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EDITORIAL

Fareed Ahmad – Newquay, UK

The Heat is On

According to a recent report¹ the last winter was the warmest since records began. Sounds great if you dislike the cold and dreary winters, but for environmentalists – and in reality for all of us – this is bad news. Be it due to greenhouse gasses, carbon emissions, the El-Nino or methane emissions from livestock, the signs are not good and this does not bode well for the future of life on earth.

There is, we are told, a 75% risk that global temperatures will rise a further two to three degrees in the next 50 years². The consequence of this would be dramatic. In fact a rise of just one degree would melt the Greenland ice sheet and drown the Maldives, but a three degree increase would kill the Amazon rainforest, wipe out nearly half of all species facing extinction and wreak havoc with crop yields due to weather changes. These are

not just fictional scenarios but are likely events – especially if you note that the predictions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change include forecasts for this century of increases up to six degrees.

Experts around the world have been warning about this for decades and have been urging governments to do more to slow down the rate of global warming. But with the economic giants of the world preoccupied with activities seeking to serve their national interest it seems that the international crisis has effectively been sidelined in the hope that either the experts will be proved wrong or that the problem somehow will take care of itself. Often such warnings were dismissed as ever more experts were commissioned by governments to see if climate change was for real. Perhaps they should have taken note of an Igbo tradition that says: ‘You may be

clever but you can never lose your shadow.’ Now it seems that the shadow is getting bigger and leaders are starting to look more concerned with the impending gloom. So is it time to panic? Perhaps. Is there any hope for survival? Possibly.

Whilst the global climate does indeed go through hot and cold cycles, what is worrying about the current phase is the *pace* of change that could send us head first into a final spin. Although we have certainly benefited from technological advancements that have given us plastics, air travel and cheap food – what is important is to maintain a balance so that excessive consumerism does not ride roughshod over nature’s harmony. There are flexibilities in what nature can handle but eventually the scales will tip over.

In Islam man is given the role of trusteeship over the earth, which is a huge responsibility. In the past, man had to be careful how he treated his local environment since excessive grazing or

agriculture could bring ruin to his livelihood. His knowledge was also limited but in the event of a disaster either through ignorance or abuse at least he could resort to moving elsewhere and start again. Now we should have no excuse for ignorance and we should have learnt from our past to avoid misuse. But what is worrying is that our responsibility has also increased considerably, in line with our ability to use vast amounts of the earth’s resources; the crunch factor is that now the impacts of our behaviour are not just local anymore, they are global. If we fail to act in a responsible manner then we cannot simply relocate because there will be nowhere to go. It is therefore vital that as producers, manufacturers and consumers, we ensure that we give due consideration to the impact of our actions. Such a responsibility is not just that of the east or the west but a responsibility for us all.

In Islam, rather than addressing each aspect of climate change

individually, the Holy Qur'an provides a moral framework that facilitates human progress by providing a clear set of principles that benefit man. This is because it is the behaviour of a person that can influence not just one but many spheres of human activity. These include the environment and sustainability and this is why they are captured in this same framework.

Fairness, ethical behaviour, and unity are among the numerous tenets advocated in Islamic teachings. They are important factors when decisions have to be made in matters including those relating to natural resource management. Stakeholders of the Muslim faith are obliged to act with justice if they wish to earn the pleasure of God, for the Qur'an states:

Verily, Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice...
(Ch.4: V.59)

Islam also lays great stress on the fact that there is a balance in the universe and that this is a feature of God's creation.

And the heaven He has raised high and set up a measure, That you may not transgress the measure. So weigh all things in justice and fall not short of the measure.
(Ch.55:Vs.8-10)

This makes clear that it is God Who is Perfect and has out of His Grace provided ample resources for all time. But through man's misuse, this balance may change. It is man who will suffer the consequences as a result. The term 'measure' refers to universal balance and that is certainly sustainable unless man exceeds it or seeks to alter it.

The need to maintain balance and the requirement to only use what is due to you and not to take what rightfully belongs to others (whether now or in the future), is further emphasised in the following verse, in which God

also reminds man that whilst at an individual level he may not live to see the consequences of his actions he will certainly be held to account for them.

Woe unto those who give short measure; Those who, when they take by measure from other people, take it full; But when they give by measure to others or weigh to them they give them less. Do not such people know that they will be raised again Unto a terrible day, The day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds? (Ch.83:Vs.2-7)

This is why acts that promote harmony in the environment are considered to be meritorious acts, for the Holy Prophet^(saw) said:

'If anyone plants a tree or sows a field, and men, beasts or birds eat from it, it is considered as a sadaqah [act of charity] on his part' (Musnad Ahmad)

So why does man act in a manner that threatens to deprive him and others of a harmonious future? The answer is of little surprise. According to the Qur'an one of the key underlying motives for such actions is personal greed, for it is greed that takes man away from God and therefore from the balance of nature. If man cares little for God and His teachings then what care would he have for his fellow beings? This results in man staying focused on his personal gain at the expense of all else

Vying with each other for amassing wealth had made you oblivious. (Ch.102:V.2)

Personal greed can also encourage those with resources to squander their wealth – which is a wasteful approach to life as it deprives others who may need those resources.

Verily the extravagant are brothers of satans and Satan is ungrateful to his Lord. (Ch.17:V.28)

O Children of Adam!...eat and drink but exceed not the bounds; surely He does not love those who exceed the bounds.

(Ch.7:V.32)

[And the servants of the Gracious God are...] *...those who, when they spend are neither extravagant nor niggardly but moderate between the two.*

(Ch.25:V.68)

The overall message is, therefore, that Islam promotes harmony by advising moderation. It accepts that we need to use resources for our progress but this should be done wisely and in a sustainable manner, so that a satisfactory medium is found.

So we as individuals should act on the Qur'anic injunction that promotes balance and avoids excess and Nations need to be more willing to share knowledge for the sake of the planet rather than for profit and take collective

action in line with their collective responsibility – only then do we have hope. By doing so we will be able to win the pleasure of God and honour our trusteeship of the earth for the present and future generations.

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1. Report of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 15 March 2007
 2. Review on the Economics of Climate Change, by Sir Nicholas Stern, October 2006

Verse references to the Holy Qur'an item count 'Bismillah...' (In the Name of Allah...) as the first verse of each Chapter. In some non-standard texts, this is not counted and should the reader refer to such texts, the verse quoted in *The Review of Religions* will be found at one verse less than the number quoted.

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(saw)' or 'saw' after the words, 'Holy Prophet', or the name 'Muhammad', are used. They stand for '*Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*' meaning 'Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'. Likewise, the letters '(as)' or 'as' after the name of all other prophets is an abbreviation meaning 'Peace be upon him' derived from '*Alaihis salatu wassalam*' which are words that a Muslim utters out of respect whenever he or she comes across that name. The abbreviation 'ra' or (ra) stands for '*Radhiallahu Ta'ala anhu*' and is used for Companions of a Prophet, meaning Allah be pleased with him or her (when followed by the relevant Arabic pronoun). Finally, 'ru' or (ru) for '*Rahemallahu Ta'ala*' means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

In keeping with current universal practice, local transliterations of names of places are preferred to their anglicised versions, e.g. Makkah instead of Mecca, etc.

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ESSENCE OF ISLAM:

Part 19 – Excellence of the Holy Qur'an

This series sets out, in the words of the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics: ISLAM; ALLAH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET^(sa) and THE HOLY QUR'AN. The original compilation, in Urdu, from which these extracts have been translated into English, was collated with great care and diligence by Syed Daud Ahmad Sahib, Allah have mercy on him and reward him graciously for his great labour of love. Amin. The English rendering is by the late Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, may Allah be pleased with him, and is quoted from *The Essence of Islam*, Volume 1. All references throughout, unless otherwise specifically mentioned, are from the Holy Qur'an.

No Verity Left out of the Holy Qur'an

It is my faith that the Holy Qur'an is perfect in its teaching and that there is no verity that has been left out of it, as Allah, the Glorious, has said:

...We have sent down to thee the Book to explain everything;...
(Ch.16:V.90)

and again:

We have left out nothing in the Book. (Ch.6:V.39)

But I also believe that it is not the function of every Maulawi to set forth from the Holy Qur'an all religious matters and to expound all its details according to the Divine design. This is the function especially of those who have been helped with Divine revelation by way of Prophethood or great saintliness. For those people who not being recipients of revelation are not competent to expound Qur'anic insights, the only straight way is that without attempting to interpret the Qur'an, they should unhesitatingly accept all the

teachings which have been handed down by tradition. Those who are illumined with the light of saintly revelation are included *among the purified*. Regarding them it is the way of Allah that from time to time He discloses to them the hidden fine points of the Holy Qur'an and makes it clear to them that the Holy Prophet^(saw) has not put forth any extra teaching on his own and that the true *Ahadith* only set forth the details of the principles and directives contained in the Holy Qur'an. By being vouchsafed this insight, the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is manifested to them and the truth of those verses becomes clear to them in which Allah, the Glorious, says that nothing has been left out from the Holy Qur'an.

(Al-Haq Mubahatha Ludhiana, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 4, pp. 80-81)

The purport of this verse is that:

He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto



The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as).

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as). In 1891, he claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation, that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and by the scriptures of other faiths.

His claim constitutes the basis of the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before, in manifest misguidance;
(Ch.62:V.3)

The Holy Qur'an has two great purposes for achieving which the Holy Prophet(saw) came. One is the wisdom of the Holy Qur'an, that is to say, its insights and fine points; and the second is the effect of the Holy Qur'an which purifies the souls.

The safeguarding of the Qur'an does not mean only that its text should be preserved, for this function was performed in early ages by the Jews and Christians also in respect of their scriptures, so much so, that even the vowel points of the Torah had been calculated. By the safeguarding of the Holy Qur'an is meant both the safeguarding of the text and the safeguarding of the benefits and effects of the Qur'an, and that can only be done in accord with Divine practice, if from time to time deputies of the Holy Prophet(saw) should appear who should enjoy all the bounties of Messengership by way of reflection, and who should be bestowed all the blessings which are bestowed upon the Prophets. This is indicated in the verse:

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear. They will worship Me and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious.

(Ch.24:V.56)

This verse is explanatory of the other verse:

Verily We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian.

(Ch.15:V.10)

and furnishes the reply to the question how will the Qur'an be safeguarded? God Almighty says that He will from time to time

send successors of the Holy Prophet^(saw).

(Shahadat-ul-Qu'an, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 6, pp. 338-339)

Holy Qur'an Possesses all True Signs of Divine Books

The certain and perfect and easy means whereby without any trouble, labour, obstruction, doubt, suspicion, error, or omission, true principles together with the arguments in support thereof, might be discovered with complete certainty, is the Holy Qur'an. There is no other book or other means through which this great object might be achieved.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.1, p.77)

Now, O friends! I will describe to you the distinctive sign which sane reason has appointed for the recognition of a revealed Book is to be found only in the Holy Book of God Almighty, which is the Holy Qur'an. In this age all those qualities which should be found as a distinctive sign of God's Book are absent in other books. It is possible that they

might have possessed those qualities in an earlier age, but they do not possess them now, and though, for the reason that we have set out, we regard them as revealed, yet even if they are revealed, in their present condition they are not of any use. They are like a citadel which is empty and in ruins, and bereft of all wealth and military strength.

(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, p. 402)

If an opponent of Islam should object that to hold the Holy Qur'an as being better and superior to all revealed Books would mean that other revealed Books are of an inferior quality, while they are the word of the same One God, and there cannot be superiority and inferiority between them, the answer would be that from the point of view of revelation all Books are doubtlessly equal, but some are superior to others on account of the quantum of their contents and the perfection of matters relating to the faith contained therein. From this point of view, the Holy Qur'an is superior to all Books

inasmuch as other Books do not contain as much of these matters as are necessary for perfecting the religion, as, for instance, questions relating to the Unity of God, and the negation of all types of *shirk*, and remedies for spiritual ills, and arguments for the rejection of false religions, and the proof of true doctrines, that are set out forcefully in the Holy Qur'an.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 1, p. 74, footnote 2)

Unity of God in the Holy Qur'an vs. the Torah

The claim of the Christian missionaries that the Qur'an does not set forth anything new on the Unity of God and on Divine commandments which is not contained in the Torah, is altogether false. An ignorant person reading the Torah might fall into the error that it sets forth the Unity of God, and directions with regard to worship, and the rights of mankind, and that there is nothing new which has been set out in the Qur'an, but only a person who has not pondered the

Word of God would fall into this error.

There is a great part of matters Divine that finds no mention in the Torah; for instance, it does not mention the finer stages of the Unity of God. The Qur'an discloses that the Unity of God does not mean merely that we should not worship idols, or human beings, or animals, or the elements, or heavenly bodies or satans, but that the Unity of God has three stages.

The first stage of the Unity of God is for the common people who desire to be delivered from the wrath of God Almighty.

The second stage is for those who desire to be closer to God than the common people.

The third stage is for those special ones who desire to achieve closeness to perfection.

The first stage is that no one should be worshipped except God, and that one should refrain from the worship of everything

that is limited and created, whether it is on the earth or in heaven.

The second stage of the Unity of God is that in one's own affairs and in the affairs of others, God Almighty should be regarded as the true force and that means should not be so emphasised as to become associates of God. For instance, to say that had it not been for X one would have suffered a certain loss, or that if it had not been for Y, one would have been ruined, would amount to *shirk*, if by such pronouncements it is meant that X and Y truly possess some power.

The third stage of the Unity of God is to exclude the desires of one's ego from one's love of God Almighty and to devote oneself entirely to His Greatness.

Such Unity of God is not to be found in the Torah. Also there is no mention of salvation or hell in the Torah, except some slight indications here and there. In the same way, there is no detailed mention in the Torah of the

perfect attributes of God Almighty. Had the Torah contained any *Surah* like the one in the Holy Qur'an:

Say, 'He is Allah, the One; Allah the Independent and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto him.'
(Ch.112:Vs.2-5)

then perhaps the Christians might have refrained from the worship of a creature. Also the Torah has not set forth the degrees of rights but the Qur'an has set forth this teaching also in perfection. For instance, it says:

Verily, Allah requires you to abide by justice, and to treat with grace, and give like the giving of kin to kin; and forbids indecency, and manifest evil, and transgression.
(Ch.16:V.91)

Allah enjoins equity, benevolence and graciousness between kindred.

This means that our sympathy with mankind should be prompted by natural eagerness and not by any motive of seeking acknowledgement, as for instance, a mother has sympathy for her child. The Torah also fails to establish the existence of God and His Unity and His perfect attributes on the basis of reason, but the Holy Qur'an has established all these doctrines and the need of revelation and Prophethood with arguments based on reason, and, by stating everything in a philosophic way, has made it easy for seekers after truth to appreciate it. These arguments are put forth in such an excellent manner in the Holy Qur'an that it is not within anyone's power, for instance, to put forth any argument on the existence of God which is not contained in the Qur'an.

A strong argument in support of the need of the Holy Qur'an is that all the previous Books beginning with the Torah and ending with the Gospel are addressed to a particular people, namely, the children of Israel and

state in clear words that the directions contained in them are not for the general benefit, and are limited to the children of Israel. But the Holy Qur'an aims at the reform of the whole world and is not addressed to any particular people but states plainly that it has been revealed for the benefit of the whole of mankind and that the reform of everyone is its purpose. (*Kitab-ul-Bariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 13, pp. 83-85*)

The Holy Qur'an Vs. the Gospels (Urdu Poem)

*O Christians! Come this way;
See the light of the True God,
and find the true path.*

*Can you show us in the
Gospels
The numberless qualities
present in the Qur'an?*

*Remember! There is the
Creator above you,
Do not just go about
misleading His creation.*

*How long will you continue to
love falsehood,*

Do try truthfulness for a change.

*People! Have some fear of God,
Have some modesty before Him.*

*The pleasures and delights of this life are not forever;
Dears!
This is not a place to live in forever.*

*No one has ever stayed here forever.
Nor is this an eternal world
My dear people, listen!
Without the Qur'an,
Man can never find the True God.*

*Those who have no knowledge of this Light,
Cannot behold the Beloved.*

*The influence of the Furqan is indeed marvellous:
It turns one into a lover of the Beloved God*

Hear from me of the beauty of the charming beloved;

Hear from me the charm of its beautiful countenance.

*If you do not have eyes, at least you have ears;
If not, it might as well serve as a trial for you.*

*(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya,
Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.1,
pp.298-300)*

The Qur'an is filled with deep wisdom. In all its teachings and in its instructions with regard to true virtue it goes beyond the Bible. The lamp for beholding the true and unchangeable God is in the hand of the Qur'an. Had the Qur'an not come, God knows how many creatures might have been worshipped in the world. So all praise is due to God that the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world, has been re-established by the Qur'an.

(Tohfah Qaisariyyah, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 12, p.282)

The Holy Qur'an brings out the full accord between Science and Religion

The Holy Qur'an is a Book so

full of wisdom that it has brought out the accord between the principles of spiritual medicine, that is to say, the principles of religion which are truly spiritual medicine, and physical medicine, and this accord is so fine that it opens the doors of hundreds of insights and verities. It is only that person who can interpret the Holy Qur'an truly and perfectly, who ponders the principles laid down by the Holy Qur'an in the light of the system of physical medicine.

On one occasion I was shown in a vision some books of expert physicians which contained a discussion of the principles of physical medicine, among which was included the book of the expert Physician, Qarshi, and it was indicated to me that these Books contained a commentary on the Holy Qur'an. This shows that there is a deep relationship between the science of bodies and the science of religion and that they confirm each other. When I looked at the Holy Qur'an, keeping in mind the books that dealt with physical

medicine, I discovered that the Holy Qur'an sets out in an excellent manner the principles of physical medicine.

(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp. 102-103)

The Migration of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV^(ru)

By Bockarie Tommy Kallon – London, UK

The story of Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad's^(ru) migration from Pakistan to the United Kingdom is one of the most dramatic chapters of his life. It reveals alike a deep-seated trust in Allah on the part of Huzur^(ru) and manifest support for His chosen servant by Allah Almighty. In a sense, many parallels can be drawn between his migration and that of the migration of the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw) from Makkah to Madinah. Both migrations had been preceded by persecution that was cruel, bitter and sustained; both had escaped when the opponent had finally resolved to put an end to them; the dangers attendant upon their escape were immense; Divine intervention had delivered them from certain apprehension; and, perhaps most important of all, the success subsequently enjoyed post-migration could hardly have been envisaged beforehand.

Since 1974 when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto colluded with the orthodox religious clergy of Pakistan to declare members of the Ahmadiyya Community as non-Muslim and heretical to Islam, Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan have endured senseless persecution and discrimination. It was a time which saw a heightened wave of anti-Ahmadiyya disturbances across the country. Orthodox religious clergy availed themselves of the opportunity to put Prime Minister Bhutto under pressure to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslim. The upshot of all this was a constitutional amendment which defined the term 'Muslim' specifically such that Ahmadis fell outside its scope and were listed, constitutionally, as 'non-Muslim'. Ahmadi Muslims would face severe attacks on their lives, properties and businesses.

Discrimination was practised against Ahmadis in every government service.

Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih III^(ru), who was then Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, urged forbearance and fortitude on the part of Ahmadis. They were to defend themselves against attack but not to attack their persecutors. They were urged not to respond to provocation, nor even return abuse for abuse but to continue to smile.

When General Zia-ul-Haq, Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, seized power in 1977 with a military coup, he did so at the expense of international condemnation and public outcry. Pakistan, despite a poor human rights record, was seen as a democracy which now threatened to degenerate into dictatorship. General Zia promised elections and a return to democracy within 90 days, a time which elapsed with no delivery on that promise. Instead,

he sought to strengthen his hold on power.

As more denunciation was poured on his regime, he sought both legitimacy and a diversion. The opportunistic government of Zia made immense political mileage by aligning itself with the desire and designs of extremist Muslim clergy. His claim to legitimacy was the imposition of extreme laws in the name of Islam which gained the assent of leading orthodox Muslim clergy and instilled both fear and subjugation in the rest of the population. The diversion he found was by making the Ahmadiyya Community, a religious minority within Pakistan, a scapegoat for his illegitimate government. With this lamentable stratagem of exploiting religious sensibilities for narrow political advantage, he would fan the embers of religious intolerance in a purported bid to exterminate Ahmadiyyat from Pakistan. The persecution of Ahmadi Muslims became wholly legal and even encouraged. Already indoctrinated by self-serving religious

clergy, oppression of Ahmadi Muslims by their fellow citizens intensified manifold. Ahmadi Muslims were murdered in cold blood and their murderers were never apprehended. Ahmadiyya mosques were demolished, set on fire, or in most cases, desecrated. Ahmadi graves were defiled and their very existence criminalised. Strange as it may seem, the very Community whose members were prepared to sacrifice their life, wealth, time and honour on a global scale for the promotion and glory of Islam, was denounced and excommunicated by the Muslim clergy and government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

It was during such time that Allah Almighty took into His loving care, Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^(ru) and his younger brother, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^(ru), as Allah willed, was appointed to take on the mantle of Khilafat.

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^(ru), like his predecessor, admonished patience and pra-yers. The

Promised Messiah^(as) had forewarned that the Community would face perse-cution in diverse ways. He had foretold of various trials to which they would be subjected. But he had also prophesied ultimate victory for the Community, if they remained steadfast in the face of trials and tribulations.

As a leader, Huzur^(ru) displayed a charismatic air of authority which exuded moral determination and confidence alike. To inspire hope into the Community, Huzur^(ru) called in aid all his great talents; he had continuous recourse to advice and exhortation, he set a high personal example of steadfastness and resignation to the Divine Will and spent a good part of his nights in earnest supplication. But it was one of his poems that struck a chord with the Community. The poem put heart into millions of Ahmadi Muslims; it recognised their despair, it gave expression to the pain and anguish they felt, but also gave hope, promised final victory and the downfall of the



*Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^(ru)
Khalifatul Masih IV*

brutal regime. The tempest of persecution would collide with the prayers they were offering and fade away as if they had never arisen. The darkness of persecution would pass away and the tranquillity would illumine the dawning day. That he was Head of the Community at this time of travail was indeed a manifestation of Divine providence.

While, however, Huzur^(RU) admonished patience and restraint, he himself was not prepared to let General Zia's tyranny go unmentioned. He denounced Zia, now President, in his Friday Sermons and warned of Divine wrath and punishment if the President failed to mend his ways. Some members of the Community, fearful of Zia's retribution, respectfully requested Huzur^(RU) not to be so forthright but to no avail. Huzur^(RU) continued with his condemnation.

Zia, like all dictators, ruled with terror and took great exception to any opposition. His response was to place the Community under

surveillance of his secret services reporting all that was said by Huzur^(RU) in his many addresses. Zia would also have noticed that all his phenomenal persecution and discrimination, including a series of laws that created a separate electorate system for Ahmadi, had failed to arrest the progress of the Community. His outrage was transformed into more draconian laws that made the most basic acts of worship by Ahmadi Muslims extra-legal. This way he thought he could silence Huzur^(RU) and curtail his actions and, as he hoped, check the progress of the Community.

Before and after his election as Khalifatul Masih, Huzur^(RU) was well networked among the diplomatic corps. Around March 1984, through these means, he began to receive intimation that something was about to happen though none of his contacts knew what exactly. He was, however, strongly advised to leave Islamabad where he had gone to ascertain any details of the imminent events.

The outcome of all this was made clear on 26th April 1984. The President of Pakistan, General Zia-ul-Haq, was introducing Sections 298B and 298C, collectively referred to as Ordinance XX, made under martial law to the Pakistan Penal Code. This ordinance explicitly undercut the activities of religious minorities generally, but struck Ahmadis in particular. According to Section 298B:

Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves ‘Ahmadis’ or any other name) who by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, refers to, or addresses, any person other than a Caliph or companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), as ‘*Ameer-ul-Momineen*’, ‘*Khalifatul Momineen*’, ‘*Sahaabi*’ or ‘*Razi Allah Anho*’; refers to, or addresses, any person other than a wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw) as ‘*Ummul Momineen*’; refers to, or

addresses, any person other than a member of the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), as *Ahle-bait*; or refers to, or names, or calls, his place of worship as *Masjid*; shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to a fine.

Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves ‘Ahmadis’ or any other name) who by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, refers to the mode or form of call to prayers followed by his faith as ‘*Azan*’ or recites ‘*Azan*’ as used by Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to a fine.

According to Section 298C:

‘Any person of the Qadiani

group or the Lahori group (who call themselves ‘Ahmadis’ or any other name) who, directly or indirectly, poses himself as a Muslim, or calls, or refers to his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to a fine.’

This ordinance was to come into force effective immediately and would override any orders or decisions of courts. The ordinance in effect meant Ahmadis could no longer profess their faith for fear of being charged with ‘indirectly or directly posing as Muslim.’ Ahmadi publications, the use of any Islamic terminology on wedding invitations or even

gravestones, building mosques, making the call to prayer and in effect, any public act of worship or devotion by an Ahmadi had all become criminal offences. The infamous ordinance completely undermined the crucial and basic human right to manifest one’s belief. It was a complete and utter blight on Islam – a religion that otherwise had a good record on the question of tolerance even to other faiths. Ordinance XX and its proscriptions was at best an embarrassment to other good Muslims in Pakistan with an understanding of the basic tenets of the religion of Islam and at worst, it was cruel, demonic and inhumane.

Iain Adamson writes in *A Man of God*:

‘World reaction to the ordinance was one of incredulity. Among Pakistan lawyers, diplomats and businessmen there was a sadness – sadness that their country was sinking into total religious intolerance, sadness that their country’s name was

becoming synonymous with infamous regimes that oppressed its citizens because of their colour or religion...

‘The sheer illogicality of the law depressed the lawyers and judges of Pakistan. They had tried in the main to hold on to notions of justice and liberty. How, they asked, could the state abrogate (*sic*) to itself the ability to define what was, and what was not, Islam?’

‘How could a particular number of Islamic divines, even though they were in the majority, consider that they, and they alone, could interpret the word of God as revealed in the Quran?’

‘How could a state justify its suppression of the rights of a group of people to proclaim its name and its beliefs, provided no anti-social or criminal offence had been committed?’

‘And, most important of all,

how could any judge or jury decide that someone was posing as a believer in any religion if all that he did was pray and observe the tenets of that religion?’¹

In Rabwah, Huzur^(ru) immediately held counsel with the most senior members of the Community to deliberate and advise on the response to the opprobrious ordinance. Huzur^(ru) was to later recount of this meeting in *A Man of God*:

‘I was never in any way scared of General Zia. I had criticised very openly in my sermons. I had told him, ‘Mend your ways and your attitude. Cease this persecution or you will face the Wrath of God.’

‘But with this ordinance it was a different kind of situation. It was not my safety that was at stake, but my ability to speak out. With this law Zia could silence me as the effective head of the Community. I could remain in

Pakistan and speak out and then be put into prison. When I came out I could speak out again and be put away for another three years.

‘In Ahmadiyyat you cannot choose another head while the first is living, even if he is imprisoned and completely out of touch. So that would mean a headless community.

‘The Khalifa is guided by God in his decisions; so he cannot delegate his decisions to a committee. Some decisions have to be taken by the Khalifa and that decision is final. If he were not able to take any decisions that could be a very dangerous situation.’²

The advice to Huzur^(RU) was unanimous. He was to leave Pakistan and leave immediately. Huzur^(RU) agreed to this only with the emphatic proviso that at the time of his departure no warrant should have been issued for his arrest or any charge brought against him requiring him to

appear before the authorities. His personal safety would not be secured at the cost of granting an opportunity to the enemies of the Community to calumniate the office of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya. Even if at the airport and when about to board, an order came requiring him to report to any authority, he would not depart. He was prepared to pay the ultimate price and lay down his life for the cause of Ahmadiyyat. He also instructed that there should be no mendacity or duplicity about his departure. He would not change from his normal dress up to and including the turban. In fact, he was in no way to be disguised and using a false passport was out of the question. These two points were made repeatedly and emphatically by Huzur^(RU).

Having decided to leave Pakistan, the most pertinent question was how to accomplish this. It was known that the headquarters were under surveillance and Zia was looking for any excuse to have him apprehended. Zia would not

permit him to leave the country now that he, in his estimation, almost had him where he wanted – on the verge of arrest.

Looking ahead at that time, the journey out of Pakistan seemed a very perilous one. All roads leading in and out of Rawbah were under the surveillance of Zia's secret agencies, the phone lines were tapped and all conversations recorded. But it is here that the evidence of Divine succour becomes manifest. At each stage, Allah Almighty created such conditions as would ensure Huzur's^(RU) safe deliverance. For instance, Huzur^(RU) had decided to take the latter of two weekly KLM flights, with which airline he usually travelled. A messenger was sent to Karachi to book the seats. On his return, he reported that the KLM manager had insisted that Huzur^(RU) travelled on the earlier flight which was scheduled for Monday, April 30th. This was despite the fact that this flight was fully booked while the other had readily available seats. At the time he did not advance any

reasons for his advice but, as he had given assurances that at least six seats would be made available on the earlier flight, his advice was duly accepted. It was not until later that he gave his explanation. The earlier flight was a direct flight to Europe while the latter touched down in a Gulf state. Had knowledge of his escape reached the Pakistani authorities before or during his brief interlude in the Gulf state, it was almost certain General Zia would have brought false charges against him and pressed for his arrest and extradition back to Pakistan.

Many people had seen various dreams leading up to the infamous ordinance which portended to the imminent emigration of Huzur^(RU) out of Pakistan. Further evidence of Divine support and assurance was to come in the form of one such dream which has been related in this regard. Huzur's^(RU) decision to leave Pakistan was kept on an absolute need-to-know basis so much so that even some close family members like his own

sister had no idea he was about to emigrate. A secret escape plan was agreed and knowledge of these details were even more restricted so that some of those with whom counsel had been held and again some family members did not know these details. This way the likelihood of an erroneous slip was minimised.

It was shortly after this that a letter addressed to Huzur^(RU) from a senior member of the Community of Chinese provenance, Mr Usman Chou, was received. In the letter Mr Usman Chou recounted a dream he had had which, though he could not unravel its meaning, believed it contained some sort of message for Huzur^(RU).

In the dream he had seen that Huzur^(RU) was about to embark on a journey to Islamabad but when he approached the car to pay his respects he discovered that the car was empty. Shocked and distressed, he heard a voice telling him that Huzur^(RU) had left via another route and gone abroad. Following the car, he

noticed that the car instead of going directly to Islamabad went to Jehlum and stayed there for a night.

This was the dream recounted by Mr Usman Chou who had no knowledge of Huzur's^(RU) plans. Amazingly, it contained the secret plan which had been agreed upon earlier. Huzur's^(RU) interpretation of this dream was that Allah Almighty had approved the plan and with that he had absolute faith that it would succeed. He, therefore, suffered no worry or anxiety over its success.

So it was that after the dawn prayers on Sunday 29th April, Huzur's^(RU) car, accompanied by the usual entourage of security staff in cars to the front and rear of Huzur's^(RU), was seen heading out of Rabwah. However, seated in the back seat of the car was not Huzur^(RU) himself but his older brother, Mirza Munawar Ahmad, wearing the long achkan coat and turban which, though not exclusive to him, was traditionally worn by Huzur^(RU). As it was still

prior to daybreak and the sun had not yet arisen fully, most Ahmadis did not notice this and presumed Huzur^(ru) was embarking on a brief journey to Islamabad. Most importantly, four of the five surveillance team installed by General Zia also presumed it was Huzur^(ru) on his way to Islamabad. They reported this to their superiors and proceeded to shadow the entourage on its way. Later when the entourage headed for Jehlum, they reported that Huzur^(ru) was not heading directly to Islamabad but planned a brief sojourn in Jehlum. This was nothing unusual as Huzur^(ru) had a cousin there and had stayed overnight there many a time on his way to Islamabad. The surveillance teams and their superiors were aware of this.

It was thus that the plan conceived and given Divine assurance in a dream to Mr Usman Chou was executed and executed successfully. Yet this was hardly the end of the road. Huzur^(ru) still had to head out of Rabwah to Karachi and onto an

aircraft to Europe. Here again another dream has been related which foretold of events to happen, though at the time, no one knew to what it pertained. Huzur's^(ru) second daughter, Sahibzadi Faiza Luqman Sahiba, had seen in a dream that Huzur^(ru) was leaving on a journey and was on an isolated road in one of two cars though they were not his usual cars. On the way, they were forced to slow down when approaching a place where it appeared road works were being carried out. However, no workmen could be seen but as they slowed down suddenly she saw some beggars approaching. Their appearance perturbed her. Suddenly a hand appeared from the car in front and scattered some one rupee notes. As most of the beggars ran to gather the money the cars moved past them and gathered speed again.

This dream was related by Huzur's^(ru) daughter at a time when no one in the family knew about his imminent departure. What happened was that much before Huzur's^(ru) entourage was

seen leaving Rabwah on 29th April, at around 2 a.m. Huzur had left Rabwah in two other cars which were not his usual ones taking a minor road leading to the small town of Lalian and then on to Jhang and then to the main road to Karachi. In those days, no visa had to be obtained before travelling from Pakistan like it is these days: again, another sign of Divine succour. Any Pakistani could travel to the UK and on arrival apply for entry clearance which then was at the discretion of the immigration officer to grant or refuse. Had a visa been a prerequisite, Huzur^(ru) would have had to go to the British High Commission to seek entry clearance prior to travelling. No doubt this would have brought his plans to the attention of the Pakistani authorities. It was only six months after Huzur^(ru) migration that the immigration rules were changed such that entry clearance had to be obtained prior to travelling to the United Kingdom from Pakistan.

Returning to the events of that night, Huzur^(ru) was in the second

car with his wife and two youngest daughters with some security staff in the car in front. Between Lalian and Jhang, the road was badly damaged and was being repaired. The military intelligence had taken advantage of this and set up one of the five surveillance teams there dressed as beggars, though they all looked healthy and wore army boots under their gowns.

As the cars slowed down, the putative beggars headed towards the second car which would have meant certain discovery of Huzur^(ru) when one of the security staff in the first car opened his window and threw out some one rupee notes. The beggars ran for them and Huzur's^(ru) car moved forward, gathered speed and was on its way again. Amazingly, these events happened exactly as Huzur's^(ru) daughter had related in her dream, even down to the denomination of the rupee notes handed out by the security staff.

Some of the beggars who did run for the money thrown stared into both cars. They were to report

later that they thought Huzur^(ru) was on his way to Jhang and so could be heading for Karachi. But this report conflicted with that of the other four surveillance teams who had reported that Huzur^(ru) was on his way to Islamabad via Jehlum. It was thus ignored. Yet again, it could be seen that Huzur^(ru) was under the canopy of Allah's protection.

The 750-mile journey to Karachi Airport was accomplished without any difficulty. At the airport, Huzur^(ru) and his entourage were shown to a private room and one hour before the scheduled departure time of 2 a.m., he went through immigration and passport control. He then returned to his private room and waited for the call to board the plane. The time came for the gates to be opened but there was no call. Instead, it was announced that departure would be delayed. The KLM manager had assured Huzur^(ru) the flight would take off on time. Now the manager came in to apologise for the delay saying it was the responsibility of the airport

authorities. They had not granted permission for the aircraft to take off.

Huzur's^(ru) security staff were trying in vain to conceal their worry and anxiety. His two youngest daughters at the time too young to appreciate the magnitude of the matter fell asleep. Huzur's^(ru) wife, naturally, became full of trepidation. In Cave Thaur when the enemy almost apprehended the Holy Prophet^(saw) and Hadhrat Abu Bakr^(ra) during their migration to Madinah, Hadhrat Abu Bakr^(ra) became extremely anxious. The Holy Prophet^(saw) sought to assuage him by giving him assurance of Divine protection. Here it was Huzur^(ru) who sought to allay his wife's fears. As he sat waiting, he had an impeccable trust in Allah.

The minutes dragged by slowly. It was patently obvious that the delay was due to Huzur's^(ru) presence but the details of what was going on in the background only came to light months later. The passport officers at the

airport had in front of them a banning order issued directly from General Zia. It had gone to all airports, seaports and border check posts. But here again the grand Divine design became manifest. The banning order stated that “Mirza Nasir Ahmad who calls himself the Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Movement” was not to be allowed to leave Pakistan. Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^(RU) was Khalifatul Masih III and had passed away almost two years before. But General Zia had dealt mostly with Khalifatul Masih III^(RU) so that when he came to issue the banning order, it was his name that he inadvertently wrote.

The cause of the delay is now manifest. Huzur’s passport clearly stated his name, ‘Mirza Tahir Ahmad’, and profession, ‘Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement’. This was the mix-up that Passport Control officers at Karachi airport had in front of them. During the delay they tried to contact Islamabad to see if someone could clear up the confusion but at that time of the

day, two o’clock in the morning, no one could be reached who could make a definitive pronouncement on the matter. They concluded it must have been an outdated order. Finally, therefore, an hour after the scheduled departure time, Huzur^(RU), his wife and two daughters, Chaudhry Hameed Nasrullah Khan, then Amir of Lahore and Huzur’s^(RU) Head of Security went aboard the aircraft for the eight-hour direct flight to Amsterdam.

Now that Huzur^(RU), by the grace of Allah, was safely aboard the plane on his way to London, via Amsterdam, plans needed to be made to receive him appropriately. Officials of the Jama’at both in Amsterdam and London needed to be informed but it was felt that, as the phone lines were tapped, they had to wait until the plane had gone past Turkey, the last of the Muslim states it flew over, before telephoning London.

At around 2:30a.m. London time, Mr Masud Ahmad, then *Wakil-ul-Tabshir* (Head of Foreign



The passport on which the Khalifa openly left Pakistan.

Missions), made the call from Pakistan to the residence of Maulana Ataul Mujeeb Rashed, Missionary In-charge UK, Imam of the London Mosque and, at that

time, also Amir, Jama'at Ahmadiyya UK. After exchanging greetings, he asked Imam Sahib to get ready. Imam Sahib responded that he was ready but

inquired for what purpose. Huzur^(ru) will be arriving in London, he was told. Thinking that Huzur^(ru) would be arriving in a week or two, and hence still not un-nerved, Imam Sahib casually enquired as to when he would be arriving. The response brought with it all anxiety. Huzur^(ru) would be arriving 8 a.m. London time that same day. They needed to wait until the flight was approaching Europe before telephoning London.

Imam Sahib recalls he and his wife first performed their ablutions and offered prayers beseeching Allah's help in the discharge of the enormous task of organising for Huzur's^(ru) reception. The London Mission was still very much small scale at the time and, apart from a small guesthouse, the only other premises belonging to the Community was the apartment of Imam Sahib where it was decided Huzur^(ru) would best be accommodated while Imam Sahib and his family moved to the small guesthouse.

While his wife started cleaning the apartment, throwing all possessions indiscriminately into bed sheets to be knotted and made into bundles, Imam Sahib telephoned Mr. Abdul Hakim Akmal, then Missionary In-charge, Holland, and gave him detailed instructions as to how Huzur^(ru) was to be received and that the information of his arrival was to be communicated immediately to London. He then set about clearing out his office in readiness for Huzur's^(ru) arrival and use. An emergency meeting of the National Executive was convened at the London Mosque immediately after the morning prayers held at 4:30 a.m. Various roles and responsibilities were delineated.

The flight having been delayed on take-off was late in arriving so that it caused moments of great anxiety among the members in London. Finally came the news of Huzur's^(ru) arrival in Holland from where Huzur^(ru) himself telephoned to say he would be taking a later connecting flight to London so that his arrival in

London was around 11 a.m. local time.

At Heathrow Airport, London, Huzur^(ru) was cheerful and jovial despite being compelled to leave his beloved Pakistan. He exhibited physical signs of fatigue but he seemed to have a resolve and determination about him. On the way to the London Mosque one of the first things he enquired about was the timing of the noon prayers, Zuhr. He wanted to know if they would make it back in time. Being told the time and being familiar with London, he confirmed himself that they would be there on time.

At the London Mosque, some 300 members had gathered to welcome Huzur^(ru). On his arrival, despite a long and tiring journey, Huzur^(ru) met and shook hands with all the men, went over to greet the ladies briefly before going upstairs to prepare for Zuhr prayers which he promptly came out to lead. In Pakistan, he had been required to speak very loudly as the use of public address systems were forbidden. His

voice was, therefore, hoarse. But it was also full of emotion and the prostrations before Allah Almighty, no doubt in gratitude for his deliverance, were long and absorbed.

After the prayers, Huzur^(ru) gave intimation of his intention to address the members of the UK Community after the Asr prayers which then were at 5p.m. and requested that the necessary arrangements be made. He then retired to his apartment for some rest.

A coded telex had been sent as soon as news was received of Huzur's arrival in Amsterdam by Anwar Kahlon Sahib, then National President of the UK Community to his brother-in-law in Rabwah which caused some perplexity. It simply said, 'Valuable package sent to Amsterdam has arrived safely. Will arrive in London shortly.' Not being among those who were in on the secret he could not decipher the message. Enquiries around his office having failed to discover the sender, he phoned

his wife to find out if she had sent any package. She replied that she had not, then momentarily recalled that there were certain rumours about Huzur's^(ru) departure from Pakistan. She therefore suggested he took the telex to the Amir.

This was the news those who were in on the secret had been waiting for. In a matter of moments, the news had spread throughout Rabwah and to all Ahmadi Communities across Pakistan. Naturally, they were saddened to see Huzur^(ru) leave in such circumstances yet there was relief everywhere and gratitude to Allah Almighty for Huzur's^(ru) deliverance. General Zia had intended to silence Huzur^(ru) as the effective head of the Community. He had very evil designs. But right under his nose and with the worldly might and power at his disposal, Huzur^(ru) had left Pakistan without disguise, without any charge and without the slightest stain on his character.

It is related that the news that Huzur^(ru) had left Pakistan, his banning order notwithstanding, sent General Zia wild with rage. There must have been collusion, he concluded. Immigration officials at Karachi airport were suspended and commissions of inquiry launched in all directions. Senior police officers were to receive direct calls from the office of General Zia demanding that they produced the Head of the Ahmadiyya Community. But it was all in vain. God works in mysterious ways.

It is believed Huzur^(ru) escaped arrest by a matter of hours. Before news of his escape had become public, the Governor of the Punjab had telephoned leaving a message that Huzur^(ru) was to report immediately to his office in Lahore. Had that been received before his departure, Huzur^(ru) would not have departed as he had already stipulated that he would not leave the country under such circumstances. Had he gone to Lahore, it is believed he would have been arrested on some fabricated criminal charge.

Back in London, Huzur^(ru) addressed the huge crowd that had assembled at the London Mosque in the evening. He gave a detailed insight into the situation in Pakistan including the evil designs of the government and explained the reasons behind his decision to emigrate. He reiterated that he had been prepared to lay down his life but it was for the benefit of the Community he had sought Divine guidance through supplication and then arrived at his decision. He touched upon the dreams that certain members had had in relation to his migration and also some of his own dreams through which Allah had given him glad-tidings of his deliverance. Huzur^(ru) admonished the Community never to give in to opposition. He requested the entire Community to prepare for the great many achievements that now lay ahead. Everyone would be called upon to render services to the Community. He himself would be pre-occupied with highly significant future planning, so he requested the Community in the UK not to

seek private audiences with him in those days. If he needed help or consultation he would himself invite that person to an audience. At the end of the address, Huzur led a very solemn and heart-rending silent prayer.

Thus was concluded one of the most remarkable and historic milestones in the annals of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. It will always be remembered for the manifest Divine succour Huzur^(ru) received at every stage of his journey out of Pakistan and for the remarkable success the Community enjoyed under Huzur's^(ru) dynamic leadership in the post-migration period.

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The Star of David

Fact or Fiction?

By Maidah Ahmad – Canada

Introduction

The six-pointed star, consisting of two interlocking triangles, has become the most common and universally recognised sign of Judaism and Jewish identity. The star, most commonly referred to as the ‘Star of David’, in Hebrew is called ‘The Magen David’, which literally translates as the ‘Shield of David’. Interestingly, on closer examination we find that the star has only achieved the status of being the ‘official emblem’ of Judaism in the last two hundred years. Before this it rarely appeared in Jewish works. In fact, the symbol is not exclusive to Judaism. Rather its usage predates Judaism and can be found in architectural and literary works of other religions and organisations throughout history.

This article will discuss some of the theories relating to the origins of the symbol. In doing so, the article will explore several key

questions: does the symbol have a common origin? Can the symbol really be associated with the great King David, the Israelite Prophet? Or has the symbol been used by different religions and organisations merely because of its simple and attractive geometric design? Without providing any definitive answers, the article serves as an introduction to the history of this universal symbol.

Jewish use of the symbol

In modern times the Star of David has become the prime Jewish symbol. It appears on the flag of the Jewish state of Israel and the Israeli equivalent of the Red Cross and is known as the Magen David Adom (ie *the Red Star of David*). However, the important question to be asked is what is the earliest known record of the usage of the Star of David?

The earliest known Jewish use of the Star, or hexagram, was as a

seal in ancient Israel in the 6th Century BCE and then eight centuries later in a synagogue in Capernaum. But these early hexagrams may have only been architectural features rather than having any religious significance. This is reinforced by the fact that the hexagram appears more frequently on churches and other religious and even non-religious buildings than on synagogues and Jewish ritual objects. In fact it was the menorah (the seven branched candelabrum) which served as the primary Jewish symbol until the post-Renaissance period around the 1600s, not the six-sided star.

Interestingly, the use of the menorah as a Jewish symbol can be traced back to the Bible. The design itself is taken from instructions for construction of the menorah found in Exodus 25:31-40. Can the same be said for the six-sided star? Does the Bible mention the symbol or its association with King David^(as)?

On close examination, we find that there is no Biblical evidence whatsoever that such a symbol existed in ancient Judaism. In fact

the Jewish view of God, which permits no images of God, is opposed to the use of any symbols and neither the Bible nor the Talmud recognises their existence.ⁱ Furthermore, although King David^(as) is recognised as a mighty warrior King, no mention is made of him possessing a specific type of shield.

Rather, as mentioned previously, we find that it was only in the 17th Century, following Jewish emancipation after the French revolution, that Jewish communities chose the Star of David to represent themselves, comparable to the cross used by most Christians. It was also in this time-period that it became common practice to put the hexagram on the outside of synagogues. In both cases, the primary purpose was as a means of identity.

The Magen David gained popularity as a symbol of Judaism when it was adopted as the emblem of the Zionist movement in 1897. Moreover, when Theodor Herzl, founder of modern day Zionism, chose the Star it was because it was so well-known and

also because it had no religious associations. Today, although it appears in the centre of the Israeli flag, there was much debate over whether this symbol should be used at all.

Having looked at its Jewish usage, before we look at its occurrence in other religions, we need to answer the question of why it is called the Star of David. In other words is the symbol associated with Prophet David^(as), and if so, how?

Association with Prophet David^(as)?

There is no shortage of scholars who attempt to trace the Star back to Prophet David^(as) as the name itself suggests. Jewish legendsⁱⁱ speak of a magical shield possessed by King David^(as) which protected him from his enemies. Other legends taken from Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions,ⁱⁱⁱ speak of a magical five-sided or some times six-sided star ring of Prophet Solomon^(as), son of King David, which protected him from evil spirits. This ring is often referred to as the Seal of Solomon and has been used by Muslims from different countries and

cultures as a symbol of magic to adorn and decorate artefacts and buildings. In fact, so entrenched has the symbol become in Muslim societies that the seal of Solomon appears on the national flag and coat of arms of Morocco.

Another theory about the origin of the shape is that it is simply 2 of the 3 letters in the name David. In its Hebrew spelling, David contains only 3 characters, 2 of which are 'D'. In ancient times, this letter was written in a form much like a triangle, similar to the Greek letter 'Delta'. The symbol may have formed by flipping and juxtaposing the two most prominent letters in the name. Some researchers have theorised that the Star of David represents the astrological chart at the time of David's birth or anointment as king. However, there is no evidence to support these claims.

Prophet David^(as) in the Holy Qur'an

Islam is also another religion which speaks highly of King David^(as), and although the Holy Qur'an speaks of the great feats which King David^(as) made, no

mention is made of a supposedly magical shield possessed by him.

In chapter 27 verse 16 the Holy Qur'an states:

And we gave knowledge to David and Solomon, and they said, 'All praise belongs to Allah, Who has exalted us above many of His believing servants.

Thus, David^(as) was certainly a true messenger of God. In fact the Holy Qur'an tells us he was a great warrior and statesman. He was the founder of the Judean dynasty and it was in his reign that the Israelites reached the zenith of their power and prosperity. In another chapter of the Holy Qur'an,^{iv} Allah states that the mountains and birds were subjected to David^(as). Rather than taking literally the meaning of the verse and thus alluding magical powers to King David^(as), one explanation given for this verse is that David^(as) subjugated wild and savage mountain tribes.^v Indeed in his reign all the tribes of Israel became united. The next verse states '...And We taught him the

making of coats of mail...' This again is reference to the military might of David^(as) and to his great skill in making implements of war and coats of mail. Prophet David^(as) invented and developed various kinds of armour by means of which he made great conquests.

Developing this description, chapter 34 verse 11 states, 'And certainly, We bestowed grace upon David from Ourselves... And we made iron soft for him'. This reinforces the idea that David was particularly gifted in the art of war and making of weaponry. So, perhaps he developed a shield which had some form of triangular structure?

However, if these theories were true and King David^(as) had invented a revolutionary shield design, there would be further evidence in the form of pictures, drawings and instructions for construction. After all, three of the world's major religions claim association with King David^(as).

Meanings attributed to the symbol

Explanations also exist on the

meaning of the symbol, which are not necessarily specific to Judaism.

One idea is that a six-pointed star receives form and substance from its solid center. This inner core represents the spiritual dimension, surrounded by the six universal directions. Another idea is that the six points of the Star symbolise God's rule over the universe in all six directions: north, south, east, west, up and down.^{vi}

Anthropologists claim that the triangle pointing downward represents female sexuality, and the triangle pointing upward, male sexuality; thus, their combination symbolises unity and harmony.

Use of symbol around the world

The different meanings attributed to the symbol reinforce the idea that the symbol has been used by different people around the world. One thing is quite certain, that the six-sided star pre-dates Judaism and is not exclusive to Judaism but rather is common around the world and throughout history. It can be found on ancient Indian temples and appears in cosmological dia-

grams in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. In Hinduism, for example, the hexagram is called the Shatkona, a combination of the elements of fire, representing female energy and water, representing masculine energy.^{vii} The hexagram is also known as the 'King's Star' in astrological circles and was an important astrological symbol in Zoroastrianism.

In a non-religious context, the hexagram is considered the most powerful of all the signs of the occult. It is a symbol associated with magic and the Satan. It is used mainly in witchcraft to summon demons from the world. In fact, the word 'hex' which means to place a curse on someone, originated from this word.

Conclusion

Given the lack of evidence for the symbol's existence in religious scriptures, it is difficult to associate the symbol with Divine origins or its being in any way related to King David. In fact, as mentioned previously, Judaism specifically forbids the use of symbols. Although, it can be said

that the Hexagram has been mentioned in early Jewish legends, as well as Christian and Islamic traditions, in all three cases the symbol is associated with magic, mysticism and folklore, rather than having any philosophical religious meaning.

Similarly, the hexagram appears in other religions and non-religious organisations, but again mainly as a symbol of magic or merely because of its attractive geometric design.

The near-universal recognition of the symbol today as being a Jewish symbol, by Jews and non-Jews alike, does not necessarily mean that it is intrinsic to Judaism. It is, perhaps, more so a reflection of the importance and power of identity politics in this age.

References

- i. *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, p.251.
- ii. The oldest Jewish text mentioning a shield of David is contained in an explanation of a magical ‘alphabet of the angel Metatron’ ... among the Hasidei Ashkenaz of the 12th Century, *Jewish Encyclopaedia*.
- iii. It is for instance mentioned in Arabian Nights, the Medieval Middle Eastern literary epic.
- iv. *The Holy Qur’an*, Chapter 21: Verse 80. Edited by Malik Ghulam Farid, Published 2002.
- v. English Commentary of the Holy Qur’an by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Chapter 21, Edited by Malik Ghulam Farid, Published 2002.
- vi. Mark O’Connell, *The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Signs & Symbols*, (2005: London).
- vii. Mahendra Jani, *What you will see inside a Hindu Temple*, (2005: Vermont).

An independant report (reproduced with prior permission) that destroys the myth that being a majority in their headquarter, Ahmadis may be able to obtain police protection. A chilling reminder of the ostracisation of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan, their continuing persecution and the absence of any protection by the authorities in Pakistan.

Rabwah:

A PLACE FOR MARTYRS?

Part three

Report of the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group mission to Pakistan into internal flight for Ahmadis. Foreword by Lord Avebury. Mission members: Frances Allen, Michael Ellman, Jonathan Ensor.

By Dr Jonathan Ensor – UK

Protection in Rabwah

This section considers the protection available for Ahmadis in Rabwah. Three types of protection are identified: community protection, meaning the security offered to Ahmadis as a result of living in an Ahmadi-majority town; state protection, including the effectiveness of the police and judiciary protecting the interests of Ahmadis in Rabwah; and the social and economic conditions that define everyday life for residents of Rabwah. As with section 3, an understanding of the national context is

important when considering the potential risks to and protection for Ahmadis in Rabwah. The following material should therefore be read taking account of the perspective offered in the section 2, ‘The Position of Ahmadis in Pakistan’.

Community protection

The mission asked all the sources their views on the protection available to Ahmadis in Rabwah that flowed from the town’s status as the headquarters of the Ahmadi community in Pakistan. Faiz ur Rehman, President,

Amnesty International Pakistan noted that it is only in Rabwah where the Ahmadis are in the majority and as a result an Ahmadi may be a little safer in Rabwah compared to a town or village where they are in a small minority. Those from outside Rabwah may therefore, flee there if they are in fear in their home area. However, Mr Rehman pointed out that Khatme Nabuwwat have an office in Rabwah. Thus, whilst those who flee to Rabwah might gain safety for a period of time, fear of Khatme Nabuwwat is ever present. As noted previously, the Islamabad Chapter of Khatme Nabuwwat stated that they want it to be known that Rabwah is a part of Pakistan and that there is no exclusive city in Pakistan for Ahmadis.

Broadly agreeing with Mr Rehman, the HRCP explained that whilst Rabwah is safer than most other places in Pakistan for Ahmadis, there are instances of violence here as well. When asked about whether Rabwah can

offer a refuge for those targeted elsewhere in Pakistan, the HRCP explained that if an Ahmadi was pursued across Pakistan, they would be caught by their persecutor in Rabwah. Clarifying this point, the HRCP [Human Rights Commission of Pakistan] stated that safety in Rabwah depends on the nature of the persecution and/or on the influence of the persecutor. For example, if a neighbour wishes to take over an Ahmadi's business by capital-ising on anti-Ahmadi sentiment, then the job of the persecutor is complete once the Ahmadi has left the local community. However, should the persecutor be a person of influence or means, they may use this to follow their target to Rabwah as well. Alternatively, in a case such as an inheritance conflict between two brothers, where one is Ahmadi and the other wishes to take the whole of the inheritance, then the Ahmadi will be pursued wherever he goes to prevent him from claiming his share. Similarly, if an Ahmadi is accused of causing harm then the

high level of enmity involved will mean that it will be very difficult for the Ahmadi to find protection anywhere, including in Rabwah. In short, if the persecutor is sufficiently willing and/ or able then the object of their persecution will remain unsafe in Rabwah. The HRCF explained that the best way for an Ahmadi to protect her or himself is to hide his/her religion: living in Rabwah has the opposite effect as it is the focus of Khatme Nabuwwat and living in the town marks a person out as an Ahmadi.

When asked whether the Ahmadi community provides any security for its own members, the Ahmadi Community Representatives explained they maintain a system similar to neighbourhood watch that is particularly vigilant during the night. Younger members of the community also provide protection to the elders. These security personnel are unarmed, but some sensitive sites may be protected by armed members of the community if it is judged

necessary. The community stated that day to day security was a heavy burden on the community whose resources are essentially charitable. However, it is seen as essential given the lack of security for Ahmadi persons or property in Rabwah provided by the authorities.

State protection

The mission were informed by the Ahmadi Community Representatives that they cannot look to the police or the Courts for protection in Rabwah. The community could not give an example of the police having provided protection to an Ahmadi in Rabwah and, moreover, highlighted the numerous incidences in which the police or government have been the instigators of FIRs against Ahmadi (outlined in detail in section 3.1). The mission were informed that the state provides no protection to senior Ahmadi figures or mosques at Rabwah, except for a symbolic presence at the central mosque at Friday prayers. The

Representatives described how during the Khatme Nabuwwat conference in Rabwah the police line the streets and look on as Khatme Nabuwwat members march through the town, chanting ‘filthy, dirty slogans’ and vandalising Ahmadi property. In explaining the problems with relying on the state for protection in Rabwah, the mission’s attention was directed to a recent incident in which Hafiz Tahir Mahmud Ashrafi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of the Punjab for the Promotion of Religious Harmony, appeared as special guest at a Khatme Nabuwwat conference held at Sargodha on 5 September 2006 (Rabwah is within Punjab state and therefore within Mr Ashrafi’s purview). The Ahmadi Community Representatives concluded that if someone fled to Rabwah fearing attack in their home area there would be no police protection available to them. Indeed, the police are seen by the community as actively protecting the Mullahs and their followers.

Similar views were expressed by other sources that the mission consulted. Faiz ur Rehman, President, Amnesty International Pakistan stated that nowhere, including Rabwah, is safe for Ahmadi as the police would refuse to give protection to an Ahmadi. When asked if the police might react differently in Rabwah to elsewhere in Pakistan, Mr Rehman explained that whilst it is not impossible, it has not happened. He explained that, as the example of violence in Jhando Sahi demonstrates (see Appendix B8), even relatively senior and educated local police officers find that their hands are tied by their superiors when dealing with Ahmadi cases. The testimony of ‘ZB’, recorded in Appendix A, illustrates the reluctance of the police to become involved in Ahmadi cases. ‘ZB’ told the mission that her husband was attacked by a mob in Sialkot following an edict against him proclaimed by Mullah Manzoor, the local head of Khatme Nabuwwat. The Sialkot police refused to enter an

FIR against his attackers, advising instead that ‘if you want to save your life, get away from here.’ ‘ZB’ also describes the failure of the police to provide protection in Rabwah, as he subsequently fled to Rabwah where he was shot at following the distribution of his photograph at a Khatme Nabuwwat conference in Rabwah. Abdul Shakoor (recorded in Appendix A) describes how the police do not prevent local mullahs from congregating and shouting abuse outside his shop in Rabwah on a regular basis. Mr Shakoor told the mission that the mullahs congregate about four times each year, most recently three months prior to the mission’s visit. The HRCP agreed generally that speaking to the police does not help Ahmadis. The HRCP pointed out that whilst the Punjab government has never stated that it will protect Ahmadis in Rabwah, it has spoken out to defend police actions against Ahmadi people or property in Rabwah.

The mission received several explanations for the apparent limitations on state protection for Ahmadis. The Senior Government Advisor explained that the social pressure around the Ahmadi issue, detailed in section 2.1, has a real effect on all levels of the police and judiciary. When blasphemy cases are being heard people protest outside the court and this has a tangible impact on decisions: this can be seen in cases that have been quashed in the higher courts due to unsustainable findings of fact rather than on a legal basis (see also the testimony of Abdul Shakoor, recorded Appendix A, for an example of the higher court quashing blasphemy cases). The Senior Government Advisor emphasised that, generally speaking, the police are not well educated: they believe the preaching of the mullahs and act accordingly to protect their religion. The HRCP concurred with the Senior Government Advisor, describing how the judiciary takes its cue from the political orientation of the district

and noting that the numerical strength of the police is small. The HRCP described the District Courts as ‘completely subservient to the police’, who in turn are in no position to resist a mob raised by a local mullah. Thus District Courts will give sentences such as amputation, and rely on the higher courts to quash the case. The higher courts do not tend to make comments on the conduct of the lower courts in blasphemy cases. In explaining the intimidation and pressure on the police and judiciary, the HRCP referred to the impact of ‘professional persecutors’ among the anti-Ahmadi mullahs. The mullahs demonstrate outside all the courts, up to and including the High Court. However, only judges in the High Court receive any protection and this is minimal compared with that provided for politicians, rendering the whole judiciary particularly susceptible to threats from extremists. Mr Rehman explained that there is no real system in place to protect judges who try to challenge the

extremists: nothing equivalent to that provided for government ministers is available for members of the police or judiciary who suffer intimidation or threats. Through his work, Mr Rehman was aware of specific cases where judges had been threatened in this way and were forced into hiding. The HRCP also noted that they have documented instances where the government has replaced judges whose decisions challenge the government’s viewpoint and gave an example from 2005 in which the government removed the armed guard from an Anti-Terrorist Judge – an act that ‘effectively blackmails Judges’ into following the government line. In the same vein, the British High Commission (BHC) noted that they had been approached by a lawyer seeking protection following his involvement in blasphemy cases against Christians.

The HRCP also pointed out that justice in Pakistan is ‘class conscious’. High profile people

with social standing may be able to have their case transferred to the High Court – the HRCP know of five or six cases where such applications have been successful for high profile individuals. However, the High Court would routinely reject an application from an ordinary individual, even if they had the financial means to make this course available to them. Overall, the HRCP's conclusion regarding state protection holds as true in Rabwah as outside it: the social and political sensitivity of the term 'Ahmadi', taken together with the weakness of state protection in the face of the Mullahs, mean that as far as the Ahmadis are concerned, the judiciary do not exist as an option for protection. No one dares to prosecute the Mullahs for incitement: there would be too strong a backlash. The best defence for an Ahmadi is to hide his belief – but this is harder within Rabwah where it is presumed that residents are Ahmadi. Mr Rehman concluded that the problems for Ahmadis

presented by discriminatory legislation are compounded by the practical behaviour of the authorities: the police are reluctant to register FIRs or take measures against those accused of attacking Ahmadis; they will refuse to give protection to Ahmadis who fear attack; and judges will not take positive measures to conclude or dismiss blasphemy cases for fear of reprisals by extremists.

The mission sought further details of state protection from DSP Tatla, in Rabwah, and his senior officer DPO Salimi in Jhang. DSP Tatla explained that he had only been in post for four months and that he had little knowledge of events in Rabwah before his arrival. DSP Tatla stated that there are four Police Stations in the district of Rabwah. Two relate to the town, one with an Inspector, 3 Sub-Inspectors, 3 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, one Duty Officer, 5 Head Constables and 20 Constables; and one inside the city with one Sub-Inspector and one Head Constable with 8

constables. Rabwah had previously formed part of an 8-station area. DSP Tatla could not say if there were any Ahmadis in his force, but the Ahmadi Community Representatives and the HRCP both stated that the police in Rabwah are all non-Ahmadi. DSP Tatla explained that it is the police's job is to ensure law and order in the area and to protect the people and property. The main problems are domestic and neighbourhood disputes, and some theft. He confirmed that no special protection is provided for senior members of Ahmadi Community, but also assured the mission that there had been no serious problems between Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis during his tenure in Rabwah.

DSP Tatla explained that if an FIR is entered against someone in Rabwah, the police arrest the person with co-operation between the two police stations covering Rabwah town. Where an FIR is issued by someone outside Rabwah in respect of person residing in Rabwah then

they arrest the person with the cooperation with the Police station where the FIR was issued. In DSP Tatla's experience, most of the FIRs issued in Rabwah are requested by the general public in Rabwah; he knew of none instigated by people from outside Rabwah. He could give two examples from his service in Rabwah, both from September 2006. One was in relation to 'objectionable material' in the newspaper '*Alfazal*' (noted above) and the other was against a Khatme Nabuwwat clergyman for shouting slogans against Shias and Ahmadis. The mission were informed by the Ahmadi Community Representatives that there have been incidents where the police, having attended the home of a person named in an FIR and not finding him there, had taken family members to the police station and detained them. These arrests were not recorded at the police station and the family members were not charged. When asked, DSP Tatla insisted that the police do not interrogate family members of

accused people, unless they are personally concerned in the charge.

DSP Tatla stated that in his time in Rabwah Khatme Nabuwwat had organised conferences in Rabwah. Khatme Nabuwwat had held a conference in September: 100 policemen were there to provide security for 5-6,000 people. There was no march then or during his tenure. Permission is required for such conferences from the District Police Officer and the local Mayor. DPO Salimi was aware of applications by both Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis for permission to hold conferences and events: sometimes they refused permission, but he was not aware of individual cases. They do sometimes grant permission, but he did not know whether they had ever granted permission to the Ahmadis. The police would be asked as they provide security and this would be seen as having serious law and order implications. If an application came to his office, he would

discuss it with his District Coordinating Officer, with whom the decision would lie.

DPO Salimi stated that generally there were no problems in Rabwah. However, he told the mission that he is aware of the particular issues and problems in Rabwah and for Ahmadis. The DPO was clear in acknowledging that the law was not in favour of the Ahmadis. He knew there was generally one main conference each year held by the mullahs but assured the mission that if there was shouting and slogans, the police would register an FIR. Similarly, anyone can complain and the police would issue an FIR, including against the mullahs. He did not know how many Ahmadis there were in his police force: he knew of one or two, and he named a Deputy Inspector and an Assistant Superintendent of Police, whom he had known in other regions. DPO Salimi stated that there was no bar against Ahmadis joining the police force.

Appendix A: Testimony from Ahmadi community members

The mission met with a number of Ahmadi community members who had volunteered to recount their experiences. The number of people interviewed was restricted by the time available (2.30-5.00pm, 10 October 2006). Some requested that their names be withheld from publication due to ongoing problems in Pakistan. All provided proof of their identity and many produced copies of legal documents such as FIRs.

ZB, wife of MH, from Sialkot, and their son NA (23 years old)

ZB's husband travelled to the UK on 8 August 2004 and claimed asylum. She told the mission that he was in fear of his life following an edict against him by Mullah Manzoor, the local head of Khatme Nabuwwat for Sialkot area, following his conversion to the Ahmadi faith in 1997.

He had owned his own shop in Sialkot, but after the edict was issued a mob had come and

beaten him up, leaving him for dead. Later they ransacked the shop; the local union of shopkeepers was involved with the mob. He had reported the matter to the Police, but they had refused to enter a FIR and said 'if you want to save your life, get away from here.' He had been in hospital for 2-3 days after which the Ahmadi community had arranged for him to travel to Rabwah.

In 1997 MH's father had persuaded ZB and the children to stay in Sialkot, hoping they would give up the Ahmadi faith. However, the children were targeted at school, and the neighbours tipped rubbish in front of their house. In 1998 they followed MH to Rabwah, and lived in the guest house there until 2004.

The rest of MH's (non-Ahmadi) family had taken over the shop. His father lived in their house in Sialkot. However ZB's brother found out where the family were, and she started receiving letters

in 2001, threatening to kill her. Her uncle's cousin wrote to her demanding that she transfer her property to him - if not, he wrote that he knew where she was and would abduct her children: it was up to her. Her elder son had been working in Lahore, but people (including his own cousins) had threatened him, so he too came to Rabwah in July 2003.

After MH's aging father had signed over his property to his family, the family disowned him. He joined MH in Rabwah in 2003, and died there the following year. MH (whose photograph had been circulated by Khatme Nabuwwat at their conference in Rabwah) was shot at during his father's funeral in Rabwah. It was at this point that he decided that he had to leave Pakistan.

Since then ZB had suffered many problems; she had no house and no income. She did not know whether an FIR had been issued against her husband. His application for asylum in the UK was still pending.

ZM (born 6 June 1972)

ZM was born in Rabwah and, following problems with gaining employment due to his Ahmadi faith, had travelled to the UK in March 2004 and claimed asylum at the airport. His application for asylum was refused, and subsequently he was escorted by two people to the plane for Pakistan. He had applied for a travel document from the Pakistan High Commission in London because he had used a false passport to come to UK, but eventually he returned on the false passport. On arrival in Pakistan, he had been handed to the Federal Investigation Agency, who had detained him, forcing him to remain seated on a chair for 5 days. Finally they charged him for using a false passport and released him. He now has to report to court every month.

Mr. Rashid Ahmed (68 years old)

Mr. Ahmed had printed a pamphlet written by the late Khurshid Ahmad, the President of the Ahmadi Community in

Rabwah, and an Ahmadi official, Qazi Muneer, advising Ahmadis on how to use their prayers for their improvement. Mr Ahmed had been charged with blasphemy under section 298c of the Penal Code, under an FIR registered on 22 May 1989 on the order of the Home Secretary of the Provincial Government, Punjab. The Ahmadi Community had arranged for bail before he was arrested, and he took the bail certificate and deposited it with the police.

[The mission were shown a document together with a translation, headed ‘Punjab Home Department Lahore, May, 1989.’ Under the subject heading ‘Rabwah Affairs’ the document refers to a pamphlet entitled ‘Tarbiyyati Umoor’, published by ‘Committee Islah-o-Irshad Local Anjuman-e-Ahmadiyya, Rabwah’. The document concludes ‘The contents of the enclosed Pomphlet (sic) contain objectionable material actionable u/s 298 C ... SHO, PS, Rabwah to register the case’.]

Mr. Ahmed later (on 5 August) went with the legal advisor to the community, Tahir Mubarik, to the UK for a conference, and stayed abroad for about two months. After he returned in October 1989, he met by chance with the local magistrate who told him that a supplementary amendment had been made to his FIR under article 298c and a case had been registered against him. He then went to court with his legal adviser and, on 2 January 1990 he received bail again. Since that time he has had to attend court in Chiniot every 15 days, sometimes waiting all day for the case to be called. Each time the police fail to produce witnesses and the case is adjourned, without any criticism of the police. He has applied for the case to be dismissed, but he believes the magistrate is too frightened of the mullahs to order this: he has been told the police will arrange for all the witnesses to come together on one occasion.

He has not yet gone to a higher court, as there are some 60 cases

like his, and his lawyer wants to take them all to the higher court together.

Mr. MN (born 15 April 1928)
An FIR was issued against MN under article 298c on 10 June 1988 because he had published a Ramadan calendar to distribute to patients of his herbal medicine clinic near Rabwah and had mentioned the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (with the words ‘Peace be upon him’). An FIR was registered against him by Mullah Khuda Bakhsh from Khatme Nabuwwat at Rabwah Police Station. He was arrested at his clinic the same day, held overnight at the Police Station and transferred to a police post for one day and then taken to Chiniot prison for 5 days until bail was arranged. Since then the case had been called and adjourned every 15 or 30 days at Chiniot: twice his bail had been cancelled and he had had to re-arrange it. There was no reason for the adjournments, but he had to attend court every time. His lawyer has asked for his case to be dismissed on many occasions.

Mr. Abdul Shakoore (born 19 May 1935)

In 1974 Mr. Shakoore had an optician’s shop in Sargoda, Punjab, which, together with his house, was ransacked and looted at the time of agitation against the Ahmadi Community. However, in 1985 he was charged with blasphemy under article 298c because of a statement he had made in support of his Ahmadi belief. After a year in prison he finally obtained bail, but was subsequently convicted and sentenced to 3 years in prison and a 5000 Rupee fine. This was quashed on appeal to the Sessions court. He then moved to Rabwah, where he set up a new shop with Qu’ranic verses painted on the outside. He was again arrested under the blasphemy laws (298c) and obtained bail after 14 days. However, he was convicted and sentenced to 2 years imprisonment (and a 3000 rupee fine) – but this was quashed on appeal. In December 1990 four further FIRs were issued in Rabwah by Mullah Khuda Bakhsh from Khatme Nabuwwat after Mr

Shakoor offered Ahmadi books for sale at his shop. He was charged again under article 298c, but since then the case had been adjourned every month because the Mullah who brought the charge failed appear at court. His lawyer has made applications for his case to be dismissed on many occasions, without success. The Mullah is not arrested to appear, the case is simply adjourned. Mr. Shakoor reported that the local Mullahs will come and stand in front of his shop and shout abuse at him. This happens about four times per year (last occasion about 3 months ago) and forces him to close his shop until they leave.

Appendix B8 Amnesty International Pakistan, Fact Finding Mission to Jhando Sahi, 13 August 2006

**Fact Finding Report, Amnesty International Lahore Pakistan
Date of visit: August 13, 2006**

Team: Mr. Faiz ur Rehman (President Amnesty International Pakistan), Mr. Munawwar Ali

Shahid (Gen Secretary Amnesty International Lahore), Mr. Irshad Ameen (Media Advisor AI Lahore – Senior Pakistani journalist)

Summary/ Background

On Saturday, 24 June, Waqar and Nawaz were burning the old pages of organizational as well as religious literature in the compound of Bait-ul-Zikr (Ahmadi worship place). After seeing this, a neighbour spread the word of burning the Qur'an among participants of a Muslim festival arranged nearby. Immediately a crowd of people rushed to the Ahmadi area of the village and severely tortured the two men. As if this were not enough, they turned to the village and harshly attacked the property, belongings and people of Ahmadiyya community in the village. They set two shops and 3 homes on fire with torture and humiliation of the peaceful Ahmadiyya citizens of the town. Experiencing this, around 70 Ahmadi villagers (12 out of 13 Ahmadi families in the village) left their homes in fear for their

lives and later, hundreds of people from the surroundings demonstrated, chanting anti-Ahmadi slogans.

Arriving at the scene of the violence, the police did not control devastating mob humiliating and abusing the Ahmadi in the town and violently destroying their properties. Instead the police arrested seven Ahmadi and registered the incident under the notorious Section 295-b of the Criminal Code (the blasphemy law). On the other hand 'NO' person had been arrested from the attackers side. After living outside the town for more than a month the 12 Ahmadi families returned back to the town on Friday 11th August.

Amnesty's Fact Finding Mission

The Amnesty fact-finding team planned a fact-finding visit to the town on August 13 to reveal the facts behind the issue and to observe the current situation of the victims in the town. The team spent 4 hours in fact-finding during which it visited the police

station and all the affected sites and interviewed police investigation in-charge, the victims and the representatives of the provoker group.

The Amnesty team started its fact-finding process from the police station Bombanwali where the members interviewed Mohammad Aslam, the sub-inspector and in-charge of investigation who told that on 24th June 2006 Ms. Kausar Bibi noticed from her rooftop that two persons were burning the pages of the holy Qur'an at Ahmadiyya Bait-ul-Zikr. She raised an alarm and gathered the people from around the site. The police reached to the occasion and registered the case under the section 295-b of the Criminal Code and investigated the case as the investigation in-charge. After investigation the four persons were arrested, among those two accused Zaheer Ahmed and Waqar were sent to jail on 26th.

When the inspector was asked about the reaction of the police on the incidences of violence,

destruction and torture by the members of the mob against Ahmadis the inspector said, 'since no Ahmadi reported the case to the police therefore the police took no action'. On a question about the application to the police by the Ahmadi victims the sub inspector said that he received the application on 16th July and registered the case against the offensives and made the application a part of the case. However, he affirmed no arrest from the offenders' side.

On a question regarding the steps taken by the police to provide security to the small Ahmadiyya community in the town he told that for their rehabilitation in the town, a 20 members' committee had been formed which included 4 Ahmadis including Mohammad Nawaz, Sagheer Ahmed Numberdar, Mohammad Abdullah and Rana Mohammad Nasrullah Advocate. However while his interview with the fact-finding committee Mr. Nawaz renounced the formation of such committee and inclusion of Ahmadis in the committee.

While replying to a question, Mr. Aslam, the sub inspector said, the offenders, who burnt the properties of Ahmadiyya community in the town, looted the belongings and tortured the Ahmadis, would be arrested and would be brought [Ed] to justice but after more then two months of the incident no offender has been arrested.

While visiting the sites and interviewing the affected people the committee noticed the heavy destruction of the properties of Ahmadis including devastation and setting fire to 3 homes, a tractor, 2 motorbikes, 2 shops and the Bait-ul-Zikr.

The team visited the Ahmadi families for interviews who had recently been returned back to their homes after refuge of more than a month. The committee found the people in devastating condition since they found no single house of Ahmadis in the town with the facilities of fan, television and proper bedding. The effects of the psychological trauma were evident from their

faces and expressions. While interviews majority of the people including women told that many people used to abuse loudly and threatened them when they were out of homes. Many of the shopkeepers refused to sell the goods to the Ahmadiis.

The mother of Tariq Mahmood said, ‘We are facing humiliating response from the neighbours and inhabitants of the town who not only use abusive language for us but also for our sacred religious personalities, however, we are patiently bearing this all.’ She said, they were feeling themselves completely unsafe since their kids couldn’t sleep in the night due to continuous fear. She said they had lost all of their belongings and even no crockery was present in the home and in that devastating condition they were unable to do any business. They estimated a loss of more than 200,00 rupees during the attack.

‘We were in the home with some of our guests when the children informed us of a big

crowd coming towards our home while continuously beating one of the Ahmadiis, Nawaz, said Tariq Mahmood. ‘We gathered the family members and rushed to our neighbours who, instead of giving us refuge, started beating our children and abusing the women. The mob entered our house and destroyed the household and looted the belongings including dresses and jewelry amounting to Rs. 175,000’.

Mohammad Nawaz told that he arrived at the town from Gujranwala to get medicine. ‘I was preparing to go back that I heard noise and people knocked the door. As I opened the door many people pulled me outside and fixed a big cloth around my neck and started pushing me ahead of [Ed] the mob. Many people kept on beating me and pushing me around the town. When I was almost unconscious some people asked them to leave me and they left me there.’

Tariq Mahmood, the owner of the

Al-Fazal General Store told that the mob firstly looted the stuff from the shop and then set the shop to fire. Everything in the shop burned into ashes. Sajjad Ahmed the owner of the CD and audio shop told that the mob looted the whole stuff in the shop costing to Rs. 200,000 and then set the shop to fire.

Naseer Ahmad told that he was coming back from Kamonke town when he saw a big crowd looting their homes and setting those into fire. ‘It was unbelievable for me. I couldn’t even think that such incidence can happen. The mob was ready to destroy anything even the people who were not even accused of doing anything. Why did they set our homes to fire?’ The estimated cost of the loss of his house was Rs. 150,000.

In the last (Finally – Ed] the members of the fact-finding committee inter-viewed Faiz Ahmed and Rana Bashir Ahmed the two non-Ahmadi persons in the ‘peace committee’ as formed by the police. They repeated the

same account as the cause of the conflict which was earlier described by the police officer. However both of them insisted that the people of the town were not involved in setting the houses to fire, torture on the Ahmadi and looting their belongings. ‘Those were the people from other towns [who – Ed] arrived to participate in the local festival’, they said. When they were asked, how did they come to recognise the Ahmadi people and their homes in the town, they had no answer. Moreover, both of them affirmed that NO Ahmadi was part of the ‘peace committee’.

Faiz Ahmed who has returned from Korea to spend his annual leave told that it was not good to target the whole community if some members of a community were accused. He said he and his fellows witnessed the whole trauma and didn’t try to stop people for doing so. ‘We are political people and we will have to go to the people for their votes and that could have damaged our political position in the town.’

Both of them told that there was huge number of police present in the town including 45 police vehicles when the mob was attacking and targeting the Ahmadis in the town. ‘Police might have taken no action to avoid any further damage.’ he said.

Comments/ Recommendations

We at Amnesty International (Lahore-Pakistan) fear that the perpetrators of attack on the Ahmadiyya community in Jhando Sahi may go unpunished and that such attacks will continue unless the Pakistan authorities respond quickly to bring the perpetrators to justice and take steps to protect Ahmadis against future attacks.

The continued violence generally against the religious minorities and especially against the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan is evident by the previous attack on worshippers in a Baitul Zikr (Ahmadi mosque) in the village of Monga, near the town of Mandi Behauddin on 7 October 2005. Eight Ahmadis

were killed and at least 18 injured in the attack. The perpetrators have not [been – Ed] brought to justice until now.

Police investigations of previous targeted killings of Ahmadis in Pakistan have been slow or have not taken place at all. In many cases the perpetrators have not been brought to justice. We at Amnesty International believe that the government’s consistent failure to investigate attacks and killings of members of religious minorities fails to discourage further human rights abuses against such groups. The right to freedom of religion, as laid down in the Pakistani constitution and in international human rights law, must be made a reality for all religious minorities in Pakistan.

Over the years we are getting information of numerous targeted killings of Ahmadis, usually carried out with impunity. In some cases, the targeted Ahmadis themselves were subjected to criminal charges. In one incident in October 2000,

eight Ahmadis were murdered in the village of Ghatialian, Sialkot district, in an incident similar to that of 7 October 2005. In October 2000 gunmen opened fire on Ahmadis while they were gathered at a Bait ul Zikr for worship. Five Ahmadis who witnessed the attack and reported the incident to the police, along with 21 other Ahmadis, were arrested and many of them are still serving life sentences for what Amnesty International believes to be false charges. None of the gunmen were ever arrested or brought to justice.

We request you to consider this report and gather more information on the issue through your other resources and help creating international pressure on Pakistani government to abolish the laws relating to religious offences, which effectively criminalise any exercise of the right to freedom of religion by Ahmadis and the blasphemy law under section 295C PPC. This is important since Pervez Musharraf government has already promised to consider abolishing this

discriminatory law but no practical step has been taken in the positive direction.

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