruments designed by him were meant to be used for women.

Al-Zahrawi's classic treatise *Kitab al-Tasrif liman ajiza al al-talif* is universally acknowledged as the first systematic, comprehensive and illustrated textbook of surgery. The book, which was the result of 50 years of clinical research and practice and runs into 30 volumes, is a veritable encyclopaedia of medicine and surgery. A major part of the book deals with materia medica and the remaining parts with wide-ranging subjects such as anatomy, clinical medicine, dentistry, midwifery and childbirth, bloodletting, the bearing of temperament on disease, the relationship between diet and disease, and the naming and compounding of drugs. Al-Zahrawi described more than hundred diseases and their treatment. The last part of the book - the 30th treatise - deals with surgery.

Al-Zahrawi is credited with having invented a number of clinical and surgical instruments, including the finely pointed scalpel to cut up a swollen foreign body in the ear, eye speculum, fine conjunctival hooks, ophthalmic scissors, respiratory for lachrymal fistulae, fine couching needles, scrappers for teeth, forceps for the removal of broken roots of teeth and for the wiring of teeth, and the use of ox bone for artificial teeth. The operative removal of a ranula and the use of a tonsil guillotine and mouth gag in a tonsillectomy are among the original procedures of Al-Zahrawi. *Al-Tasrif* contains more than 200 illustrations and drawings of clinical and surgical devices and instruments, and many of them were designed by him. These include scalpels, probe syringes, obstetric forceps, curettes, hooks, rods, specula, the surgical needle and forceps. These devices and instruments were adopted by surgeons in the past and some of them are still in use today.

Al-Tasrif was translated into Latin, as *Liber al-Sahrawi de Chirurgia*, by Gerard of Cremona at Toledo in the 12th century. This translation was printed in Venice in 1497. In 1778 Johannes Channing brought out an Oxford edition of *Al-Tasrif*, and a French translation of the book, *La Chirurgie d'Albucasis*, by Lucien Leclerc was published from Paris in 1961. A lithographic Arabic edition with stylized figures was printed in Lucknow in 1908. An English translation of 30 (thirty) articles together with the original text, drawings of surgical instruments, footnotes and commentary, edited by M. S. Spink and G. L. Lewis, was published by the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in 1973.

For nearly five centuries, from the 11th to the 16th, al-Zahrawi was the most cited medical authority in Europe and his work on surgery had a profound impact on European physicians and surgeons. Almost all European writers of surgery in the Middle Ages made extensive references to Al-Zahrawi's work and drew upon his clinical insights and surgical innovations. The celebrated

French surgeon Guy de Chauliac (d. 1368) made repeated references to Al-Zahrawi in his writings and even appended the Latin translation of his surgical treatise to his book *Chirurgia magna*. He ranked al-Zahrawi alongside Hippocrates and Galen. Al-Zahrawi was hailed by the eminent Italian surgeon Pietro Argellata (d. 1423) as "the chief of all surgeons". The renowned French surgeon Jaques Delchamps (d. 1588) made frequent references to al-Zahrawi's work in his writings. Al-Zahrawi's surgical treatise remained a reference book on the subject in all leading European universities from the 15th to the 18th century. Many of the renowned figures in modern science and medicines, including Fallopius, Vesalius, Cardan and Harvey, drew upon the works of al-Zahrawi, al-Razi and Ibn Sina. The renowned historian of science George Sarton, in his monumental *An Introduction to the History of Science*, has remarked that no single book, other than *Al-Tasrif*, influenced and revolutionised the art of surgery from the 11th to the 14th century.

W. S. Halsted (1852-1922), the doyen of modern American surgery, credited Al-Zahrawi for performing the first successful thyroidectomy, and remarked, "The extirpation of the thyroid gland for goiter typifies, perhaps better than any other operation, the supreme triumph of the surgeon's art -- which is indeed a very great attribute".

Four aspects of al-Zahrawi's enduring legacy in medicine and surgery are particularly note-worthy. First, he anticipated and pioneered the diagnosis and treatment of several diseases, through highly innovative clinical and surgical methods, centuries before they were rediscovered by European physicians. Second, many of his clinical methods and surgical procedures and instruments continue to be followed, albeit in more sophisticated forms, in modern clinical and surgical practices. Third, there is a growing worldwide recognition of the holistic view of health and disease, which was espoused by al-Zahrawi, in modern medical discourse. Fourth, there is a

revival of interest in modern times of some of the novel surgical procedures recommended by al-Zahrawi.

Objectives

- To commemorate al-Zahrawi's 1000th death anniversary and to highlight his highly original and enduring contributions to the advancement of modern medicine and surgery
- To sensitize scientists, physicians and surgeons, especially those of the younger generation, to the grandeur of Islamic civilization and its role in the shaping of the modern world
- To disseminate awareness and appreciation about al-Zahrawi's outstanding contributions to medicine among physicians, surgeons and other medical and health-related professionals in India
- To offer a contemporary assessment of al-Zahrawi's contributions in the light of modern clinical researches and surgical procedures
- To offer a corrective to the Eurocentric bias in the Western discourse on the history of science and medicine

Sub-themes/Sessions

1. Islamic Ethos in Al-Zahrawi's contribution to surgery and medicine
2. The relevance of al-Zahrawi's clinical methods and surgical procedures and instruments to modern medicine and surgery and dentistry
3. Al-Zahrawi's holistic vision of health and disease and its relevance in the contemporary medical discourse; Islamic concept of Physical Health
4. Al-Zahrawi's contribution to orthopaedics and its contemporary relevance
5. Al-Zahrawi's contribution to gynaecology and obstetrics and its enduring significance
6. Al-Zahrawi's works and Tibb-e-Unani in South Asia
7. Al-Zahrawi's enduring contribution to pharmacology
8. The Prominence of Islamic Perspective in al-Zahrawi's

contributions; Why Islamic world has not produced another Zahrawi in the last 1000 years

Proceedings of the Panel Discussion on Wakf Amendment Act, 2013 on October 08, 2013 organised by IOS at IICC, New Delhi

As many as 12 suggestions were made by the experts who assembled to deliberate on Wakf Amendment Act-2013 at a discussion organised by the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) at the India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi on October 08, 2013. There was a commonplace among the speakers that the Act has made much headway as far as the management of Wakf properties is concerned. Mr. K. Rehman Khan, Union Minister for Minority Affairs, could not make it to the panel discussion on account of his indisposition. He, however, asked the Chairman of IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam to brief him on the outcome of the deliberations, so that correction measure could be taken to make the Act more purposeful and conforming to the spirit of Islamic Shariah.

In his presidential address, the former judge of the Gujarat High Court, Mr. Justice Abdus Sattar Qureshi hailed the Amendment Act as very positive, especially the insertions of Section 104A and 104B in the principal Act. It may be recalled that while Section 104A prohibits sale, gift, exchange, mortgage or transfer of wakf property, Section 104B stipulates restoration of wakf properties in occupation of government agencies to the Wakf Board. He called for protecting wakf properties worth Rs. 130 thousand crores in the country and stressed the need for finding out committed people who could save the wakf property from encroachment and misuse. He lamented that today the Muslim community is pitted against itself and the enactment of the amended law has afforded us an opportunity to put the wakf property to

the use of umma. Ways must be found to save the wakf property and make better use of it. Emphasizing the need for creating awareness among the umma, he said a situation is bound to emerge in which the younger generation will take over from us. He pointed out that in the process of saving the property, cases may drag on in courts, but they must be pursued to seek justice. He praised the Indian legislation as the best in the world but regretted that its implementation was very poor. He struck a note of caution that hurdles are put up at every level, but we have to remain vigilant or else the progeny would not forgive us.

Initiating the discussion Prof. Afzal Wani of the School of Law and Legal Studies, G.G.S. Indraprastha



A view of the Panelists

University explained that the very idea of wakf was visualized by the second Caliph, Hazrat Umar, who aroused the consciousness of society by stating that the wakf property was not meant for profit-making, but for nourishing society. He said the wakf should be managed in accordance with the Shariah without the least interference from the government. Dr. Zafar Mahmood, Chairman, Inter-faith Coalition for Peace remarked that the IOS had done an outstanding job in the field of wakf by undertaking comprehensive research. This facilitated the experts in Islamic jurisprudence, ulema and the leaders of the Muslim community to gather for useful suggestions. He was also all praise for the work by the Haryana Wakf Board. He emphatically said he

was on the side of wakfs noting that about 70 percent of the recommendations made by the joint select committee, have been accepted and incorporated into the wakf amendment Act. Referring to the calculation of loss due to misuse of wakf properties made by the Sachar Committee, he said that it ran into billions of rupees. He suggested that the wakf premises be defined as per the recommendations of the Sachar Committee. He dwelt at length on the definition of encroachment on wakf property, alteration in its nature, acquisition and removal of encroachment on it, besides mutation of property. He wanted the government to ensure that the wakf properties occupied by the central government and the state governments are vacated by them and restored to wakf boards in compliance with the letter written by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Indira Gandhi to the Chief Ministers as far back as 1976. Point-wise contents of the letter dated March 26, 1976:

- State governments must ensure that wakfs are properly maintained

and administered by the State Wakf Boards in terms of the Wakf Act of 1965.

- For a variety of reasons, including unsettled conditions after partition, a large number of wakf properties have gone into the adverse possession of private parties as well as state government departments and local bodies.
- The Wakf Board could well start legal proceedings against the concerned state government departments. Obviously, such litigation would not be desirable. Hence, you should settle the issue on an administrative basis.
- As far back as 1961, we had made three concrete suggestions for quick settlement of such cases:
 - (i) Where feasible the Wakf properties should be vacated and

handed over to the Wakf Board concerned.

- (ii) Where costly buildings have been put up on the land and their vacation is not feasible, the state government may enter into permanent leases with the Wakf Boards, after paying to the Boards the bulk of the market value as premium; or
- (iii) In the alternative, the state governments may arrange to make over the fair market value of the lands in the Boards, which will relinquish their rights over the land, if in their direct management, or obtain from the Mutawallis concerned with their consent, the necessary deeds on relinquishment.
- I understand that Wakf Boards have sent your government lists of wakf properties in the possession of government departments and local bodies. Please see that these are dealt with as suggested. A periodic review should be undertaken and a monthly report sent to me and to the Minister of Wakfs.
- Most wakf properties are leased out on very nominal rent which can not be increased because of Rent Control Acts. In its Interim Report the Wakf Inquiry Committee has suggested that all public wakfs serving a religious or charitable purpose or for that matter all public trust and endowments belonging to any community, should be exempted from the provisions of the Rent Control Acts.
- The committee rightly felt that Wakfs, which are not meant to benefit individuals, should be treated differently from individual landlords.
- I understand that at the suggestions of the Centre, the states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have already agreed to exempt public wakf properties from respective Rent Control Act.
- Please look into the possibility of making a similar exemption in your state.

Former Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University, M. Naseem Ahmad, referred to the slackness of the government in respect

of the matters relating to wakfs. He said the prevailing atmosphere is hostile and it is difficult to administer wakfs. To buttress his point, he said certain mosques in Haryana have been encroached upon and encroachers are running schools there. Some of the wakf properties are being looked after by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee in Haryana and Punjab. Mr. Rizwanul Haque, former Secretary, Central Wakf Council, commended the Wakf Amendment Act, 2013 by saying it has gone beyond the Sachar Committee recommendations. He especially referred to the provision of penal action in the Act. Emphasizing the need for amendment in the composition of the Central Wakf Council, he said the inadequacies in the presentation of the data be removed. He admired the skill and commitment of Mr. K. Rehman Khan.

Mrs. Rana Siddiqui, advocate, pointed out that certain discrepancies in the use of words in Section 4 of the Act. She said that with the amendment in Section 14 of the principal Act, Section 13 has become redundant. Former judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, Justice Fakhruddin Ahmed observed that the overriding powers given to the tribunals should be debated. It opened scope for challenge in a court of law, he said. Former Chief Justice of India, Mr. Justice A.M. Ahmadi said there are a large number of properties, but some of them are managed properly and the rest are being mis-managed. Underlining the importance of implementation of the provisions in the legislation, he said the bottlenecks to it be removed. Prof. Z.M. Khan, Member of the Central Wakf Council and Secretary-General of the IOS was of the view that unless the beneficiaries of the wakfs are brought into light, the very purpose of the Act will be defeated. Calling for democratization of wakfs, he said a connect with the beneficiaries be established. He said the sociology of the wakfs demands that the beneficiaries be made aware. He cited the case of several countries, like Sudan, Kuwait, etc. where wakf properties are being successfully

managed as per Shariah law adding that pieces of land are big revenue earners. Pointing out certain discrepancies in the amendment Act, he said wakf property is nobody's property. Therefore, it should be treated as pious and respected, he remarked. Prof. Refaat Ali Khan, former Dean of Social Science, Jamia Millia Islamia, (JMI) associated himself with the views expressed by other speakers. Dr. Iqbal Husain of the Department of Law, JMI, spoke at length on the rights conferred by the Act. Categorising them as political, religious and divine rights, he said that better administration of wakfs and the protection of property is the need of the hour. He made special mention of the amendments in Section 51 and 83. He pleaded for the provision of inclusion of a member well-versed in the Muslim law. Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad, senior Supreme Court advocate, called for making district magistrates, additional district magistrates and sub-divisional magistrates, accountable for non-implementation of the Act. He also laid stress on the need for acting upon the Act and finding ways to take full advantage of its provisions. He wanted to know why wakfs are not being created. Instead, he said that trusts are being created for fear of unnecessary supervision of the wakf board. He made an impassioned plea for allowing those also who are willing to create wakfs but do not want the supervision of the wakf board.

In his concluding remarks, Chairman of the IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, said that by ensuring the enactment of the wakf law, Mr. K. Rehman Khan, kept his promise he made at an interactive meeting organised by the IOS on November 14, 2012. Sounding an optimistic note, he said it is not an end and that such programmes will continue to be organised in future also. Efforts will be made to frame rules, regulations and bye-laws. These will be submitted to the Union Minister for Minority Affairs. Salient features of these rules will be debated in order to make them more effective. Another meeting will be organised in the near future for the purpose.

Earlier, Mr. Raju Mansukhani made a presentation of the provisions of the principal Act, amended Act and the suggestions received from IOS, Administrator, Haryana Wakf Board, All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Mr. Khwaja Abdul Muntaqim, Mr. Mujeeb and Mr. Yusuf Hatim Muchala, advocate.

Minutes of the Al-Zahrawi Conference

A meeting was held in the chamber of chairman/IOS on 30-10-2013 at 12:30 in regard with conference of Al-Zahrawi. The following were present in the meeting.

1. Dr Manzoor Alam in the chair
2. Mr Iqbal Husain
3. Mr Ataur Rahman
4. Mr Abdul Haque
5. Mr Khalid Nadwi
6. Dr Qamar Ishaque
7. Mr Mansoor Ahmad
8. Dr Nakhat Hussain

The following points were discussed and finalized.

1. Advisory committee will be held on 09-11- 13 at IOS, New Delhi, to finalize the name of the members of Reception Committee and other relating issues. The final shape will be given to others committees too, such as Advisory Committee, Organizing Committee, Exhibition Committee and Scientific Committee. In addition of it, memento and souvenir will also be discussed and finalized.
2. The matter of collaboration will be discussed of certain institutions such as MESCO Hyderabad, Hai Medical Centre and Al- Shifa Multispecialty Hospital, New Delhi, along with IOS. Some institutions like Jamia Hamdard and Ibn e Sina Academy Aligarh (No money) should be included.
3. An actual budget estimates with addition of 20% to 25% to meet unforeseen/ miscellaneous expenses.
4. Reminders will be delivered through letter and telephone to all

foreign participants to whom letters have gone earlier.

5. The elaborative letters will go to all foreign participants who have written us letters in regard of paper contribution.
6. All missives with previous references will be written in Arabic only to all Arabian Embassies and concept note will be attached with. The previous links of Indo-Arab conferences and silver jubilee conferences will also be sent along. In addition, we will seek appointment from all concerned Embassies.
7. Letters to be shoot to all concerned academicians relating submission of papers.
8. Demand will be put to Acting VC of Jamia Millia Islamia for ten rooms in university's guest house as complementary, being academic collaboration with denting department of Jamia Millia Islamia.
9. Write to letter Dr Fakhruddin regarding current status of sponsorship and other relating issues...
10. Write to letter Mr Manzoor Ahmad regarding the programme at Meerut and IOS coloboration as well.
11. To send brochure to Dr Abdul Hai through e-mail for his opinion and suggestion.
12. To prepare a conference responsibility chart at IOS with immediate effect.
13. A committee of four officers got constituted of Mr Iqbal Hussain, Mr Ataur Rahman, Mr Abdul Haque and Dr Nikhat Hussain to ensure the proper preparation of it and finally to morph it into a success. However this committee will meet on each alternate day to review the process.
14. Write to letter about lunch/dinner sponsorship to Mr K. Rahman Khan (Hon'ble Minister of Minority Affairs, Govt. of India) Chief Minister of Delhi, Mr Nasir Arvi (Secretary Tawun Trust) Maulana Asrarul Haque Qasmi (M.P) and Pravez Hashmi etc.....

IOS Current Affairs

Short Takes

Who Is Behind Those Riots? Dr Mohammad Manzoor Alam

Every few days we learn about some anti-Muslim riot staged somewhere in India. The most unfortunate part is that these riots generally occur in non-BJP states, run by "secular" parties whose credentials are not generally questioned. Not that they do not occur in BJP-ruled states like Gujarat 2002 or Indore (MP) yesterday. The point to note is that they are used to polarise Hindu vote for BJP.

This way the worst record has been that of Samajwadi-ruled Uttar Pradesh, with about 30 anti-Muslim riots since Akhilesh Yadav took over as Chief Minister. It is clear that these riots are not staged by the Samajwadi Party, but by some other group.

However, the question is why can't the Samajwadi government control riots in Pratapgarh or check the goondas of Mahant Adityanath, or those of Raja Bhaiya? The plain answer is that the SP does not act against their goondas because the mahanth and Raja Bhaiya are SP allies.

But why can't Nitish Kumar control rioters in Navada, or Ashok Gehlot in his own state? Nitish cannot fight back people who were his allies till yesterday, and Ashok Gehlot does not seem to be in control of his own police and administration.

A very disturbing question is what are the secular parties and their supporters doing when homes and shops are being burnt down and people killed in daylight as policemen watch or participate in the crime? What is the civil society doing?

Is the entire political system ruling and opposition combined—complicit in the mass murder of Muslims? Has the civil society itself become criminalised like German civil society during Hitler's rule?

To answer the question as to who stages the riots "like theatre" (Paul

Brass's words for anti-Muslim riots in India), the answer is, "whoever benefits from them." And the only party that benefits from riots is BJP. Digvijay Singh's warning that BJP would organise a series of riots all over the country to polarise vote on communal lines and win has to be heeded. BJP has no positive agenda, is not capable of one. All it can do is create hatred between citizens and organise violence against religious minorities. Be careful and watch out at least till the next election ends.

Briefly

See No Evil

Remember the Mahatmaji's three moral monkeys, who were taught "not to see evil, not to hear evil, not to speak evil". That, in fact, is a high standard of personal morality.

However, it must be kept in mind that public morality is quite different from the personal. That is why when the Union Home Ministry recently refused to take note of the alleged involvement of Abhinav Bharat in terrorism, one was amazed. Public morality, or the kind of morality required for governance, is not covered by the monkeys' antics.

The fact remains that quite a few like Col. Purohit and Aseemanand have been obliquely related to the programmes conducted by Abhinav Bharat, besides the openly anti-Muslim, vile-tongued niece of a Hindutva leader of earlier vintage.

One only hopes that such restraint would also be exercised in the case of weaker groups in the future. The Home Minister has refused to act against Abhinav Bharat on insufficient grounds, contrary to a large number of Muslim youth languishing in jail for years on mere suspicion. Equality before law is a vital point in our Constitution. The Hon'ble Home Minister and ministry should take note of it. **-IOSCA.**

Contd. from page-8

This was the purpose of Tasawwuf which Iqbal admired and appreciated. There have been such great Sufis in the past and such noble pious men existed

in Iqbal's time also. Iqbal had great regard for them.

But Iqbal was opposed to deviations from true Tasawwuf whether practical or intellectual. The Sufi shrines of his time, as he found, were not practicing true Tasawwuf and therefore drew his criticism. But true Sufis were always a source of inspiration for him. Tasawwuf for him was a message of life, alive and active which was contrary to the lifeless rituals found in the Sufi shrines of his time.

Calendar 2014

The IOS calendar 2014 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
- Page-2 World: Global Hunger Index (GHI) Scores 1996, 2001 and 2012
- Page-3 World: Country-wise Diabetes Prevalence (%) 1995, 2000 and 2010 for Population (Number of Adults ages >=20 years)
- Page-4 India: Distribution of Pre-matric Scholarship for Muslim Minority Community students 2010-11 & 2011-12

The calendar may also be obtained from

Qazi Publishers & Distributors

B-35, Basement, Nizamuddin West
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Price per calendar Rs. 25/-
(include packing, excludes postage)
US\$ 1 (including packing excludes postage)

Iqbal and Tasawwuf by Ishtiyaque Danish

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

Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of the East, had a personality of many dimensions. Going through his works, especially poetry, we occasionally gather the impression if he supported or opposed Tasawwuf. When he decided to go to Europe for higher education, he visited Delhi to seek the blessings of the famous Sufi saint, Hadhrat Nizamuddin Awlia.

He even wrote a beautiful poem in his honour. The Sufis and religious scholars of his time were greatly impressed by his poetry which had a distinct Islamic colour and orientation. Iqbal also had great regard for some of his contemporary Sufis. One such saintly personality lived in a small town near Lahore. Iqbal once went to meet him. The saint was offering the mid-day prayer. After the prayer Iqbal wanted to meet the Sufi but the later's disciples prevented him because he did not have a beard.

Deeply saddened, Iqbal began retreating to Lahore. He was passing through the market, when the Sufi came there running, bare footed and in a state of shock. He apologised profusely saying that he didn't know that the visitor was Iqbal.

In fact, after the mid day prayer the sufi was sitting among his disciples when he was informed that a clean-

shaven man wanted to meet him. The sufi had made it a principle that he would not give audience to unbearded people. When Iqbal was out of sight, some one mustered courage to tell the sufi that the person refused an audience was none but Iqbal. One hearing it, he said loudly that the principle of not meeting the unbearded persons did not apply to Iqbal and he rushed out of the mosque to bring him back to the mosque. The sufi was indeed greatly impressed by Iqbal's great Islamic poetry.

Iqbal was brought up in a deeply religious environment where saints were venerated very much. His father was not a highly educated man but knew a lot about great works of Tasawwuf; many scholars of Tasawwuf would often meet him and discuss one or another aspect of Tasawwuf. Naturally this spiritual environment had made a deep impact on Iqbal.

But Iqbal had a change of mind when he was studying in Europe. During the course of his deep and thorough study of Islamic philosophy he came across books and ideas which greatly disturbed him. He realized and concluded that the so call Islamic philosophers had propounded ideas which contradicted some fundamental teachings of Islam. He was especially perturbed by Ibn

Arabi's concept of *Wahdah al-Wajud*.

Far away from India Iqbal also pondered over some practical aspects of Tasawwuf. He discovered that many rituals and practices common in Sufi shrines had no basis in Islam. He felt that the purpose of Tasawwuf – purification of soul – was lost. He, therefore, became critical of the Tasawwuf that was practiced, rather marketed for financial gains in Sufi shrines of India.

Tasawwuf in its early phase was a call to *Akhira*. When the conquests brought wealth and power to the Islamic world, many people developed and took the love of this world to a level where they forgot to fulfil the requirements of true religion. The true scholars of Islam were deeply disturbed at the new trend and development and therefore urged upon people that the world they loved so much was ephemeral whereas the world of *Akhira*, the Hereafter, was the real thing, the permanent abode of mankind. They also urged people to purify their souls of worldly love by remembering God constantly.

Contd. on page-7

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