



## Nationalism Not Clubbed With Religion

The last week saw an unprecedented escalation of tension between two nuclear powers, i.e. Indian and Pakistan. The situation was exacerbated after the launch of Operation Sindoor by India to retaliate against Pakistan-backed terrorist groups, after the Pahalgam attack of 22 April, in which 26 civilians were killed by the operatives of The Resistance Force (TRF) a largely unknown entity.

In a tit for tat manner, after Operation Sindoor carried on the night of May 6-7 by India, Pakistan launched a series of drone attacks and heavy shelling along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir on Wednesday (May 7). The Indian response to this aggression continued the second and third day, too and a ceasefire was declared on the fourth day i.e. May 10.

The country's political and military leadership adopted a principled stand of not tolerating any terrorist activity on the Indian soil, and showed its commitment of giving a fitting reply to any such offensive, further boosted by its diplomatic outreach. However, another pillar of any functioning democracy i.e. the media – particularly the electronic media showed its immaturity by broadcasting often inaccurate and speculative information, in addition to completely unnecessary analyses, often bordering on sowing the seeds of religious animosity. The country's electronic and social media was reporting on the situation as per their own script, despite a circular issued by the government not to report sensational and unconfirmed news. In the latest episode, the Indian TV channels who have now scripted a completely new ecosystem of reporting, devoid of following any known journalistic standards, went on a completely different track of over-reporting the Indian successes. In this they were helped by the dime a dozen defence and strategic affairs experts, who while offering an insight or analysing the given situation offered their own biased and sensational insights of the unfolding events.

Following the TV channels was the social media, which in India has evolved its own unique ecosystem of peddling unconfirmed and largely false news, besides every lay man posing as experts offered their own twisted interpretation of the unfolding events. One such issue being discussed on some TV channels, most social media platforms and even in some newspapers was the question that which country is going to favour whom or in other words, which Islamic countries are going to support Pakistan, if a war really starts between two nuclear powered countries.

These experts or pundits with no clue of the warfare or the geo-political realities, transformed the whole question of support, based on religion, i.e. which Islamic country is going to support and help Pakistan and which will help India. Now if we go by the definitions of these experts then India will only have one country in its support, i.e. Nepal, as it is the only country which declares itself to be a Hindu nation. But on the contrary many Arab nations, who are often described as Islamic nations, supported India.

Further, these experts clubbed all Muslim majority nations as Islamic countries, though in the real sense not even one country out of these could be described as an Islamic nation, as none of them fulfils the true definition

of an Islamic nation. In real sense, international diplomacy is a nuanced arena where overt alliances often mask complex strategic calculations. For instance, while countries like Turkey and China have supported Pakistan at multilateral forums, their positions are also driven by broader geopolitical rivalries and their own regional interests.

These experts also wondered whether countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey, Iran, Oman, Qatar will support Islamabad in the name of Ummah or the global community of Muslims? They forget that there is no Muslim or Islamic Ummah in the real sense. The bigger question was whether the Islamic countries will nurture their own economic and geopolitical benefits by maintaining an aloof stand and limit their support to rhetoric? Based on their regional aspirations and geopolitical interests their responses varied but the messaging was the same. In the current conflict, Saudi Arabia – the so-called leader of the Islamic world chose diplomacy as the ultimate tool. Saudi Arabia currently has bigger investment plans for India rather than Pakistan, in addition to employing some 2.6 million Indians working in the country. In fact, when the Kashmir attack unfolded, PM Modi was in Jeddah to discuss the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor and advance an investment deal worth \$100 billion.

Further, on Thursday (May 8), Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir made a surprise visit to India to meet External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and help broker a climbdown. Similarly, UAE has already announced plans to invest billions of dollars in India to diversify its oil-based economy, so its commitment to India and to safeguard the Indian interest are much larger, and it showed in its support to India.

Iran made its intentions clear by sending Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi to Pakistan and India to hold talks and de-escalate the tension. At present, India is delivering on an agreement to develop and operate the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar Port, including a \$120 million investment and a \$250 million credit line for infrastructure development. In this background Iran cannot jeopardise its interests with India.

The most vitriolic slander campaign was started against Turkey, as Pakistan used some of the Turkish-made drones in its attacks against India. But this fact does not prove that Turkey would have supported Pakistan in its every military campaign. In fact, India's trade with Turkey, has seen significant growth in recent years, with bilateral trade reaching \$10.43 billion in FY2023-24, whereas Turkey's trade with Pakistan reached a historical high of \$1.4 billion only last year.

In fact, the bold stand taken by India made it very clear that it will not tolerate any further Pakistan-sponsored terrorist threat. This stand was further supported by the diplomatic outreach by India, and after briefing the UK and US about the Operation Sindoor, it raised the issues with Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE, and other so-called Islamic countries, most of whom supported India, as evidenced by the priority given by both Saudi Arabia and Iran by involving their foreign ministers to initiate a dialogue between the two countries.

Sura al-Ma'idah

108. And, (O Muslims,) do not abuse these (false gods) that these (polytheists) worship besides Allah, lest these people should (also, in retaliation,) revile against Allah's Glory wrongfully due to ignorance. Thus have We made the conduct of every sect (and faction) seem attractive to (their own eyes and they regard only that as truth). Then all have to return to their Lord, and He will inform them of (the results of) their deeds which they used to do.

109. They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah that if there comes to them some (manifest) sign, they shall certainly believe in that. Say (to them): 'Signs are but with Allah alone. And, (O Muslims,) you are not aware that when the sign comes, they will (still) not believe.'

110. And (due to their own malice) We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away from (accepting the truth the same way) as they have disbelieved (in the Messenger [blessings and peace be upon him]) the first time. (So, they will not believe even on seeing the sign). And We shall leave them to wander astray in their rebellion and defiance.

111. And if We sent down to them angels, and the dead started talking to them, and We gathered everything in clusters

The delegates of 'Abdul Qais came to Allah's Apostle and said, "The pagans of the tribe of Mudarintervene between you and us therefore we cannot come to you except in the Holy months. So pleaseorder us to do something good (Religious deeds) by which we may enter Paradise (by acting onthem) and we may inform our people whom we have left behind to observe it." The Prophet said, "Iorder you to do four things and forbid you from four things: I order you to believe in Allah. Do youknow what is meant by belief in Allah? It is to testify that none has the right to be worshipped exceptAllah, to offer prayers perfectly, to give Zakat, and to give Al-Khumus (one-fifth of the war booty)(in Allah's Cause). And I forbid you four things, (i.e., Do not drink alcoholic drinks) Ad-Dubba, An-Naqir, (pitched water skins), Az-Zuruf, Al-Muzaffat and Al--Hantam (names of utensils used for thepreparation of alcoholic drinks)." (See Hadith No. 50, Vol. 1)

Allah's Apostle said, "The painter of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection,and it will be said to them, Make alive what you have created.' "

The Prophet said, "The painters of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, andit will be said to them, 'Make alive what you have created."

# ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF FORGIVENESS

If a person truly believes there is no god but Allah, he or she should accept Islam immediately. We also put forward that Islam is the religion of forgiveness. No matter how many sins a person may have committed, he or she never becomes unforgivable. God is the oft Forgiving, Most Merciful and Quran stresses these attributes more than 70 times. "And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. He forgives whom He wills, and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is oft Forgiving, Most Merciful."(Quran 3:129)

There is however, one sin that God will not forgive and that is the sin of ascribing partners or associates to God. A Muslim believes that God is One, without partners, offspring, or associates. He is the only One worthy of worship. "Say (O Muhammad), He is Allah, (the) One. Allah-us-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks). He begets not, nor was He begotten; And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."

"Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills." (Quran 4:48) It may seem strange to say that Allah is the Most Merciful, and stress that Islam is the religion of forgiveness while also saying that there is one unforgivable sin. This is not a strange or unreliable concept when you understand that this grave sin is only unforgivable if a person dies without repenting to God. At any time, up until a sinful person draws his last breath he or she may turn sincerely to God and ask for forgiveness, knowing that God truly is the Most Merciful Oft Forgiving. Sincere repentance assures God's forgiveness. "Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven."(Quran 8:38)

Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him,

said: "Allah will accept His slave's repentance so long as the death rattle has not yet reached his throat."[1] Prophet Muhammad, SallAllahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, also said, "Islam destroys that which came before it (sins)".[2]

As discussed in the previous article, often when a person is contemplating accepting Islam they are confused by or even ashamed of the many sins they may have committed over their lifetime. Some people wonder how they can ever be good, moral people when in the shadows lurk their sins and crimes.

Accepting Islam and pronouncing the words known as the Shahada or testimony of faith, [3], wipes a person's slate clean. He or she becomes like a newborn baby, completely free from sin. It is a new beginning, where one's past sins can no longer hold a person captive. There is no need to be haunted by past sins. Every new Muslim becomes unburdened and free to live a life based on the fundamental belief that God is One.

When a person is no longer held back by the fear that their past sins or lifestyle prevents them from leading a good life, the path to accepting Islam often becomes easier. Knowing that God can forgive anyone, of anything, is certainly a comforting prospect. Never the less, understanding the importance of not worshipping anything or anybody other than God is paramount because it is the basis of Islam.

God did not create humankind except that they should worship Him alone and knowing how to keep that worship pure and unadulterated is imperative. However, the details will often be learned after a person has recognised the sublime truth of the way of life that is Islam. "And follow the best of that which is sent down to you from your Lord (i.e. this Quran, do what it orders you to do and keep away from what it forbids), before the torment comes on you suddenly

# Israel's Gaza 'disengagement' that paved the way for conquest

In August 2005, the Israeli government officially withdrew from the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian coastal enclave it had occupied continuously since 1967. Apart from pulling back its armed forces, it had to undertake the dismantlement of 21 illegal settlements housing 8,000 Jewish settlers.

Israeli troops were deployed to begin the process, which pulled at the heartstrings of international media outlets like The New York Times. The paper reported on the sobbing settlers affected by Israel's "historic pullout from the Gaza Strip", some of whom had to be carried "screaming from their homes in scenes that moved a number of the soldiers to tears".

To be sure, there is nothing quite so tragic as illegal colonisers being uprooted from one section of land that does not belong to them and transferred to another section of land that does not belong to them. It bears mentioning that a majority of the Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip are themselves refugees from Israel's blood-drenched conquest of Palestine in 1948, which killed 15,000 Palestinians, expelled three-quarters of a million more, and destroyed over 500 Palestinian villages.

Since 2005, the myth of a unilateral Israeli "withdrawal" from Gaza has stubbornly persisted – and has been repeatedly invoked as alleged evidence of Israel's noble willingness to occasionally play by the rules.

And yet objectively speaking, what happened in August of that year was not much of a "withdrawal" at all, given

that the Israeli military continued to control Gaza's borders while subjecting the territory to a punishing blockade and periodic wanton bombardment.

Israeli officials themselves made no effort to hide what they were really up to. In 2004, while the plan was still being discussed in the Knesset, Dov Weisglass, a senior adviser to then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, stated point-blank: "The disengagement is actually formaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that is necessary so there will not be a political process with the Palestinians."

By "freezing" the political process, Weisglass went on to explain, "you prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, and you prevent a discussion on the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem". Thanks to "disengagement", then, the whole issue of Palestinian statehood had been "removed indefinitely from our agenda" – and all with the "blessing" of the president of the United States of America "and the ratification of both houses of Congress".

Since the so-called "withdrawal" from Gaza did not entail ceasing to make life hell for the Palestinian inhabitants of the territory, Israel remained ever-engaged on that front. On September 28, 2005 – the month following the drama of the sobbing settlers and soldiers – the late Dr Eyad El-Sarraj, founder of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, wrote on the Electronic Intifada website: "During the last few days, Gaza was awakened from its dreams of liberation with horrible explosions which have shattered our skies, shaken our buildings, broken our windows, and threw the place into panic."

These were the effects of Israeli aircraft executing sonic booms in the skies over Gaza, a method El-Sarraj noted "was never used before the disengagement, so as not to alarm or hurt the Israeli settlers and their children". And that was just the start of the "disengaging".

In 2006, Israel launched Operation Summer Rains in the Gaza Strip, which scholars Noam Chomsky and Ilan Pappé would subsequently characterise as being thus far the "most brutal attack on Gaza since 1967". This, of course, was before Gaza was awakened from its dreams of liberation with an all-out Israeli genocide, which has now killed more than 53,000 Palestinians since October 2023.

But there was plenty of brutality in between, from Israel's Operation Cast Lead – which kicked off in December 2008 and killed 1,400 Palestinians in a matter of 22 days – to Operation Protective Edge, which slaughtered 2,251 people over 50 days in 2014.

Along with periodic bouts of mass killing, the fluctuating Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip posed additional existential challenges. In 2010, for example, the BBC listed some of the household items that had at different times been blocked from entering Gaza, including "light bulbs, candles, matches, books, musical instruments, crayons, clothing, shoes, mattresses, sheets, blankets, pasta, tea, coffee, chocolate, nuts, shampoo and conditioner".

In 2006, Israeli government adviser Weisglass – the same character who revealed the "formaldehyde" approach to disengagement – also took it upon himself to charmingly clarify the logic behind Israel's restrictions on food imports into the Gaza Strip: "The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger."

Now that Israel is literally starving Palestinians to death in Gaza with the full complicity of the United States, it seems the "idea" has undergone some revisions. Meanwhile, recent news reports citing unnamed Israeli officials indicate that Israel is also currently plotting the "conquest" and full military occupation of the Gaza Strip.

Two decades on from Israel's withdrawal-that-wasn't from Gaza, it's safe to surmise that "disengagement" paved the way for conquest. And this time around, there's no disengagement plan.

## Halqae Zikre Ilahi, Islamic Education and Instructiveness Assessions

### SUNDAY

2 to 3pm : Halqae Zikr,  
Darse Hadees,  
Khutbaat-e-Ghouse al Azam  
RA, Fiqahi Masail,  
Tazkiratul Auwliya.

### TUESDAY

Maghrib to Isha: Darse  
Tasswuff, Question  
Answers. At: Qanqahe  
Shujaiya

### EVERYDAY

After Maghrib Zikre Jahri.  
At: Khanqahe Shujaiya

### UNDER

### GUARDIANSHIP

Hazarat Maulana Syed  
Shah Obaiullah Qadri  
Sahab Qibla

### UNDER ORGANISE

Anjuman-e-Khadimeen  
Shujaiya, Hyderabad.  
Ph: 040-66171244.  
www.shujaiya.com

### THURSDAY

After Asar to Maghrib:  
Halqae Zikre Jahri and  
Waaz. At: Dargah Hazrat  
Syedna Mir Shujaiddin  
Hussain Qibla RA, Eidi  
Bazar Hyderabad.

### FRIDAY

2 to 3 pm : (Khitab) Speech  
of Hazrat Maulana Syed  
Shah Obaidullah Qadri Asif  
Pasha Sahab Qibla At:  
Jama Masjid Shujaiya  
Charminar Hyd. Namaze  
Juma at:3-15 pm. After  
Namaz Majlis Darood wa  
Zikr, Salaam Ba Huzoor  
Sallalaho Alaihi Wa Sallam

### SATURDAY

Deeni Tarbiyati Camp: After  
Maghrib to Sunday Isha  
(Zikr, Wazif, Basic Education  
of Islam, Tazkiratul Awliya,  
Muraqiba, Prays Namaze  
Thajjud and Ishraq. At:  
Khanqahe Shujaiya  
Backside Jama Masjid  
Shujaiya Charminar,  
Hyderabad.



# Haj Made Me Stronger in Belief

This is a wonderful story of a conservative Christian whom Allah guided to the path of truth making him one of the most prominent Islamic preachers in the African continent. The Chad-based Ali Ramadaan Naajeeli, the Sultan of Qindi, narrates how much he hated Muslims, but embraced Islam when studied it:

I WAS lost and confused until I became Muslim in 1977 at the hands of a Nigerian sheikh, a dayee. His sustained preaching among us drew us to learn and understand Islam.

The Salafi scholar proved beyond doubt that Islam was not like others would like to make out of it. He told us how the mushrikeen (idolaters) offered power and wealth to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), but he refused it for the sake of his dawah. And he told us how he had striven against the mushrikeen for many years and had bore insults and torment until his divine mission succeeded and spread throughout the world. His months of dawah convinced us of Islam's truthfulness, and we entered the faith on the basis of conviction. We became Muslims willingly, embracing a religion in which we could worship on God in all sincerity, worshipping Him alone.

I became Muslim with the others, among whom was my father, the Sultan of the region of Mahim Tooki Qindi in Nigeria. After I embraced Islam, I went with the sheikh and remained in his service for 6 years, then I graduated to become a dayee, after studying Islam. At the end of the training period, he said to me: "Work with me in Nigeria."

I became the sultan after my father passed away, after calling people in the region to Islam for two years. This led to 4,722 people from the Saraqulai tribe becoming Muslim, including 14 Christian priests. From this time the confrontation with the Christian missionaries in the south of Chad began.

They tried to destroy the Islamic dawah and make those who had become Muslim Christian, using various methods. They regarded the Islamic dawah there as a rival, which threatened to stem the Christian tide. They tried to tempt me with money and by offering me a house and a farm so that I would become Christian. They wanted me

to work for Christianity. This is what made the Chadian government appoint me as a member of the Higher Committee on Islamic Affairs in the Republic of Chad. But despite all these offers, I rejected what the Christian missionaries offered me. So they started to provoke the animists against the Muslims in the south, but their efforts ended in failure.

Later, the Islamic Dawah organization permitted me to perform Haj. When I visited Makkah and saw the Muslims there — white and black, with no differences between them; all of them wearing the same clothes and equal in status, I could not stop myself from weeping. I had no one from my family with me, yet I felt that all the people around me were my family and my brothers. This increased my determination to strive more seriously in the field of dawah, to guide other people to this great religion and not to keep this spiritual joy to myself, and to save the rest of my brothers from doom and from the Fire of Hell. I decided to start my dawah in my own country, Chad.

After I came back from Haj, I decided to open Islamic centers, to construct more mosques and schools. Praise be to Allah, I was able to establish 12 mosques and a school. We dug up 12 wells for the people in the Qindi region. I also worked to establish a foundation for training of converts in dawah. My only aim now was to spread the message of Islam; its teachings, morals and manners; and to focus on teaching Arabic. We established study circles to teach Qur'an and Sunnah, praise be to Allah.

Besides, there are many obstacles facing the dawah in the south of Chad. The main obstacles are material, for the people there are poor and do not have their daily food. The region also suffers from a lack of roads and there are no means of transportation to go into the primitive animist areas in order to make dawah in the villages where most of the people are Christians. We are also suffering from a lack of trained dayees.

Many of the Muslims there know little about Islam, which is most unfortunate. In contrast, the efforts of the Christian missionaries are supported by material support. The missionary efforts

remain the greatest obstacle we face in this region. When the Pope from the Vatican visited the region of Qinda at the end of his African tour, he met with the missionaries there and made great plans to Christianize the region. Hence they supplied many missionaries from a number of European countries and they supplied the money they needed.

They also announced that they would build a number of churches in the region. One of the Italian missionaries told me that this region would be Christian soon. Each month they organize local festivals where they offer food, drink and assistance to the animists and invite them to become Christian. They also visit orphanages and refugees, which they support financially, in order to Christianize the children who stay there. They are very devious: They were working in the name of the Red Cross there when it was discovered that they have been sterilizing women by giving them medication with the result that they will never again conceive. This is one of their means of limiting the number of Muslims and putting an end to Islam in Chad.

I have discovered the fragrance of Islam and there is no doubt that it is the religion of equality and justice. It makes no distinction between rich and poor, black and white except in terms of taqwa. Everyone turns to Allah and everyone is a slave of Allah.

My advice to all Muslims, if they want to see Islam prevail, is that they should follow Islam in word and deed. This in itself will be a cause of Islam spreading, because the others do not possess the good characteristics and conduct which are the reason why others are attracted to it and embrace it.

Islam prevails and is not be prevailed over, because it comprises a great treasure, lofty teachings and lessons for mankind which are still hidden and which have to be revealed to all of mankind. This can be achieved if we adhere to it, follow its teachings and manners as given in the Qur'an and the sayings of the Noble Messenger (peace be upon him) and his companions. (

**arabnews )**

# Toward An Accepted Hajj

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ALLAH has assigned a great reward for Hajj Mabrur, as evidenced by the saying of the Messenger (peace be upon him) "There is no reward for Hajj Mabrur except Paradise." (Al-Bukhari)

The meaning of berr (from which the word 'Mabrur' is derived) involves the following two: Good behavior toward people, fulfilling one's duties toward others and giving them their rights. In the Hadith, "Al-Berr is good behavior." (Muslim) In the Musnad, from Jabir, Marfu narration states, "They said: 'What makes Hajj Mabrur, O Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him)?' He said, 'providing food to people and spreading (the greeting of) salam'." (Fath Al-Bari) The following will help one ensure that his or her Hajj will be accepted, inshaAllah.

First: Sincerity : Sincerity to Allah and seeking His reward and pleasure alone. Allah says in the Hadith Qudsi, "Whoever does an action for other than Me, I will leave him and his shirk." The Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated, "Allahumma Hajjatan La riya'a fiha wa La suma" (O Allah, (enable me to make) Hajj with no riya' (show-off in the sense of desire that others witness one's good acts) or suma (show-off related to desire that others hear about one's good acts) in it." (Ibn Majah, also see Sahih Sunan ibn Majah)

Second: Preparation for Hajj :- Servant's preparation for Hajj is from the most important matters that helps in performing the pilgrimage in the legislated manner and ensuring that one's Hajj is inshaAllah accepted.

Third: Symbols of sanctities From the most apparent of goals and wisdoms of Hajj is cultivation of the servant upon appreciation, esteem and love of Allah's symbols and sanctities. Allah says, "That (is so). And whoever honors the symbols (i.e. rites) of Allah — indeed, it is from the piety of hearts." (Qur'an, 22:32)

Fourth: Good characteristics : - "Hajj is (during) well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein (by entering the state of ihram), there is (to be for him) no Ar-Rafath ..." (Qur'an, 2:197) Ar-Rafath is sexual intercourse or what leads to it from sayings or actions. Suppressing anger, leaving argumentation and disputes. Allah says, "and no (Jidal) disputing during Hajj." (Qur'an, 2:197) Ataa said, Al-Jidal is that you dispute your companion until you anger him and he angers you.

Fifth: Reminder of the Last Day :- Hajj reminds the servant of the Last Day and its states and conditions in a clear manner.

Sixth: Submission to Allah :- Pilgrim is trained upon submission, surrender and complete obedience to Allah Lord of the worlds, as, for example, in the case of actions of Hajj, such as abandonment of stitched clothing and adornment, Tawaf, Sayee, standing on Arafat, stoning, lodging and shaving or cutting of one's hair and other such matters.

Seventh: Feel of brotherhood :- Pilgrims, with all their differences in tongues, races and nationalities, gather in one same place at one same time, in one same appearance, pronouncing the same call of Talbiyah, and for the same purpose: Belief in Allah, fulfillment of His order and forsaking sinful acts, all of which develops deep love between them, which, in turn, becomes a motive for them to know each other, to cooperate, exchange thoughts, advice, news and experiences, reinforcing in them uprightness upon this Deen which joined them together, as well as performing acts aiming to reach higher levels.

Eighth: Attachment to past Actions of Hajj remind of the past, from the migration of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) with his wife and infant, to Hijaz, his story when he was ordered to sacrifice his son, his building of the Kaaba and his call to people to make Hajj. Likewise, Hajj is a reminder of the rising of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his farewell pilgrimage with more than 100,000 companions; when he said to them, "Take from me your rites (of Hajj)."

Ninth: Remembrance of Allah The servant who contemplates during rituals of Hajj about Talbiyah, Takbir, Tahlil (saying La ilaha ill Allah), supplication, as well as the two revelations (Qur'an and Sunnah) which

will speak about them, will find that an increase in remembrance of Allah is from the greatest wisdoms and aims of Hajj. From those texts is the saying of Allah, "Remember Allah at Al-Mash'ar Al-Haram (Muzdalifah)." (Qur'an, 2:198) And his saying, "Circumambulating of the house, (going) between As-Safa and Al-Marwah and stoning have only been legislated for establishment of remembrance of Allah on the earth." (At-Tirmidhi)

Tenth: Discipline Remember that Hajj nullifies what precedes it from sins, and that because of Hajj you return in a state like that on the day your mother bore you. So beware of opposing Allah with sins after this blessing. Open a new page in your life and fill it with righteous actions in steadfastness upon His Deen.

The evidence of Hajj Mabrur is steadfastness of the servant after Hajj, his practice of righteous acts and leaving of the sins. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "Al-Hajj Al-Mabrur is to return abstinent from this world and desiring the Hereafter. This is witnessed in His saying, "And those who are guided; He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness (Taqwa, fearful awareness of Allah, care to avoid His displeasure). (Qur'an, 47:17)

## Need to Remember God

All of the various acts of worship contained in the divine laws are designed to help humans remember God. It is natural for human beings to sometimes forget even the most important things. Humans often become so engrossed in fulfilling their material needs that they totally forget their spiritual needs. Regular prayer is ordained to organize the day of the true believer around the remembrance of God. It interweaves spiritual needs with material needs on a daily basis. The regular daily need to eat, work and sleep is linked to the daily need to renew man's connection with God. With regard to regular prayer, God states in the final revelation, "Verily, I am God, there is no god beside Me, so worship Me and establish regular prayer for My remembrance." (Quran 20:14) Regarding fasting, God stated in the Quran, "O you who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may become God-conscious." (Quran 2:183)

The believers are encouraged to remember God as much as possible. Although, moderation in all spheres of life, whether material or spiritual, is generally encouraged in divine law, an exception is made regarding the remembrance of God. It is virtually impossible to remember God too much. Consequently, in the final revelation, God encourages the believers to remember Him as often as possible: "O believers! Remember God often." (Quran 33:41)

Remembrance of God is stressed because sin is generally committed when God is forgotten. The forces of evil operate most freely when consciousness of God is lost. Consequently, the satanic forces seek to occupy people's minds with irrelevant thoughts and desires to make them forget God. Once God is forgotten, people willingly join the corrupt elements. The final revelation, addresses this phenomenon in as follows: "Satan got the better of them and caused them to forget God. Those are the party of Satan. Truly the party of Satan are the real losers." (Quran 58:19) God, through Divine law, has prohibited intoxicants and gambling primarily because they cause human beings to forget God. The human mind and body easily become addicted to drugs and games of chance. Once addicted, mankind's desire to continually be stimulated by them leads them into all forms of corruption and violence among themselves. God says in the Quran: "Satan's plan is to incite enmity and hatred among you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of God and regular prayer."



# Eight Steps To Attain Qurb -E- Ilaahi

1. ADAB Deen sarasar poora Adab hai. It's been said that "be-adab insaan kabhi baa-Khuda nahin ban sakta. Adab here means adab towards ALLAH in terms of respecting & obeying him. When we sin, it means we're not obeying Him, hence the criteria of Adab is not being fulfilled. It also means Adab towards Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) Hadith & Sunnah and following both of them as well.

Allah is bay-niaaz, He could throw us all into Hell-fire. It won't matter to Him. He would still be ALLAH, He doesn't need us. We need Him. Even the Wali (friend) ALLAH doesn't care (beyond a certain point). But Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) always cared, he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) cared for his Ummah so much that he'd wake up for Tahajjud prayer & shed tears for us, uttering the words "My Ummah, my Ummah, my Ummah". Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) was Fanaaf-il-Ummah. He cared about his Ummah more than anyone else. Thus, the sunnah of Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) is the real path to attain Qurb. Sunnah to this day is very powerful and iski barkat se Qurb haasil hota hai. Another point to mention is that sometimes a good deed's idea comes to our mind/heart, that is nothing but Taufeeq granted to us by ALLAH. If we fail to put it into action due to our laziness or whatever reason, it's sad & unlucky of us to do so.

2. ILM-UN-NAAFAY (BENEFICIAL KNOWLEDGE):

Ilm-un-naafay Ilm (knowledge) that benefits. And by Ilm (knowledge) we mean Ilm leading to practice. For example, most of us know that whoever uses Miswaak (which is a Sunnah) on a daily basis, would In Shaa ALLAH be granted Kalima at the time of death. It's simple knowledge that needs to be practiced, we don't need any Fatwa or need to have learnt all the tafseer of Quran to know this piece of knowledge that could benefit us.

It is said that it took Hazrat Umar (RA) 12 years to learn Surah-al-Baqarah. And it was not because of the length of the surah or the difficulty, what it meant is that it took him 12 years to practice what he learnt in this surah.

3. AMAL-E-SAALEH : Once a person attains (1) & (2), he gets to the third stage that is Amal-e-saaleh, where he practices all his learning in real life.

4. HIKMAH (Wisdom): (1), (2) & (3) are at the person's end, his efforts towards Qurb-e-Ilaahi. Hikmah (wisdom) is what ALLAH grants us for our efforts that we put in the earlier three stages. And the person gets to know the reality (asliyat) of this world. There have been many many well-educated people but they lack Wisdom. True Wisdom can only be granted by ALLAH to those who put in efforts towards Him.

5. ZUHUD: At this stage insaan ko dunya ki asliyat samaj ajati hai k dunya ki koi asliyat nahi. The person's heart, at this stage, does not have dunya or it's love. His/her heart is for Qurb of ALLAH. Their hearts are not fascinated by the luxuries of this world. To them sitting in a luxurious lounge is not different than sitting on barren land. These are the Wali of Allah. It is to be noted that a Wali's profile will exactly be the same as any other normal person, he may own a bungalow, a fancy car, etc. But the only difference would be that his heart & life are disconnected with this dunya. His heart yearns for Allah only. A wali tastes the love of ALLAH & Aakhira. Nothing in this dunya affects him anymore.

6. INA'BIT-ALLAH: A person's heart has only two states; either it's filled with the Darkness of this world's love or filled up with the noor. It can't be both at the same time. Today, we're filled up with this world's love, we need to vacuum our hearts. We need to repent to ALLAH to fill our hearts with His love. Only then can we attain His Qurb. "Koi ALLAH ko mananey wala toy banay" At this stage, these people miss ALLAH. They wait to pray & do more & more amal-e-saaleh.

7. TRUE IBADAH: The person wakes up to every tahajjud every prayer w/o anyone (his parents/friends) asking him to wake up. He prays with all his heart. He knows the Reality. It's all about "ibadah, ibadah & ibadah. Here he reaches his real Maqsad i.e. to worship ALLAH. The very purpose of his existence.

8. MAARFAT-ALLAH:

This is the ultimate stage that a human attains. A wali craves for Allah. "Wo chalta phirta Jannati banjata hai." He begins to understand about ALLAH. He feels ALLAH to be right beside him every second & minute of his life.

We used to have Khaanqaheins i.e., Institutes for Qurb-e-ilahi where one would learn to attain Yaqeen & Qurb. These were the ishq ki dukaanen (khaanqaheins of Love of ALLAH) and the special things about them was that they were all available for free.

Today we pay high amounts of fee to the institutes where we study, but these institutes were all for free. Today, we have a shortage of people who attain Qurb & Maarfat of ALLAH. When there's a shortage of something in the market, its price (return that we get) increases. Hence we find that reward of reviving a Sunnah in times of fitna is equivalent to sawaab of 100 Shaheeds. Thus, the return we get is way more when there's a shortage of it (in this case it's the shortage of Sunnah being practiced).

## Dhikr In Gatherings

O Messenger of Allah? He (SAWS) replied: "The circles of dhikr. There are roaming angels of Allah who go about looking for the circles of dhikr, and when they find them they surround them closely."

Tirmidhi narrated it (hasan gharib) and Ahmad. Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and Abu Huraira (Radiyallahu Anhum) reported that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) said: "When any group of men remember Allah, angels surround them and mercy covers them, tranquility descends upon them, and Allah mentions them to those who are with Him." [Narrated by Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and Bayhaqi] Muslim, Ahmad, and Tirmidhi narrate from Mu'awiya (Radiyallahu Anhu) That the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) went out to a circle of his Companions and asked: "What made you sit here?" They said: "We are sitting here in order to remember / mention Allah (nadhkurullah) and to glorify Him (wa nahmaduhu) because He guided us to the path of Islam and he conferred favours upon us."

Thereupon he (SAWS) adjured them by Allah and asked if that was the only purpose of their sitting there. They said: "By Allah, we are sitting here for this purpose only."

At this the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) said: "I am not asking you to take an oath because of any misapprehension against you, but only because Gabriel came to me and informed me that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, was telling the angels that He is proud of you!" Note that the hadith stated jalasna — we sat — in the plural, not singular. It referred to an association of people in a group, not one person.

The Prophet, Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam, would often tell his Companions: "Shall I tell you about the best of deeds, the most pure in the sight of your Lord, about the one that is of the highest order and is far better for you than spending gold and silver, even better for you than meeting your enemies in the battlefield where you strike at their necks and they at yours?" The Companions replied: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet, Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam, said: "Remembrance of Allah."

[Narrated by Tirmidhi, Ahmad, and Hakim who declared its chain of narrators sound] The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam) said: "He who loves something mentions it much."



# Haj & Its Important Rituals

This is the concluding part of article on Haj.

AS you near the miqat, your heart will tremble and tremor. Is this really happening? Is my heart getting closer and closer to His House? Soon you will enter Allah's haram. It is only fitting that you enter into a state, both externally and internally, that justly corresponds to this honor. Beyond the miqat, there is only talbiyah.

The essence of Haj is the journey of our hearts away from the house of our lower selves (nafs) with its passions, inclinations (ahwa) and attachment to the created world to the haram and, ultimately, the House of Allah. We must leave these temporal attachments to receive the greatest divine connection. We must leave to arrive. Ihram is from haram. Both meanings, to be sacred and to be forbidden, are carried in it. Through the ihram, the heart is meant to leave the temporary and the finite — to make it, in a sense, "forbidden" — and to prepare for the sacred audience of Allah's presence.

**Beginning talbiyah :** One enters into ihram with talbiyah. Talbiyah is the heart's most profound surrender to the invitation and call of Allah: Here I come to You, my Lord, here I come — fully and forever. With the talbiyah, we proclaim that no associate or attachment will distract us from seeking Allah. Our hearts will not see, hear, obey, or be lured to another, besides Him. The recitation of this talbiyah is to be said with constancy and conviction, and not intermittently and infrequently.

**Mina :-** Mina, or Muna, means desire, hope, longing. Some texts teach that it was in Muna that Adam (peace be upon him) longed and desired to journey back home to paradise and to be, once again, in Allah's presence. It is in Muna that the journey begins. The day spent in Muna, termed the day of tarwiyah (meaning, in part, to quench, to drink to one's fill), is meant for our heart to focus on the aim of their journey, to gather in resolution and focus, and to begin our inner momentum toward the House of Allah.

**Arafat :-** Arafat means to know, to understand. Another verb scale conveys the meaning of perfuming, making fragrant, scenting. Arafat is the essential pillar of Haj; without Arafat there is no Haj. Arafat is the cleansing station outside the haram where we stand and seek forgiveness for all that we've committed in our lives. We beg and implore Allah to make us worthy of entering into His haram, visiting His House and being in His presence. Here, on Arafat, we learn two things.

As we acknowledge our disobedience, our sins, our rebelliousness and our forgetfulness, we know our unworthiness as true servants. We reveal everything to Allah, minor or major, Who knows already but simply wants us to admit with true transparency and sincerity what we are inside of our selves.

**Muzdalifa :-** Muzdalifa, from the Arabic root izdilaf, means to approach, to get closer. It's a second station of cleansing and purification. The pilgrim is now closer to the Kaaba. We remain in supplication after fajr, imploring Allah again for pardon and guidance. Some scholars have said that in Muzdalifa, Allah also forgives our violations against the rights of others. Such violations are not usually forgiven unless, in addition to seeking forgiveness, we remedy what has been violated.

**Muna and the casting of pebbles :-** During the Haj of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), he was commanded to sacrifice his son. Allah, of course, never intended that the slaughter take place. Allah wanted, instead, to purify and free Ibrahim from every love and every attachment besides Him. It was in Muna that the shaitan attempted to waylay Ibrahim from sacrificing his son. Ibrahim cast pebbles at the shaitan to reject his designs and prompting. In casting the pebbles, the pilgrim affirms Allah's greatness over everything and covenants with Allah that he or she will never regress to anything which displeases Him. Casting the pebbles is the casting away of shaitan, the lower self (nafs) with its desires, inclinations and evil, and, ultimately, casting away everything besides Allah.

**Tawaf Al-Ifadah:-** Ifadah means to flood, to rush, to move. The movement from Arafat to the Haram is called ifadah. The rite of tawaf that takes place after the casting of the pebbles, the sacrifice and the shaving of the head is likewise termed Tawaf Al-Ifadah.

Sai between Safa and Marwa Sai means to work, to strive, to act. We remember in sai the actions of Hajar (peace be upon him) as she climbed, walked and ran up both Safa and Marwa looking for sustenance for her starving child.

**Days and nights in Mina :-** During our stay in Mina, we re-affirm and re-declare our desire and hope for spiritual freedom by casting pebbles for three days. Each casting of the pebbles cements our resolution to contain and confine both the lower self and shaitan. You remain in Muna as Allah's guest.

## **Mob Lynching of Indian Muslims and Arbitrary Demolition of Their Houses is Also Terrorism—PM Modi Must Stop It Immediately**

Arun Shourie, former Cabinet Minister and former Editor of The Indian Express, in an interview with Karan Thapar, endorsed Prime Minister Modi's new doctrine to end terrorism. However, he also warned the Prime Minister that to effectively fight terror, Modi must first treat all Indians—specifically Indian Muslims—justly. Quoting from the Gospel of Matthew (12:25) in the New Testament, Shourie stated, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation." We, the 200 million Indian Muslims, fully endorse the central government's initiative to send all-party delegations of Members of Parliament to key global capitals beginning May 23, aiming to present a united front against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

At the same time, we the 200 million Indian Muslims fully support the sentiments expressed by Ashoka University professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad regarding the mob lynching of Muslims in India. His arrest is both unconstitutional and unlawful. His Facebook post contained nothing objectionable; in fact, his arrest ironically confirms the very point he made—that the state views Hindus and Muslims through different lenses. While no action has been taken against Madhya Pradesh Minister Vijay Shah despite his vile, hate-filled remarks against Colonel Sofia Qureshi. Meanwhile, punitive measures were swiftly taken against Mahmudabad, who did nothing wrong. This selective application of the law underscores the exact concern he raised in his brief article—one that has now tragically come to pass in his own experience. **What Ali Khan expressed reflects the genuine sentiments of 200 million Indian Muslims.** Since the Modi government came to power, Indian Muslims have faced a surge in hate crimes, often resulting in mob lynchings of innocent Muslims, frequently based on mere suspicion. RSS-affiliated cow vigilantes and members of the VHP and Bajrang Dal openly call for the genocide of Muslims. Television channels owned by Adani and Ambani broadcast Islamophobic content. Even a BJP minister shamelessly garlanded accused involved in the mob lynching of Muslims upon their release on bail.

Despite Supreme Court orders prohibiting arbitrary demolitions, bulldozers continue to target Muslim homes almost daily, particularly in BJP-ruled states.

Meanwhile, BJP politicians, including sitting MPs, have been distributing arms among their cadres. VHP and Bajrang Dal regularly organize arms training camps in these states. Instead of condemning mob lynching, Prime Minister Modi has fueled hatred against Muslims during his election campaigns. All of this has been happening in India under the Modi-led government and over two hundred Muslims have been killed in mob violence merely on the basis of suspicion. A report by the Association for Protection of Civil Rights (APCR) reveals that in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, a total of 184 anti-Muslim hate incidents occurred between April 22 and May 8, in which three Muslims were killed.

# Ali Khan Mehmudabad: A Saner Voice That Cannot Be silenced

When I got to know the arrest of Associate Professor (Political Science) Ali Khan Mehmudabad at Ashoka University, I first rang to his secretary in Lucknow for details, as on May 18, early morning, Ali Khan has been picked up, by Sonipat Police, Haryana, on allegations of 'endangering country's sovereignty and integrity and promoting enmity between groups'. Ali Khan is in the midst of storm over his May 8, Facebook post, after which he was issued a notice from Haryana Womens Commission. Commission members visited his University too. It's Chairperson Renu Bhatia lodged FIR on it. One more FIR was lodged against him by Yogesh Jathedi, Sarpanch and BJP Yuva Morcha general secretary under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita 196 (1) B, 197(1) C, 152 and 299 and 79 which is to insult the modesty of women through act, word or gesture. Yogesh Jathedi claims to have met Ali Khan a day earlier to his FIR. In fact, what has come to light that Renu Bhatia was so enraged, to not have been able to see Ali Khan at the university, that she has got Police Commissioner Nazneen Bhasin, Sonipat sent packing! She has been transferred.

What is the message the government wants to give on his arrest? The lofty claims of freedom of expression is now just a misnomer. Isn't it? Why there hasn't been the arrest of Vijay Shah, BJP minister in MP, against whom FIR had to be lodged after MP High Court had taken a suo-moto, on his utterly disgraceful and communally infested remarks against Indian Army Colonel Sofia Qureshi? Why so great promptness into the arrest of Ali Khan? The stark reality, which is growing by the day, is that isn't it there are two set of laws? One for Muslims and others who question the government and the second is for BJP affiliates. The former are to fret under the sun while the latter are to have a gala time. Isn't it time to yet again recollect that even FIR is yet to be lodged against the accused of Delhi riots of 2020, Parvesh Verma, Kapil Mishra and Anurag Thakur. Justice S Muralidhar of the Delhi High Court had then urged the Delhi police to consider registering it and on that very Muralidhar was transferred out of the Delhi High Court by the BJP-led Union government.

Ali Khan's is a profoundly knowledgeable gentleman, who has studied in world renowned institutions and universities like Amherst College and Cambridge University. A true embodiment of his father Amir Muhammed Sulieman Khan who himself was a Professor of Astrophysics at Cambridge University. Sulieman Sahab was a great friend for over two-decades. Immediately on May 18, I spoke to the secretary of Delhi Ex. CM Arvind Kejriwal Ji, as since his release, he does not use his old number. I could come to know that Kejriwal Ji is now in Punjab. On May 19, early morning, at 9:50 am, I could speak to eminent lawyer Kapil Sibal Ji, to seek from him, he was in the know of things and informed me the legal remedy is in the pipeline. At 11:30 am I could come to know, from Tahir Abidi editor of JudicialQuest, that a 'lunch-motion', is to be moved in the Division Bench of Chief Justice of India BR Gavai and Justice AG Masih, for the redressal of the injustice having been made to Ali Khan.

Ali Khan is also the spokesperson of Samajwadi Party, and Akhilesh Yadav Ji, SP President, has also questioned, in his tweet on May 19, as to why government is having a free-lease to speak uncouth while those who tell the truth are imprisoned? The legal outcome is to be awaited with a trust that judiciary will do justice. But, the attempt of government to muzzle any 'other voice' for not appropriating the government's line, is however to remain unhindered? Let the law prevail. Let justice prevail.

## Ashoka University professor Ali Khan sent to 14 days judicial custody

Ali Khan Mahmudabad, an Associate Professor at Ashoka University, has been sent to judicial custody by a district court in Sonipat after being arrested by Haryana Police over a Facebook post concerning Operation Sindoor. The court denied the police's request for a seven-day custody extension and instead remanded him to judicial custody.

The arrest, made on May 18, followed complaints filed by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Yuva Morcha's Haryana general secretary Yogesh Jathari and Haryana State Commission for Women Chairperson Renu Bhatia.

Two FIRs were registered at Rai police station, accusing Mahmudabad under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including charges of inciting armed rebellion, insulting religious beliefs, and disturbing communal harmony.

The move sparked widespread criticism and concern over free speech. Civil rights activists and academics have voiced alarm at the criminalization of expression. A protest meeting organized by the Nagrik Adhikar Manch Sonipat was held at Chhotu Ram Dharamshala, where several speakers condemned the arrest as unconstitutional and politically motivated. The meeting was chaired by Shraddhanand Solanki.

Kapil Balyan, advocate and convenor of the civil rights forum, called the charges "false and baseless" and demanded the immediate quashing of the FIRs and Mahmudabad's release. He emphasized the importance of public awareness and peaceful agitation to protect democratic rights.

The Supreme Court has agreed to urgently hear Mahmudabad's plea challenging his arrest later this week. Meanwhile, support for the professor continues to grow among civil society and legal experts, many of whom see the case as a test of constitutional protections for freedom of speech and dissent in India. The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear a plea of Ashoka University's political science department head Ali Khan Mahmudabad challenging his arrest for social media posts related to Operation Sindoor.

A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih took note of the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the associate professor, and said the pleas will be listed for hearing either on Tuesday or Wednesday, PTI reported. "He has been arrested for a patriotic statement. Please list it during the day," Sibal said.

"Please list it tomorrow or day after," the CJI said.

The professor was arrested on Sunday after two FIRs were lodged on stringent charges, including endangering sovereignty and integrity, for his social media posts related to Operation Sindoor.

The Haryana State Commission for Women had recently sent a notice to the associate professor questioning his remarks, though Mahmudabad had maintained that they were "misunderstood" and asserted that he had exercised his fundamental right to freedom of speech.

Haryana Deputy Commissioner of Police Narender Kadyan said two FIRs were lodged at the Rai police station in Sonipat — one based on a complaint from the chairperson of Haryana State Commission for Women, Renu Bhatia, and the other on the complaint of a village sarpanch.