

INSTITUTE OF OBJECTIVE STUDIES, NEW DELHI

Two-day National Conference

on

“ALLAMA HABIB-UR-RAHMAN AZMI: LIFE AND WORKS”

July 6-7, 2019, at New Delhi

CONCEPT NOTE

Indian ulema have left an indelible mark of their erudition on different branches of Islamic studies, like tafseer and its rules, study of Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence and fatwa, seerah, Arabic language and literature, Sufism, philosophy, poetry, writing of history and memoirs etc. The rich contribution made by ulema and scholars of India to the study of Hadith, is unparalleled in entire Islamic world in the last three or four centuries. The valuable services rendered by Abu Ma'ashir Sindhi, Raziuddin Hasan Sanaani, Tahir Sindhi, Ali Muttaqui, Abdul Wahab Muttaqui, Mohammad Tahir Patni, Abdul Hasan Sindhi, Shah Abdul Haq Mohaddis Dehalvi, Shah Waliullah Mohaddis Dehlvi, Shah Abdul Aziz Mohaddis Dehlvi, Maulana Abdul Haq Firangi Mahli, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri in enriching the study of Hadith, have illuminated not only the sub-continent, but also the entire Islamic world. Eminent Egyptian Islamic scholar, Allama Syed Rashid Raza (d 1935), who visited India in 1912, had recognised invaluable services of the Indian ulema, mohaddisin (scholars of Hadith) and said: "If our Muslim brothers, the Indian ulema, had not paid attention to the study and dissemination of Hadith, this knowledge would have disappeared from the world as Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Hejaz once centres of this learning, had lost their glory.

The last scholar of this highly acclaimed caravan of the interpreters of Hadith (mohaddisin) who survived, was Abul Ma'asir Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi. Undoubtedly, he was one of the symbols that Allah created. Such rare personalities are born once in several centuries. The life and personality of Hazrat Abul Ma'asir was multi-faceted and of rare qualities. His deep knowledge predominated his personality. According to the *Taaba'i* sufi (who saw a companion of the Prophet (PBUH), Hazrat Qatadah bin Dam'a, Allah has blessed the Muslim ummah with unparalleled power of memorisation. This is not found in any other religion. History books are full of references to mohaddisin who memorised the Quran and Hadith. Hazrat Abul Ma'asir was

one such scholar as gifted with the power of memorization who hardly had any peers in his times. His deep study, keenness of perception, exceptional sense of understanding, power of deducing conclusions and pin-pointing, remind us of the scholarship of famed mohaddisin like Shamsuddin Zahbi. He possessed the capability of solving difficult tangles relating to knowledge and explaining them in a very lucid manner. The notable aspect of his personality lay in the high standard of understanding of tafseer and its rules, Fiqh, Seerah, Arabic language and literature, philosophy, history and the writing of anecdotes. Hazrat Abul Ma'asir's love for Islamic manuscripts and his knowledge about them is found only in a few ulema of today. The correspondence between him and Maulana Abul Wafa Afghani illustrates their interest in the manuscripts. He was so well informed of the presence of manuscripts in different libraries of the world that he could tell of the places of the availability of micro-filmed copies of them. He used to put in efforts to outsource micro films of the required manuscripts from the libraries. He would visit the libraries of the cities where he stayed even for a brief period and inspect the manuscripts there.

Hazrat Abul Ma'asir's main contribution to Hadith was the search and publication of rare manuscripts relating to it which remained inaccessible to the ulema, mohaddisin for several centuries. Books written by noted scholars like Abdul Razzaq, Masuad Hameedi, Sunan bin Masur Khurasani, Ibne Abi Sheeba who wrote *Kitab Azzuahad war Raqa'iq*, Hafiz Hashmi who wrote *Kashful Asta Raan Zawaid al Bazar* and Hafiz Ibne Hajr's *Al-Mutaalib Al-Alia*, were published as a result of Abul Ma'asir's researches.

These books are known for the deletion and discovery of a number of Ahadith by those who quoted them. He stood out as a scholar who deleted about 1,300 Ahadith of Mashad Hameedi by relying on the books on Hadith handed down from generation to generation. The high standard of Hazrat Abul Ma'asir's research and its application stumped Western orientalist. While making the assessment of his works, one will reach the conclusion that despite ample resources, the academies of letters and other institutions cannot stand anywhere near the endeavours of the maulana.

About four or five years before his death, Hazrat Maulaula Abul Ma'asir went to Cairo on the invitation of Jamia al-Azhar. While introducing him to the ulema and scholars present on the occasion, Sheikh al-Azhar described him as *human kabaar al-Mohaddisin fil alam wa akbartum fil Hind*. Allama Zahid al Kausari, a well known Islamic scholar described him as *al-Ilmatul nahrir and al ustadul jaleel*. Noted Egyptian researcher, Sheikh Ahmed Mohammad Shakir called him *al alamatul kabir al mohaqqiq*. While Sheikh al-Azhar Tibbul Lisan

was his ardent admirer the famed Islamic scholar Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Baaz was his favourite student. With the Grace of Allah, what contributed to his stature as an extraordinary alim, was his own pursuit of knowledge and research of Islamic learning.

The intellectual contribution and research of the orientalist is two-fold. It is either positive or negative. Honesty demands that while critically examining their contribution, both the aspects should be factored in. Maulana Abul Ma'asir preserved the manuscripts by obtaining their micro films. This amply illustrates his broad vision, balanced reasoning and approach.

During the last century, the Islamic world as well as India had several ulema of repute who rendered exceptional services to the enrichment of Islamic studies. Among them were quite a few ulema who possessed interpretative vision, besides the knowledge of *fiqh*. Maulana Abul Ma'asir was one among them ulema whose writings show interpretative vision. His interpretative farsight is reflected in his books like *Tazkirat un-nisa Jeen*, his *Risale ansaab-o-kifayat*, *Risaale Dar Assalam aur Darul Harab*. The maulana always gave paramount importance to fairness in treating the subject. In this connection, he always refused to be influenced by anyone and never liked to admire anybody without reason. He used to deal with the difference of opinion on Ahadith with his intellectual expertise and research. In our times, a school of thought prefers to hold independent opinion of the rest of the schools of thought and treats itself better than others. This school of thought shows genuine efforts, particularly of Imam-e-Azam, in poor light. Maulana Abul Ma'asir refuted such ideas and theories with his argumentative prowess. He logically rejected the theory propagated by Sheikh Nasiruddin Albani and proved Mufti Mohammad Shafi Deobandi on the issue of *kifayat* right. He also rejected Maulana Saeed Ahmad Akbarabadi's views on the issues of Indian Shariah and *fiqh*.

Maulana Abul Ma'asir was one of the ulema who were endowed with high-level mental and intellectual abilities by Allah. During his student days he was initiated by Maulana Thanvi and he later benefited from Maulana Ahmad Pratapgarhi and Maulana Wasiullah Fatehpuri. He was deeply interested in the study of Sufi literature, which is reflected in his brief book *Ahle Ilm ki Dilawez Baatein*. He also wrote a commentary on *Manqib al Arifeen* under the title *Poorab ki Chand Buzurg Hastiyan*. Unlike other ulema, he used to discharge his religious and milli responsibilities despite engagement in research and writing. He remained in constant touch with ulema, students and common people by way of teaching and addressing them. He had a sense of responsibility for his students and helped them in every way possible. People

from far off areas came to him for inviting him to lay the foundation of a mosque or an Islamic seminary, or to participate in the *Khatm Bukhari Sharif*, or to address religious congregations. He never disappointed such people and travelled in spite of the discomfort during the travel.

With a view to acquainting the high-level contribution of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi to Islamic studies and his services to Islam, with the ulema and the sections that received modern education, a two day national conference on “Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi: Life and Works” is being organised by the Institute of Objective Studies at New Delhi on July 6 and 7, 2019. The following topics relating to the multi-faceted contributions of Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi to Islamic learning and religion will be discussed at the conference:

1. Evaluating the profound contributions of Allama Habibur Rahman Azmi among Indian mohaddisin
2. Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi: Life and Personality
3. High profile of Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi among ulema
4. Allama Habib-ur-Rahman Azmi and Islamic manuscripts
5. Allama Habib-ur-Rahman’s vision of *fiqh* and interpretation
6. Allama Habib-ur-Rahman’s contribution in the present context

Important dates:

- Last date for the submission of summary of papers (In doc and pdf, Inpage file): June 15, 2019.
- The date of acceptance/rejection of the summary of papers: June 18, 2019.
- Last date for the submission of the complete papers (in doc and pdf, inpage file): June 25, 2019.

For further enquiry, please contact:

Institute of Objective Studies

162, Jogabai Main Road, New Delhi-25

26981187, 26987467, 26989253

Email: ios.newdelhi@gmail.com www.iosworld.org