

Paigaam

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IMWS

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Black Lives Matter

The Muslim community stands shoulder to shoulder with our black brothers and sisters in humanity and we condemn the inhumane police brutality.

We are against all types of injustice and discrimination, irrespective of the form it takes - whether it is based on colour, nationality, or religion. Islam teaches us that a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white;

an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab, except by piety and good action.

This powerful message comes from the last sermon of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

Structural and institutional racism and discrimination breeds inequalities in health, education, employment, law enforcement and judiciary, impacting

the life chances of Black and Minority Ethnic Citizens.

This must stop. Enough is enough.

Full article on Pages 2&3



Black Lives Matter



On May 25, a 46-year-old black man named George Floyd died in police custody in Minneapolis, unleashing political demonstrations that have spread to at least 140 cities in the United States.

The events in the US have since gone on to trigger a wave of protests and activism around the world under the banner of the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM).

The sentiment explaining the BLM campaign was captured in a poster held up by a young protester in the US.

Her placard read: "We said Black Lives Matter, never said only black lives matter, we know all lives matter, we just need your help with #blacklivesmatter because black lives are in danger."

In the wake of George Floyd's death, the brutal deaths of countless black people at the hands of police officers have been showcased to the world.

Police in the US are militarised and view all encounters as dangerous and seemingly more when it comes to black people.

The solution to police brutality and racial inequalities in policing is simple, supporters say: "Just defund the police."

Campaigners say the mass demonstrations must deepen and expand to win full equality and to stop police violence, and that the demands to defund, dismantle and demilitarise the police go hand-in-hand with "No Justice, No Peace".

Police brutality towards black men and women is both a chronic problem and a recurrent source of instability in US cities, with several high-profile incidents, including a sickening assault on Rodney King in 1992, the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in 2014 and the death in custody of Freddie Gray in 2015.

Black Americans are more likely than white Americans to be arrested.

Once arrested, and convicted, they are more likely to experience lengthy prison sentences.

On average, black men in the US receive sentences that are 19.1% longer than those of white men

convicted for the same crimes.

At current levels of incarceration a black male in the United States today has greater than a 1 in 4 chance of going to prison during his lifetime, while a Hispanic male has a 1 in 6 chance and a white male has a 1 in 23 chance of serving time.

In New York City alone, 88 percent of those stopped by police involved those from Black and Latin American backgrounds, whilst 10 percent of those stopped were white people.

Of those stops, 70 percent were completely innocent.

Violence against black men and women at the hands of white authority is foundational to the United States and continues to influence its policing culture to this day.

Horrific deaths of unarmed black men and boys can only be described as a cycle of American state brutality that has repeated itself year upon year, generation upon generation.

For instance, in the US people with mental health disorders having episodes are often subjected to police violence. The recent events have yet again brought to the fore the history of racism in the British police.

The claim that policing practice in Britain is institutionally racist was widely accepted after the Macpherson Report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1999.

A Home Office report two decades later found that a disproportionate number of BAME (black, Asian and ethnic minorities) people are more likely to be targeted under "Section 60" stop-and-search rules despite not having committed crimes.

The Black Lives Matter movement in the UK have also protested not only against the state violence against black people in America, but also the unequal treatment of BAME (black, Asian and ethnic minorities) people in 21st-century Britain and the understudied violence of the British empire.

Consequently, it has prompted a national debate on colonialism and the slave trade and has even gone on to demand the

removal of public monuments to figures associated with it.

Protests in London saw the message "Churchill was a racist" spray painted on a statue of Winston Churchill which has put the legacy of the wartime prime minister back under the spotlight.

A statue of slaver Edward Colston was toppled in Bristol, and then rolled into the waters of the Bristol Harbour.

Oxford University has also pledged to remove the statue of its imperialist benefactor Cecil Rhodes, amid increasing calls to remove the legacy of racism and colonialism from institutions.

Locally, thousands of people have converged upon demonstrations in Huddersfield and Leeds where protesters held a minute's silence for George Floyd.

Meanwhile, rather predictably far-right extremists, who have attempted to sow further division, attracted ridicule and fierce criticism.

Intoxicated football hooligans and far-right henchmen who claimed to have travelled into central London to "defend" Churchill's statue in Parliament Square and the Cenotaph, turned on the police stationed to protect the monuments by pelting them with bottles, cans and smoke bombs.

During the violent demonstration an image of Andrew Banks, 28, urinating next to a plaque honouring PC Keith Palmer, the officer who was stabbed to death during the Westminster Bridge terrorist attack in 2017, triggered outrage.

Banks, from Stansted in Essex, pleaded guilty to outraging public decency and was jailed for 14 days. Prosecutor Michael Mallon said the Tottenham Hotspur fan was in central London to 'protect statues' but admitted he did not know which ones.

With no sign of tensions easing, Paigam takes a look back at how the slave trade served up years of racial injustice and repression.

Slave Trade

In 1442, Pope Eugene IV gave the Portuguese the right to explore Africa. The Portuguese attempted

to protect their findings from the Spanish, who were at the time, beginning to explore Africa.

At that time, Spain was under Muslim rule and the Catholic Church felt threatened.

Protecting the church, Pope Nicholas V in 1452 gave the right to enslave anyone who was not practicing the Christian religion, known as the *Dum Diversas*.

The Spanish government created the *Asiento* system, which functioned between the years of 1543 and 1834.

The *Asiento* allowed other countries to sell people into slavery to the Spanish.

By the late 16th century, most slaves comprised of individuals of African descent.

While the British knew about Spanish and Portuguese slave trading, they did not partake in the Slave Trade until the 17th century.

As for the United States, academics believe that as many as 30 percent of African slaves brought to the U.S. from West and Central African countries were Muslim.

UK-based Arabic and international relations scholar Mustafa Briggs, through his research, showcased how Islam not only underlined the identity of many of these enslaved Africans, but also their resistance.

He cited stories about "Muslim's who fought for freedom in South America and The Caribbean before the abolition of slavery."

Discussing how the first slave revolt in the Americas occurred in the Caribbean, Briggs described how, on the island of present-day Haiti, enslaved Wolof Muslims rose up against their enslavers in 1522, over 200 years prior to the famous Haitian revolution of 1791 and in 1835 the Muslim population of Bahia took part in the Malé revolt.

Briggs also said the high level of Islamic education the West Africans had received enabled them to pursue remarkable lives, despite their enslavement.

He cited famous examples of Ayuba Suleiman Diallo, Omar Ibn Said, Yarrow Mamout, and Abdulrahman Ibrahim Ibn Sori.

One of these men, Abd ar-Rahman, after gaining his

freedom, went as far as to meet President John Quincy Adams on his trek back to his native Africa. "These are just four examples of the stories of thousands and thousands of slaves similar to them, who came from families established in learning, and were highly literate and educated individuals," Briggs remarked. Briggs also explained how the transatlantic slave trade "was built so that people would forget where they come from and who they were. Thus, resulting in the fact that when they came to America, they were given new names." "Many of these enslaved Muslims travelled to [the Americas] and were persecuted and were not allowed to practice their religion," added Briggs. "But many silently prayed that their descendants would one day be able to return to their religion and join them in practicing Islam," he continued. In the twentieth century, many of these prayers were answered, according to Briggs.

Malcolm X

Islam re-emerged and spread among African Americans in the 1900s, which included notable people such as Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. Briggs believes Malcolm X's message of Islamic universalism is still seen as the ideal answer to Western racism and imperialism and discussed how Malcolm tried his utmost to develop mutual love and respect between black and non-black Muslims in order to tackle the issue of anti-black racism, and provide black Muslims with a sense of empowerment and belonging. "We should see him as someone who represents a legacy and a history that interlinks continents, such as Africa and North America, and the Islamic community of West Africa and North America, for a period of over 700 years." "When we speak about Malcolm X, we shouldn't just see him as an individual," Briggs stressed. The Civil rights icon changed

his name to El-Hajj-Malik El Shabbaz after travelling to Makkah where he underwent a spiritual transformation. "The true brotherhood I had seen had influenced me to recognise that anger can blind human vision," he wrote. In June 1964, he founded the Organisation of Afro-American unity, which identified racism, and not the white race, as the enemy of justice. His moderate philosophy became influential, especially amongst members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. He began work on his autobiography in the early 1960's with the help of Alex Haley, the acclaimed author of Roots. His acclaimed autobiography chronicled his life and views on race, religion and black Nationalism. It was published posthumously in 1965 and became a best seller.

Muhammad Ali and Vietnam

legendary Heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali (born Cassius Clay, 1942-2016) was outspoken about many political issues, including his opposition to the Vietnam War. At the beginning of 1965, there were about 23,300 US servicemen in Vietnam. By the end of 1967, this number had jumped to 465,600. In 1966, the number of US troops in Vietnam dramatically increased yet again because the government dropped the qualification standards of the draft. Many black Americans who had received an inferior education and, consequently, had evaded the draft, discovered, like Muhammad Ali, that they were now eligible. Of the 246,000 men recruited between October 1966 and June 1969, 41 percent were black, although black Americans represented only 11% of the US population. During the Vietnam War African Americans faced a much greater chance

of being on the front-line, and consequently a much higher casualty rate. In 1965 alone African Americans represented almost 25 percent of those killed in action. Ali was drafted by the United States military in 1966 and called up for induction in 1967. He attended the induction but refused to answer to his name or take the oath. This led to Ali's arrest and conviction, which in June 1971 was overturned by the US Supreme Court. In March 1967, one month before his scheduled military induction, Muhammad Ali explained why he would not be enlisting to fight in Vietnam: "Why should they ask me to put on a uniform and go ten thousand miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people in Vietnam while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs and denied simple human rights? "No, I am not going ten thousand miles from home to help murder and burn another poor nation simply to continue the domination of white slave masters of the darker people the world over. "This is the day when such evils must come to an end. I have been warned that to take such a stand would put my prestige in jeopardy and could cause me to lose millions of dollars which should accrue to me as the champion. "But I have said it once and I will say it again. The real enemy of my people is right here. "I will not disgrace my religion, my people or myself by becoming a tool to enslave those who are fighting for their own justice, freedom and equality. "If I thought the war was going to bring freedom and equality to 22 million of my people they wouldn't have to draft me, I'd join tomorrow. But I either have to obey the laws of the land or the laws of God. "I have nothing to lose by standing up for my beliefs. So, I'll go to jail. We've been in jail for four hundred years."

Inside this issue

Black Lives matter 2/3

Editorial/Chair/General Manager's column 6/7

IMWS raises 100k/IMWS teams up with Martin Lewis 8/9

Remebering Sebrenecia 10/11

Was Churchill a White Supremacist? Was Ghandi a racist? 12/13

Coronavirus & the BAME population/Masjid's reopening 16/17

Solidatiry & Justice/How Britain stole £45 trillion from India 18/19

Kids/empathy/Iqbal Bulsari 20/21

Shamoon Hafez/OCI Passport no longer allowed to partake in Tabligh work 22/23

Gujarati 24/27

Urdu 28

Park Croft Murder 29



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Hajj 2020: Only 1000 Saudi pilgrims will be allowed

Saudi Arabia says it will allow only about 1,000 pilgrims residing in the kingdom to perform the Hajj this year, one day after it announced the annual pilgrimage would be reduced due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Some 2.5 million pilgrims from around the world flock annually to the cities of Mecca and Medina for the week-long ritual scheduled to begin in late July. This year, no overseas visitors would be allowed.

Saudi Arabia announced it would hold a "very limited" Hajj this year, as the country is still battling with the coronavirus pandemic.

The Saudi Ministry of Hajj said the decision to curtail the pilgrimage was aimed at preserving global public health because of the risks associated with large gatherings.

This year's event is expected to start on July 28.

In a virtual news conference on Tuesday, Hajj Minister Mohammad Benteen said the government is still in the process of reviewing the number of overall pilgrims allowed, saying they could be "around 1,000, maybe less, maybe a little more".

"The number won't be in tens or hundreds of thousands" this year, he added.

Health Minister Tawfiq al-Rabiah said the pilgrims would be tested for coronavirus before arriving in the holy city of Mecca and will be required to quarantine at home after the ritual.

The move comes despite a notable increase in the number of Covid-19 cases in the country. The kingdom had previously taken restrictive measures against the virus, particularly in Makkah.

"The mosques in the holy city will begin to reopen their doors to the faithful on Sunday after three months of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic," the state-run Al-Ekhabariya channel reported, citing a decision by the Islamic affairs ministry.

Some of the most important sites in Islam reopened two months after the coronavirus pandemic forced them to shut, allowing worshippers to enter under strict guidelines.

Hundreds prayed at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Masjid, Islam's third holiest site, as worshippers entered praying either quietly or loudly. Others kissed the ground as crowds entered. Inside, precautions were taken to reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

Worshippers had their temperatures

checked, stood at a distance from each other, and were asked to wear masks and bring their own prayer mats. The Al-Aqsa Mosque, and many other holy sites, have been off limits to Muslims since mid-March, meaning they were unable to host daily prayers during Ramadan.

Though the threat of the coronavirus still remains, many countries are easing restrictions in a gradual way after weeks of lockdown, opening up holy sites to limited numbers of worshippers and visitors.

There were similar scenes as the Masjid of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) in Medina opened as worshippers gathered for namaz.

The Masjid was one of around 90,000 that were being prepared for reopening by Saudi authorities.

Ahead of the reopening, millions of people were sent text messages to inform them about the new rules for public prayer.

The text messages, sent by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, urged worshippers to pray two metres (6.5ft) apart, and to refrain from greeting each other with hugs or handshakes. People were told to carry out wudu at home, because washroom facilities at the Masjid's will remain closed.

PAIGAAM EDITORIAL

PEOPLE POWER

The murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Police in the USA has sparked worldwide protests including the UK and has invigorated debates about racism and inequality and has energised calls for tackling police brutality and abuse of power.

The Black Lives Matter movement has also led to questions about the future of statues and monuments to historical figures that were complicit in the slave trade which was systematically racist and enabled the white oppressors to benefit from abuse and the torture of black people for decades.

Therefore, this movement is having a very far reaching impact on getting to grips with the past, dismantling the institutions of inequality and building a much more equal and fair society that treats all human beings with compassion and justice.

However, the question we all need to ask is how effective are such movements and whether they bring about lasting change and transformation.

Whilst there are examples of positive outcomes when the masses have exerted their "people power" and achieved desired results in toppling dictators and despots. We have also witnessed other movements such as Arab Springs where there hasn't been lasting positive outcomes for citizens and many other movements have just fizzled out and died leaving the citizens no better off.

In light of what has transpired in some parts of the world we should also ask why the masses have put up with unjust rulers and endured decades of suffering, injustice and abuse of power by the

dictators?

Why is it that the citizens can be so meek, submissive and docile that they allow these dictators to trample all over them with impunity?

How are these "monsters" allowed to gain power and exert their authority? Is the answer that some of these criminals gain authority using the democratic process and then gradually usurp power at their disposal?

Another question we must ask is how do they get away with it?

The answer is that people around them provide the support for their own personal greedy motives and ignore the abuse and injustice.

Tellingly, we also have many public servants who administer the systems and impose the unjust laws on the pretext of "I'm just doing my job" thus enforcing the unjust system and providing the backbone to the evil administration.

If all these people didn't support these despots and rose up to fight against them the system may not survive. How did the evil monster Hitler manage to rise to power and slaughter millions of Jews?

Because the system allowed him to do it and others followed his evil plans on the justification that they were merely "doing their jobs" following orders.

Historically human beings have sat back and accepted evil actions and have not had the courage to stand up and be counted. When slavery of black people was widespread amongst affluent white people the other white people accepted this and did not bother to challenge it so it was allowed to become the norm in

those societies.

In addition, when the indigenous Native American population in USA were being subjugated by the European settlers, people simply turned a blind eye and it was allowed to happen and the rest is history.

When the native Aborigines people in Australia were being trampled upon on no one stood up for them.

When the racist apartheid system in South Africa was in full force the world stood by and did nothing useful for years.

When the Muslims were being slaughtered in Bosnia and Kosovo by the Serbs the world leaders stood by until 80,000 Muslim men, women and children were systematically and brutally murdered.

Even in the UK institutional racism hasn't been effectively tackled by successive governments and the BAME community has been disproportionately disadvantaged.

The deaths of so many NHS front line staff from BAME backgrounds who worked tirelessly despite knowing that they were in clear and present danger due to Covid 19 provides clear evidence of where the Government priorities lie.

Boris Johnson's team decided to bury significant sections of the recommendations of a report commissioned to look at why so many people from diverse backgrounds succumbed to the virus. What does this tell us?

The Windrush scandal is another example of injustice against black people in this country. The UK Government is far from being blameless.

Even now the world is ignoring the atrocities committed by Israel against the innocent Palestinian people, the abuse of Muslims in China, Kashmir, Myanmar, India and Middle East.

The double standards of leading countries such as USA and UK are evident with their actions in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Remember the lies about the nonexistent weapons of mass destruction in Iraq?

When their own interests are at stake they will act swiftly otherwise they will delay and make excuses.

Edmund Burke said "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing".

Isn't that the problem? Too many people ignore injustice around them thinking it's got nothing to do with them, it's not their problem. Not thinking that one day it may also become their problem and it may affect their children or future generations.

There have been so many killings of black people by the Police in USA over decades, yet nothing effective has been done by those in power so the injustice has continued.

The good people did not get together to ensure that this injustice was stopped so black people have continued to suffer at the hands of people whose job it is to "protect and serve".

However, we have seen optimistic signs following the death of George Floyd with people of all races, colour and background actively involved in supporting the Black Lives Matter movement. The good white people have decided to stand for justice and humanity and are supporting the cause.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The continued Covid 19 situation has restricted our activities.

Therefore our meeting facilities, sports hall and the wedding venue are still not available.

The UK Corona virus alert level has been reduced from 4 to 3 so we should be hopefully seeing more easing of the restrictions.

We will of course be following the guidelines closely and will make changes to our policies as required and to the benefit of our community.

If anyone who has booked the wedding hall until the end of August and want to cancel their booking, then please contact the office and they will be fully refunded. Our main office is open between 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

In partnership with the Martin Lewis fund, a further 500 food packages were packed and distributed locally, this time the main recipient were those needy families in the sheltered homes.

The packs contained essential food and non-food items such as soap, sanitiser, washing up liquid, masks, tea, sugar, cereal, soup, pastas, ready meal, chocolate, biscuits and much more.

The lockdown has obviously had a major impact on our community with the closure of masajids

especially during Ramadan.

Together with our area Masaajids have been working very hard to reopen Masaajids for individual prayers and we must acknowledge their efforts to make all the arrangements to safely open the doors.

So it is great news for our community that at least the Masaajids are open once again.

Let's pray that soon the Masaajids will be allowed to open fully and allow congregational prayers.

We are very grateful for the response from our community during the Ramadan collection and the response was excellent. So on behalf of IMWS and our affiliated area Masaajids I would like to express our gratitude. Your donation will allow us to continue with our projects abroad to help the needy Muslims.

We had a recent virtual meeting with our respected local MP, Tracy Brabin, where we raised issues that were of concern to us.

Internationally, we highlighted the plea of the minority (mainly Muslims) being persecuted by the far right wing in India and continued lockdown and worsening situation in India controlled Kashmir.

Also we expressed concern of the proposed illegal

annexation of part of Palestine by the Israeli government.

Nationally, whilst we welcome the government allowing the opening the Masaajids for solitary prayers, we feel that the government needs to go further and allow congregational prayers with of course social distancing and the other necessary precautions.

Tracy has also promised to keep us updated on a number of local issues which were also discussed.

I would also like to thank our burial and ghusul volunteers who have worked tirelessly to help families through this difficult time. We are over the peak of the virus and this has been reflected in the significant decrease in number of Covid related deaths and infections in our community.

We still need to exercise care and follow guidelines as the disease is still around and we wouldn't want a second peak.

If you have any views or suggestions please do contact us. Our phone number is 500555 or email us on: info@imws.org.uk

Dr Imtiyaz Patel
Chair
IMWS

Al Hikmah Centre Update

Please be advised, during the Covid crisis, the Al Hikmah centre main office is open from Monday to Friday from 9am to 4 PM.

Should you wish to give your donation in person, this can be facilitated.

For more information please telephone 01924 500555.

Alternatively please

e-mail: info@imws.org.uk



GENERAL MANAGER'S COLUMN

It has been nearly eight months since I was appointed by IMWS as the General Manager.

We are all going through some of the most unprecedented times in our living history.

No doubt it's a very challenging time for any organisation especially for ours as we are an organisation that is not supported by any Government funding and we as a registered charity, have to rely on our own self generated resources.

My team and I are determined to improve our quality of services and I hope and pray that our members will support us to achieve our goals once we are fully open for the public. Our management committee,

staff, volunteers and members of community have worked tirelessly all the way through the COVID-19 pandemic, to do their best to help our communities in these difficult times.

We have been successful in keeping our day to day business at the Al-Hikmah centre (with a skeleton work force) up and running under the government guidelines whilst making sure that our staff, volunteers and Al-Hikmah centre users are protected and safe from the pandemic.

Here are few examples below of our achievements: All of our affiliated Masajid's have been kept informed in relation to the latest government guidelines regarding places of worship.

Special burial arrangements have been made.

Dozens of full PPE kits provided to burial committees for Ghusul of the deceased have been provided.

Since Ramadhan and to date nearly 1000 food parcels have been delivered.

IMWS is distributing FREE face masks in the community.

We continue to upgrade and maintain our facilities at the Al-Hikmah centre.

Ongoing repairs, sports Hall improvement, lighting and heating and refurbishment is underway.

The Al-Hikmah centre is also equipped with sanitizers and with increased regular cleaning, it's been made sure

the centre is safe for the users

We are in contact with the families, booked weddings at Al-Hikmah and have fully refunded their deposits due to cancellations or offered alternative dates as priority.

Please be advised, our reception office remains open Monday - Friday from 9.00am-1.00pm should you require any advice and guidance I am Looking forward to hearing from you.

Nadeem Raja
General Manager.
Mobile: 07548217280
E-mail: nadeem.raja@imws.org.uk

IMWS raise £100 K in Ramadan and Sadqatul Fitr appeals



The Indian Muslim Welfare Society along with its affiliates and partners recently launched the annual Iftar and Sadqatul Fitr appeals for Yemen and Myanmar respectively in order to provide much needed respite and aid to those in need.

Despite the Covid-19 crisis wreaking havoc and ensuring Masjid's were closed during Ramadhan, the generous people of Batley and Dewsbury donated directly by visiting the Al-Hikmah Centre and giving their donations directly whilst observing social distancing guidelines and online via PayPal, raising £104,000.

The generosity of the local community ensured many needy and deserving people were afforded an opportunity to break their fasts during the Holy month by means of a number of food packs which were distributed to those in need.

The IMWS Charity sub-committee made a conscious decision to help these vulnerable victims, over half of whom are women and children. Iftar packs consisting of a number of essential staples and weighing in at 56kg were distributed to approximately 400 families in the areas of Sa'ada, Sana'a, Dhaher, Ta'iz and Aden with the packs envisaged to last for a month.

The Sadaqatul fitr which was collected for Myanmar was also used to distribute food packs with approximately 700 families in Rakhine, Kayine state and Ayeyarwady state area benefitting.

In addition, a donation for Gaza was also made from funds already raised through the IMWS Charity Fund, thus ensuring another 200 families received essential assistance.

Chair of the Charity Sub Committee, Masoom bhai Karolia thanked the local community for their support and resolve in providing much needed help and support for the long-suffering people of Yemen and Myanmar despite having to undergo life in lockdown.

"It was a fantastic effort by the people of Batley and Dewsbury and again emphasised the generosity of the local community who once more helped the people of Yemen break their fasts and the people of Myanmar during Eid," said Mr Karolia.

"All of the money which was raised went to those who are really in need and we would like to thank all those involved in ensuring we provided urgent relief to those in the most hard-hit areas.

"None of this would have been possible without the kind and generous nature of our members and the local community. With your help over 1400 families received Iftari meals throughout Ramadhan, that's around 8400 people.

"This is something our community has been doing for many, many years and we hope and pray the Almighty keeps us in good health and wealth to continue helping those less fortunate."

With the ongoing conflict in Yemen – already one of the poorest countries in the region – tens of thousands of lives have been lost and over 20 million people do not know where their next meal will come from. A country crippled by conflict is sadly now on the brink of famine.

With families facing ongoing armed conflict, displacement, disease and economic decline, an estimated 24 million people are now in need of humanitarian aid to survive – a figure so high that it is in fact the highest across the globe.

Yemen now officially hosts the world's largest human-induced food security crisis.

Families and communities have been torn apart and left without even the most basic of living essentials. 19.7 million people need basic healthcare.

Almost 18 million people are in need of water and sanitation facilities, over 3 million people have been left displaced by conflict and on the ground in Yemen, the situation is dire and things are getting worse each and every day.

Violent conflict is devastating the lives of families in Myanmar. Ongoing violence is threatening the safety and wellbeing of countless families, many of which have been left displaced or forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

Since late August 2017, the emergency situation in Rakhine State has worsened. Violent clashes have reportedly resulted

in over 1,000 deaths and the United Nations estimate that over 720,000 members of the Rohingya community have fled, seeking refuge in Bangladesh. This includes high numbers of women, children, and elderly family members.

This recent spate of conflict has seen civilians killed by landmines. This has resulted in entire townships having to be evacuated.

As a result, wholly-displaced communities have been forced to seek temporary shelter in schools and public buildings.

These temporary shelters are overcrowded, leaving little space for basic infrastructure with more than 90 percent of household water sources said to be highly contaminated with E. coli and numerous cases of highly contagious diphtheria.

Total amount of funds raised during Ramadhan: £104,000

Yemen: £21,000

Gaza: £17,000

Syria: £10,000

South Gujarat: £33,500

Myanmar: £17,000

General Fund: £5,500

IMWS is continuing to collect funds for various projects throughout the year.

These include the South Gujarat Project, Yemen, Gaza, Syria, Myanmar and the general fund appeals.

Please contact the Al Hikmah centre or phone 01924 500555 to find out more.

Lest We Forget: we will always



Every year the 11th of July is marked as Srebrenica Memorial Day, an EU designated day, to remember the Srebrenica genocide. The international legal definition of 'genocide' is large scale killing with an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.

In Srebrenica, Bosnian Serb militias intended to destroy every last Muslim from the region just like during the Holocaust, when the Nazis' wanted to wipe out all Jews from Europe.

In July 1995, Bosnian Serb forces, led by General Ratko Mladić overran and captured the town of Srebrenica in Eastern Bosnia which had been declared a UN Safe Area in 1993.

In the days following Srebrenica's fall, more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were systematically massacred and buried in mass graves.

Thousands of women, children and elderly people were forcibly deported. Srebrenica was the culmination of a campaign of 'ethnic cleansing'.

Perhaps best placed to speak about the horrors of Srebrenica is Riad Terzic, who arrived in the UK in 1993.

Riad, who is a Trustee of the Al

Hilal Masjid on Hyrstlands Road in Batley, explains why it is never easy to speak about the horrors of what he and his fellow Bosnians had to endure.

He told Paigaam: "25 years after the events, I feel it is absolutely imperative to speak about Srebrenica and those who needlessly paid the ultimate price. Even though it is difficult to fathom the enormity of the atrocities"

One of the most heart-breaking recollections of the people in Srebrenica is that many believed that the United Nations who were deployed there, to keep the peace and protect the vulnerable would prove to be their saviours.

Riad explains how unfortunately, this was not the case. He explains how Muslim boys and men were subjected to inhumane abuse that can only be rendered unimaginable.

"Ultimately, the UN pulled back and saved their own lives. The men and boys separated with some taken to the mountains at the end of the country bordering Serbia and they were left to either run for their lives in the middle of forests or face certain execution.

"Serbian soldiers used chemical weapons as they tried to flee. Unfortunately, many were killed

mercilessly there and then."

Riad did however praise the courage and spirit of the lucky few who did manage to somehow survive.

"Some of those who were shot played possum even though they were badly wounded. And although they too were then thrown into mass graves, they invoked The Almighty and asked for his forgiveness and asked for his acceptance.

"This gave them the strength to dig themselves out of the trenches and graves in the darkness of the night and somehow manage to bypass all the Serbian soldiers and walk many miles to an area called Tuzla which was controlled by the Muslims."

He also lavished praise upon the Indian Muslim Welfare Society for setting up a camp for over 200 people at the Al Hikmah centre in 1993 for hundreds of refugees.

"The concentration camps in Srebrenica were discovered by the U.N and the Red Cross who went onto investigate and found out that Muslims were being tortured.

"This prompted them to pressurise western countries to take refugees on and thankfully we were given refuge until we were housed at the IMWS

Centre alongside a number of Vietnamese refugees.

"We never knew where we would end up but we were very fortunate to end up in an area with many Muslims where we could access Masjids and practice freely. Some people were sent to the North East whilst some moved to Batley Carr, Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield.

"We heard of some people who were stuck on ships that were moored for years in Norway with the people on board, having to stay on the ships until they were allowed onto dry land. And although they settled in Norway, they were miles away from any Muslims."

Elvisa Avdić was ten years old when the war broke out. She returned to Srebrenica after the war and shares her story with Paigaam.

"I was ten when the war started. I lived with my mother, grandmother and older sister in the village of Donje Peći, in the municipality of Srebrenica.

My father was away working in Belgrade, and my brother was in high school there.

"When the war broke out, they couldn't get back to us—others tried the journey but they were killed at the border.

remember Srebrenecia

"It was around 11 May 1992 when a tank started firing at our school.

"We escaped to the woods. In the chaos, I lost my mother. I was absolutely terrified, ten years old, all alone. I found my neighbours and went with them to a neighbouring village. It was three days before my mother found me and we went back to our village.

My grandmother had suffered a stroke the day after the attack and passed away. We stayed until Serb forces attacked again, killing my other grandmother and two of my cousins, then we left and never went back."

In spring 1993 another offensive took place and Elvira and her family came to Srebrenica where she hid in her mother's uncle's house with 50 other people. In every room, there was a whole family. Somehow, they managed to survive.

However, in early July 1995, Serb forces entered the town, which prompted Elvira and her family to flee to the town of Potočari.

"We were on the second floor of a factory. The first floor was full of the wounded. There were so many people. It was so cold at night—we had nothing with us; no food, no blankets. I was just shivering in my mother's lap.

"We were the last ones to leave. We got on the bus, not knowing where they were taking us. Eventually, they told us to get off the bus and to continue on foot even though it was pitch black outside.

When we arrived, there were crowds of refugees from Srebrenica. I wonder how I could have been so brave as a child. Now I have three children of my own, I am terrified. I can't imagine how my mother survived on her own with me and my sister.

"My sister's husband survived the fall of Srebrenica, but so many men never returned. My brother came home from Belgrade in 1999, but my father stayed there. I did not have a childhood, I was not a teenager, and I will never have a normal life. All because of the war."

Many in Bosnia-Herzegovina are still struggling for justice, not least

the women who were left to pick up the pieces after their families and whole communities were wiped out during the genocide. Many of the perpetrators of sexual violence remain unprosecuted, and survivors of sexual violence still have to fight against the stigma associated with what happened to them.

However, Riad Terzic is determined to help bring about change.

He is also a representative of Remembering Srebrenica, a UK based charity which aims to teach current and future generations about the consequences of hatred and intolerance in all communities through learning the lessons of Srebrenica.

He is calling on all communities to remember the victims and survivors of the Srebrenica genocide and learn the lessons from Srebrenica.

"We must always be vigilant against hatred and intolerance in our communities and pledge to take action now to build better and safer communities and how to challenge the behaviour that is emerging across the western world and how Right wing and nationalism are trying to stoke divisions within communities.

"How getting rid of people overnight is not the first step. They identify and then persecute people and then they finally kill them.

"We are hoping to establish a permanent memorial in Birmingham and also include Srebrenica as part of the curriculum in the UK. I hope and pray that that we never allow anything like that to happen to anyone ever again."

Timeline of Srebrenica siege

6-8 July 1995: Bosnian Serb forces start shelling Srebrenica enclave

9 July: Bosnian Serbs step up shelling; thousands of Bosnian Muslim refugees flee to Srebrenica

10 July: Dutch peacekeepers request UN air support after Bosnian Serbs shell Dutch positions. Large crowds of refugees gather around Dutch

positions

11 July: More than 20,000 refugees flee to main Dutch base at Potocari. Serbs threaten to kill Dutch hostages and shell refugees after Dutch F-16 fighters bomb Serb positions. Bosnian Serb commander Ratko Mladic enters Srebrenica and delivers ultimatum that Muslims must hand over weapons

12 July: An estimated 23,000 women and children are deported to Muslim territory; men aged 12-77 taken "for interrogation" and held in trucks and warehouses

13 July: First killings of unarmed Muslims take place near village of Kravica. Peacekeepers hand over some 5,000 Muslims sheltering at Dutch base in exchange for the release of 14 Dutch peacekeepers held by Bosnian Serbs

14 July: Reports of massacres start to emerge

The Srebrenica Prayer

We pray to The Almighty.
May grievance become hope
May revenge become justice
May mothers' tears become prayers
That Srebrenica Never happens again
To no one and nowhere.

Living the Lessons Pledge

As an act of commemoration, the organisers suggest 11 candles to be lit for each pledge made to honour the international Srebrenica commemoration day which takes place on 11 July each year.

1. We pledge that when we hear the language of "us and them", we will reach out and find common ground with our neighbour.

2. We pledge that, when we hear stereotyping and scapegoating, we will find and share alternative positive stories.

3. We pledge that, when we see discrimination in our schools or workplaces, we will challenge this and promote equal opportunities for all.

4. We pledge that, when we hear dehumanising language, we will remind the speaker of our common humanity.

5. We pledge that, when we see members of our community becoming disenfranchised, we will make a concerted effort to engage and

include them.

6. We pledge that, when we hear divisive propaganda, we will challenge this effectively.

7. We pledge that we will protect those who speak out against human rights abuses.

8. We pledge that, where we see persecution, we will do everything in our power to protect those who are suffering.

9. We pledge that, where we believe that extermination is taking place, we will call on our governments and the international community to take immediate action.

10. We pledge that we will always challenge denial by believing the victims and sharing their stories.

11. We pledge that we will choose the side of those who are suffering and not the oppressor.

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Was Winston Churchill a white supremacist?



The UK has grappled with its colonial and imperialist past in the wake of the George Floyd killing.

Protests in London saw the message “Churchill was a racist” spray painted on a statue of Winston Churchill which has put the legacy of the wartime prime minister back under the spotlight.

Churchill’s monument was installed in 1973 at the north-east corner of Parliament Square.

The monument in London’s Parliament Square was later boarded up before being uncovered again in time for the visit of French President Emmanuel Macron of France

Churchill is remembered by many as the brave and unflinching British Prime Minister who led our country to victory in World War Two.

He served as Conservative Prime Minister twice - from 1940 to 1945, before being defeated in the 1945 general election by the Labour leader Clement Attlee, and again from 1951 to 1955.

The war time leader’s refusal to surrender to Nazi Germany have prompted many to credit him for Britain’s victory in WWII.

The war time leader may be a much-lionised figure in the West, however, in the former British colonies of Asia and Africa, the opinion of him is radically different. Thus, campaigners are asking was Winston Churchill an antifascist hero or racist warmonger – or both?

Churchill undoubtedly espoused racist views in his lifetime. The historian John Charmley, author of several books about Churchill, said that “even to most Conservatives, let alone Liberals and Labour, Churchill’s views on India between 1929 and 1939 were quite abhorrent”.

in 1937, The Guardian reported that he told the Palestine Royal Commission: “I do not admit... that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia... by the fact that a stronger race, a higher grade race... has come in and taken its place.”

When the Kurds rebelled against British rule in 1920, Churchill said he did not understand the “squeamishness” surrounding the use of gas as a weapon. “I am strongly in favour of using gas

against uncivilised tribes,” he said. “[It] would spread a lively terror.”

He called Indians “a beastly people with a beastly religion”, Africans as “savages”, and Palestinians as “barbarians who ate camel dung”.

Even former Prime Minister Stephen Baldwin was warned not to appoint him to Cabinet because his views were so old-fashioned, with even Churchill’s doctor saying: “Winston thinks only of the colour of their skin.”

According to The Guardian, Churchill blamed the suffering on Indians themselves, claiming they were exacerbating the problem by “breeding like rabbits”.

Indian MP and writer, Dr Shashi Tharoor believes Winston Churchill’s foreign policy may have been the primary cause of the Bengal famine of 1943, in which up to three million people died.

During a speech at Oxford University, Tharoor said that between 15-29 million Indians died of starvation in British induced famines.

He said: “The most famous example was, of course, was the great Bengal famine during World War II when 4 million people died because Winston Churchill deliberately as a matter of written policy proceeded to divert essential supplies from civilians in Bengal to sturdy tummies and Europeans as reserve stockpiles.

“He said that the starvation of anyway underfed Bengalis mattered much less than that of sturdy Greeks’ - Churchill’s actual quote. And when conscious stricken “British officials wrote to him pointing out that people were dying because of this decision, he peevishly wrote in the margins of a file, “Why hasn’t Gandhi died yet?”

An Indian newspaper, The Economic Times, profoundly agreed with Tharoor and said that policy “lapses” such as “prioritising distribution of vital supplies to the military, civil services and others as well as stopping rice imports

and not declaring Bengal famine hit” were among the factors that led to the enormous magnitude of the tragedy.

Tharoor also believes Churchill covered up India’s contribution to World War Two by taking all the plaudits for defeating the Nazis.

He cited India’s contribution to World War One before elaborating on World War Two and how the British have still not paid India billions that are owed to them.

He said: “Let me take World War One as a very concrete example. I am sorry, from an Indian perspective, one-sixth of all the British forces that fought in the war were Indian - 54 000 Indians actually lost their lives in that war, 65 000 were wounded and another 4000 remained missing or in prison.

“Indian taxpayers had to cough up a 100 million pounds in that time’s money. India supplied 17 million rounds of ammunition, 6,00,000 rifles and machine guns, 42 million garments were stitched and sent out of India and 1.3 million Indian personnel served in this war. I know all this because the commemoration of the centenary took place.

“But not just that, India had to supply 173,000 animals, 370 million tonnes of supplies and in the end the total value of everything that was taken out of India and India by the way was suffering from recession at that time and poverty and hunger, was in today’s money 8 billion pounds. You want quantification, it’s available.

“World War II, it was even worse - 2.5 million Indians in uniform. I won’t believe it to the point but Britain’s total war debt of 3 billion pounds in 1945 money, 1.25 billion was owed to India and never actually paid.”

However, according to a poll conducted by The Sunday Telegraph, one in five people think the statue of Sir Winston Churchill should be moved to a museum.

Was Mahatma Gandhi a Racist?



Recently, a great deal of fury has been expressed against the racism and injustice faced by people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds across the world.

However, amongst the statues defaced was that of Indian independence leader, Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi's Statue, which was initially unveiled on Parliament Square in London in March 2015 was daubed with a splash of white paint and 'racist' written on its steps.

In Washington DC, however, Gandhi's statue had to be covered up after protesters vandalised it.

Was the anti-colonial protester who used non-violence effectively to help rid India of the British a racist?

South African academics Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed spent several years researching and writing a book exploring Gandhi's background and political views whilst he was studied and worked in Africa for more than two decades – from 1893 to 1914.

Desai and Vahed write that

during his stay in Africa, Gandhi carved out an exclusivist Indian identity "that relied on him taking up 'Indian' issues in ways that cut Indians off from Africans, while his attitudes paralleled those of whites in the early years".

Gandhi, the authors write, was indifferent to the plight of the indentured, and believed that state power should remain in white hands, and called black Africans Kaffirs, a derogatory term, for a larger part of his stay in the country.

In 1893, Gandhi wrote to the Natal parliament saying that a "general belief seems to prevail in the Colony that the Indians are a little better, if at all, than savages or the Natives of Africa".

In 1904, he wrote to a health officer in Johannesburg that the council "must withdraw Kaffirs" from an unsanitary slum called the "Coolie Location" where a large number of Africans lived alongside Indians. "About the mixing of the Kaffirs with the Indians, I must confess I feel most strongly."

The same year he wrote that

unlike the African, the Indian had no "war-dances, nor does he drink Kaffir beer."

When Durban was hit by a plague in 1905, Gandhi wrote that the problem would persist as long as Indians and Africans were being "herded together indiscriminately at the hospital."

Meanwhile, a petition to remove a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Leicester has reached over 6,000 signatures.

Kerri Pangulier from Derby started the petition as she believes Gandhi was a 'racist and fascist'.

She added that 'we should not praise that kind of character' and therefore wants the statue removed.

She said that she had been contacted by Leicester City Council to "close the petition and formally submit it with presenting arguments."

Therefore, I want to finally thank all of you for your support, signatures and sharing.

"Throughout this experience, I have learnt that we the people, have a huge impact on this world and it's important to recognise your significance if you want change in the world.

"I strongly believe, it's important to be an advocate in what's right, even if it means going "against the system."

Others disagree with Kerri's views and believe Gandhi was "not a racist. On the contrary a peacemaker and changed the lives of millions'.

Leicester East MP Claudia Webbe called the petition a "massive distraction" from the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Labour politician said Gandhi "was part of creating a movement in the same way that Martin Luther King created a movement".

"His form of peaceful protest, like Black Lives Matter, is a force for change," she said.

"There is not any desire from the black community to move that symbol of change."

Professor of Indian history at Oxford University, Faisal Devji, said he thought the debate to remove the statue was "absurd".

"It seems almost surreal to have to list the many things Gandhi did," he said.

"He's a fallible man as all men are, but to lump him in with slave owners, that's a bit much."

Prof Devji said Gandhi's statue in Leicester was also a representation of the large refugee Gujarati community in the city.

"Gandhi himself was Gujarati, and many of the city's residents came from Uganda when they were expelled by Idi Amin," he said.

"So in some ways Gandhi's statue represents their presence in that place."

Gandhi's biographer and grandson, Rajmohan Gandhi, previously admitted one of the fathers of modern India was "at times ignorant and prejudiced about South Africa's blacks".

However, he believes Gandhi's "struggle for Indian rights in South Africa paved the way for the struggle of black rights".

He argues that "Gandhi too was an imperfect human being", but the "imperfect Gandhi was more radical and progressive than most contemporary compatriots."

But Prof Devji said Gandhi's "record is actually very mixed", and he was known to sympathise with Africans during the Boer and Zulu wars.

A total of three statues were commissioned in the UK as a lasting tribute to the Indian nationalist, with one also situated in Manchester.

Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January 1948 in the compound of Birla House (now Gandhi Smriti), a large mansion in New Delhi by Hindu extremist, Nathuram Godse, who objected to Gandhi's tolerance for Muslims.

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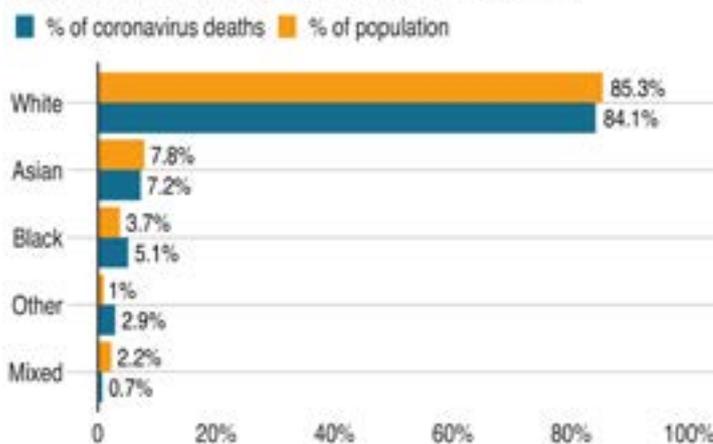


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Racism contributed to BAME Covid-19 deaths

Coronavirus deaths by population

Based on 23,351 deaths in NHS England hospitals



Ethnicity of 11% of victims unknown

An official enquiry by Public Health England into why people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities have disproportionately died due to the coronavirus points to racism and discrimination experienced by BAME workers as a principal factor in many deaths.

Stakeholders pointed to racism and discrimination experienced by communities and more specifically BAME key workers as a root cause to exposure risk and disease progression.

However, ministers have refused to publish the conclusion of the government-commissioned report, reportedly because they fear it will raise tensions around race and racism after protests in response to George Floyd's killing by a white police officer in the United States spread to the UK and beyond.

The Shadow justice secretary David Lammy has lambasted the government's decision not to publish the report which had been eagerly awaited at a time of huge concern over the disproportionate number of deaths among BAME people.

He believes it to be a "scandal" that the recommendations of a report on the impact of coronavirus on people in black,

Asian and minority communities have been "buried".

The Labour MP for Tottenham, told The Andrew Marr Show it was hard for black and Asian people not to know someone who had died from the virus, adding that his uncle and a classmate had lost their lives.

"But the point is it is a scandal if one week Boris Johnson and Matt Hancock say black lives matter and then we find out today that they have buried part of the review that had the recommendations in it to do something about it," he said.

"It is no wonder why people are upset, this is a very, very serious business, the statistics are grim, again, you are in government do something about it - save lives."

Among a range of factors, the report by Public Health England found historic racism may mean people are discriminated against when it comes to personal protective equipment (PPE) and may result in people from BAME backgrounds being less likely to seek care or demand better protection.

Aimed at "improving the lives and experiences", PHE's recommendations include proper collection of ethnicity data across the NHS and social care sectors,

improving representation among workforces, and specific Covid-19 risk assessments for staff.

PHE also suggested the following recommendations are introduced:

More research to better understand the impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities.

Improving access, experience, and outcomes for BAME communities across care systems.

Quickly develop a "culturally competent" occupational risk assessment tool to reduce the risk of BAME staff's exposure to, and contraction of, coronavirus.

Better Covid-19 education and prevention campaigns.

Specific health promotion and disease prevention programmes.

An effective Covid-19 recovery strategy that actively reduces wider health inequality.

The analysis also showed that once in hospital, people from BAME backgrounds were also more likely to require admission to an intensive care unit.

BAME people accounted for 11 percent of those hospitalised with Covid-19 but over 36 percent of those admitted to critical care.

The recommendations follow research undertaken by University College London (UCL) scientists.

A total of 16,272 deaths were observed over the study period. However, ethnicity is not recorded in death certificates in England, therefore this proved to be a major limitation in the ability to study the differential impact of COVID-19 on mortality in different ethnic groups.

The largest total number of deaths in minority ethnic groups were Indian (492 deaths) and Black Caribbean (460 deaths) people. In comparison to the whole population. After adjusting the figures to region to region, White Irish and White British ethnic groups continued to have a lower risk of death.

Academics found the risk of death from the virus for people from an Indian background was 1.7 times higher whilst for those

from Bangladeshi backgrounds the statistics suggest they face a 2.41 times higher figure with people from Pakistani backgrounds having a 3.29 figure with black Caribbean people 3.24 times more likely to catch the disease than the general population.

The final point of the plan, referring to using recovery from the coronavirus pandemic to better protect BAME communities across healthcare inequality, feeds into an acknowledgement in the report of wider inequality.

The report states: "Ethnic inequalities in health and wellbeing in the UK existed before Covid-19 and the pandemic has made these disparities more apparent and undoubtedly exacerbated them."

In response to the publication, a spokesperson for the Government Equalities Office said: "This valuable insight will help inform the next stages of our work to tackle the disparities highlighted by the Public Health England review.

"This work will be led by the Minister for Equalities as we look to build on the good work that is already being done to protect our communities from the impact of the coronavirus."

The Shadow Health Secretary also criticised the government's lack of openness over the report.

Jonathan Ashworth, the shadow health secretary, said: "The impact of Covid-19 on people from BAME communities is serious, and as the data shows for many it can be fatal. This should demand urgent action from ministers. Instead we have had misleading statements and a lack of transparency.

"We shouldn't have to reply on leaks. The report should be published in full as soon as possible and action taken.

"Labour have been raising concerns for weeks and calling for greater use of targeted testing and protection for staff on the frontline, for example."

How Masjids in Batley are re-opening



The Muslim community in Batley has welcomed the news that masjids are reopening.

Places of worship opened for private worship from Monday, June the 15th with the 4th of July pencilled in for a further gradual opening.

Private, or individual, worship means worshippers can pray individually but must abide by social distancing by being two metres from the next person.

And although congregational prayer is usually performed with worshippers praying side by side, Masjid leaders in Batley have welcomed the move and feel "it's a step in the right direction".

Mosques nationally have been closed since the Prime Minister announced the lockdown on Monday, March 23, and it has been a very difficult period for Muslims, especially with the month of Ramadan and then the celebration of Eid.

Normally, mosques are full with worshippers during Ramadan and the build up to Eid, but that was not been allowed to be the case this year.

Majeed Mayet, a musallee at Taylor Street Masjid told Paigaam:

"We were delighted to have opened up the Masjid by the 15th of June. We have worked out how we will be opening the masjid and how to comfortably allow daily prayers to happen.

"We have also worked out how to come up with suitable measures to maintain the safety of the public. However, thanks to the Almighty, it has been heart warming to see so many people take up the chance to get back into the masjid albeit without being able to partake in namaaz with jamaat. However, the Almighty will also make this happen soon.

A worshipper at Dark Lane Masjid told Paigaam about how the executive committee has asked worshippers to adhere to social distancing rules whilst also bringing their own prayer mats, along with PPE equipment such as gloves and masks.

"We will be providing hand sanitiser at the mosque, but worshippers will have to perform wudhu (ablution) at home.

"We have a lot of room in the mosque and have the benefit of allowing more people to pray and maintain social distancing from

one another.

"As a Masjid, we want to thank everyone for their patience and just reiterate we had to close the mosque to protect the public."

Mohsin Pandor, a worshipper at Mount Pleasant Masjid feels the opening of the Masjid was a step in the right direction.

He said: "It is good news and seeing mosques opening again is a good sight for all Muslims across the country.

"Prayers are normally in a congregation and safety measures are in place to limit how many people we allow in at one time. However, the opening of all the local masjids is a good sign and I hope "everything will start improving soon".

Ismail E. Daji, an executive member of IMWS and Vice President of ICWA, said he was very happy to find that Masjids were allowed to open again.

"A lot of people prayed for mosques to open as soon as possible and their prayers have been answered," said Mr. Daji.

"To begin with, only one person will be allowed to pray at a time,

and we request those who are vulnerable or feeling slightly unwell to continue praying at home.

"Masjid committees and caretakers have been deep cleaning and will continue to do so until they all re-open fully, but for now they obviously cannot take the risk."

Mr Daji also explained how Masjids are looking into ways of making sure when they re-open there no risk of endangering others.

"All the masjids have to be cautious and careful and ensure the safety of worshippers is at the paramount to whatever we do. Masjids are looking into setting up one-way entrances and exit systems to allow worshippers easy access in and out of the masjids.

"There are also a few options we are looking into and we aim to sit down and discuss the idea with representatives from the Masjids to ensure we have the right measures in place for when we open."



We should stand in solidarity with the struggle for justice

By Dr Jafar Daji

Not only are we now seeing a kind of global challenge to racism but also to the consequences of slavery and colonialism.

In the US, monuments of Confederate leaders like General Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson were taken down, as leaders promised they would listen.

The Indianapolis mayor, Joe Hogsett, said "Our streets are filled with voices of anger and anguish, testament to centuries of racism directed at black Americans,".

Campaigners are thus saying that it's not just about removing statues of people associated with racism but honestly telling the uncomfortable history which needs to be told instead of the Imperialist version which neglects so many truths.

But calls for better education to students about the brutality of Britain's imperial past have been made in the past by leading historians.

Reporting in 2016, The Independent said: "Schools and colleges should take a more balanced 'warts and all' approach to teaching students about the British Empire and colonialism".

Here in Britain, it now seems that the same people who paraded anti-Muslim sentiment and hatred but declared that they were not racist, are now showing the same feelings towards black people – which in itself speaks volumes.

These people even neglect the story (or perhaps refuse to want to hear it) of the way Britain has been settled and influenced by foreign people and ideas as old as the land itself.

The millions of people from the British Empire who fought in the two world wars. And our food is, of course, anything but British.

However, it's not just police violence.

There is also much police brutality in India where

suspects die under mysterious circumstances where the ruling party in power has a great ability to subvert criminal justice.

They have encouraged and incited violent attacks by party supporters who believe they have political protection and approval.

They have even brought in anti-Muslim and discriminatory policies such as the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

And after winning a second term in May 2019, the government revoked the constitutional autonomy of India's only Muslim-majority state, Jammu and Kashmir, and then deployed additional troops, detained thousands, and removed peoples' phone and internet connections.

Then bizarrely, during the COVID-19 pandemic of global and historic proportions, the far-right extremists have weaponised the issue to attack Muslims and blaming them for the spread.

In the media we have also witnessed the heartbreaking scenes from the Covid-19 pandemic in India, where poor migrant workers leaving cities walking hundreds of miles on foot to return back home have been subjected to harassment by law enforcement.

One could argue their suffering is not very different to the depredations faced by America's minorities.

Professor Angela Davis, well known activist and Emeritus Professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who spoke on a recent Channel 4 interview, about there now seeming to be a shift in public opinion.

She said: "There now seems to be a shift in public opinion as a result of this historical conjuncture which holds possibilities for change that we have not seen since a generation, where we are now facing consequences of decades and centuries of attempting to expel racism from our societies."

However, with the national conversation focused on systemic

racism, of course bringing down statues alone is not enough to address the issue of racism in our society and continued action on this should involve all our key institutions.

It's also about not giving up on democracy, and we have stood on the side of democracy, but of course those who retain institutional power have the responsibility to ensure that democracy becomes meaningful and is substantive, rather than being used as a rhetorical device to silence those who seek to open up public discourse.

What we are witnessing now are very new demands for accountability, for example: demands for accountability of individual police officers responsible for violence carried out in the name of the law; and demands and envision different modes of public safety (in the US to demilitarise and defund the police).

Hence we seem to be experiencing a kind of global challenge to racism and also to the consequences of slavery and colonialism.

This is a pivotal moment, where it may not mean a new future, but what we are offered is the possibility of reimagining and recreating of the future. And that of course has a political dimension.

Anyone who's visited India will no doubt have seen adverts for so called "Skin-lightening creams". The racism we face and that which we perpetuate are two sides of the same coin.

So where does our community fit into all of this? Primarily, as Muslims, we should challenge any form of injustice in line with our values.

The change has to come in many forms in particular political, economic and social. What we are witnessing now are very new demands for accountability, for example: demands for accountability of individual police officers responsible for violence

carried out in the name of the law; and demands and envision different modes of public safety (in the US to demilitarise and defund the police). Islam teaches racial equality and the fighting of oppression.

Furthermore, it is fair to say that the racism faced by the black community stems from similar people and ideologies that spread racism against our own community, for example in the form of islamophobia.

We should all be focused towards building a fairer society for everyone, irrespective of race. We should stand in solidarity with the struggle for truth, humanity and justice.

Dear Paigaam

The family of our late Hafez Muhammad Faruk Patel RA would like to sincerely thank the Ulema-E-Keraam, IMWS, family members, friends, customers, and all those who reached out to them.

They are extremely grateful for your dua's, prayers and kind words. May the Almighty accept and reward you all, Ameen.

There will always be an empty space where he sat, the family humbly asks that you to make dua that he is seated in a much more blessed gathering amongst the Almighty's Chosen People.

Marhoom Hafez Muhammad Faruk's character was such that he always strived to help and advise people with his wisdom.

We pray that he endlessly reaps the rewards of his good work in this life.

Please remember Marhoom Hafez Muhammad Faruk Patel and all Marhoomeen's in your blessed Duas.

May the Almighty forgive all of their sins, and make their graves a place of comfort for them and may we will all be reunited in Jannah.

Britain made India pay for its oppression by stealing \$45 trillion

The commonly peddled myth that the colonisation of India - as horrendous as it may have been - was of major benefit to India and a grand gesture on behalf of the Britain who used their own resources to supposedly sustain the administration of the country.

However, this narrative has been called into question and discredited by a number of primary sources in the form of new research by renowned economist Utsa Patnaik and Indian politician, writer and diplomat, Shashi Tharoor.

Having studied swathes of historical fiscal records pertaining to the economic dealings between the U.K and India, Patnaik produced a collection of essays for Columbia University Press detailing how between 1765 and 1938, the East India Company and the British Raj drained £9.2 trillion (equal to \$45 trillion since the exchange rate was \$4.8 per pound sterling during the majority of colonial period).

She wrote: "The 'drain' varied between 26-36% of the central government budget. It would obviously have made an enormous difference if India's huge international earnings had been retained within the country."

She explained how India would have been far more developed, with much better health and social welfare capacity had the money not been siphoned. "Since all the earnings were taken by Britain, such stagnation is not surprising.

Ordinary people died like flies owing to under-nutrition and disease. It is shocking that Indian expectation of life at birth was just 22 years in 1911. The most telling index, however, is food grain availability.

"Because the purchasing power of ordinary Indians was being squeezed by high taxes, the per capita annual consumption of food grains went down from 200kg in 1900 to 157kg on the eve of World War II, and further plummeted to 137kg by 1946. No country in the world today, not even the least

developed, is anywhere near the position India was in 1946."

So how exactly was the method to extract the money out of India extracted? And why was it allowed to happen for so long?

The answer is that the British put tax collection procedures in place. "The very name for the district administrator was 'Collector', explained Patnaik.

"When the Company first got revenue collecting rights in Bengal in 1765, its employees went completely mad.

"R.C. Dutt, a civil service officer in the British Raj, documented that between 1765 and 1770, the Company trebled the tax revenue in Bengal, compared to the erstwhile Nawab's regime.

"You know what that means for a peasant who is already quite poor? The Nawab was collecting sufficiently high taxes, so when the Company took over and forcibly trebled collections over five years, people were driven into starvation. "

"There was a massive famine in Bengal in 1770. Out of a population of 30 million, the British themselves estimated that 10 million died. "The only Indian beneficiaries of this clever, unfair system of linking trade with taxes were the intermediaries who were known as the dalals.

Some of modern India's well-known business houses made their early profits doing dalali for the British. Income tax on businesses and professionals was virtually non-existent until World War 2."

As an economist, she believes Britain and a number of western countries should return the large sums of money drained out of the country and pay reparations to India.

"Not only Britain, but the whole of today's advanced capitalist world flourished on the drain from India and other colonies. Britain was too small to absorb the entire drain from colonial India.

So it became the world's largest capital exporter, which aided the industrial

development of Continental Europe, the U.S., and even Russia.

The infrastructure boom in these countries would not have been possible otherwise. Colonial drain helped to create the modern capitalist world, from North America to Australia—all regions where European populations had settled.

The advanced capitalist world should set aside a portion of its GDP for unqualified annual transfers to developing countries, especially to the poorest amongst them.

Britain, in particular, morally owes reparations for the 3 million civilians who died in the Bengal famine because it was an engineered famine."

Patnaik's views are shared by Lok Sabha MP, Shashi Tharoor who demanded reparation payments for 200 years of colonial rule during a speech at Oxford University.

He insists Britain's rise for 200 years was financed by its depredations in India: "Britain's industrial revolution was actually premised upon the de-industrialisation of India.

"The handloom weaver's for example famed across the world whose products were exported around the world, Britain came right in.

"There were actually these weaver's making fine muslin as light as woven wear, it was said, and Britain came right in, smashed their thumbs, broke their looms, imposed tariffs and duties on their cloth and products and started, of course, taking their raw material from India and shipping back manufactured cloth flooding the world's markets with what became the products of the dark and satanic mills of the Victoria in England.

"That meant that the weavers in India became beggars and India went from being a world famous exporter of finished cloth into an importer when from having 27 per cent of the world trade to less than 2 per cent."

By the end of 19th century, according to Tharoor, India was already Britain's biggest

cash cow, the world's biggest purchaser of British goods and exports and the source for highly paid employment for British civil servants.

"We literally paid for our own oppression. Meanwhile, colonialists like Robert Clive brought their rotten boroughs in England on the proceeds of their loot in India while taking the Hindi word loot into their dictionary as well as their habits.

"And the British had the gall to call him Clive of India as if he belonged to the country, when all he really did was to ensure that much of the country belonged to him."

Tharoor also highlighted the fact that India contributed billions of pounds to Britain's participation in World War 1 and World War 2.

He said one-sixth of all the British forces that fought in the war were Indian.

He insists 54 000 Indians actually lost their lives in that World War One, 65 000 were wounded and another 4000 remained missing or in prison.

"Indian taxpayers had to cough up a 100 million pounds in that time's money. India supplied 17 million rounds of ammunition, 6,00,000 rifles and machine guns, 42 million garments were stitched and sent out of India and 1.3 million Indian personnel served in this war. I know all this because the commemoration of the centenary has just taken place.

"But not just that, India had to supply 173,000 animals 370 million tonnes of supplies and in the end the total value of everything that was taken out of India and India by the way was suffering from recession at that time and poverty and hunger, was in today's money 8 billion pounds.

"You want quantification, it's available.

"World War II, it was even worse - 2.5 million Indians in uniform. I won't believe it to the point but Britain's total war debt of 3 billion pounds in 1945 money, 1.25 billion was owed to India and never actually paid."



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Empathy in Dewsbury South for those in need

Although the Dewsbury South Covid-19 community action group(DSCs) was formed only three months ago to support the elderly and the vulnerable, the group has made a significant difference to those who have been self-isolating in Thornhill, Thornhill Lees, Whitley & Brierfield.

Members of Empathy, a multicultural community group that aims to bring people from all backgrounds together; Darul-ilm Mosque; Thornhill Community Academy, the local high school; Quba Community Hub; Thornhill Parish Church and the parish of Ravensthorpe with Thornhill Lees and Savile Town have also been working closely together for the community.

Supported by members of the local branch of the Labour Party, volunteers have generously come forward to make sure everyone is aware of the very infectious nature of the Covid-19 virus.

The group has made sure they have adhered to social distancing guidelines and washed their hands regularly.

Group spokesperson, David Currie told Paigaam about how the group has leafleted 5000 households within a week and have since done 184 shops for those self-isolated, collected 45 prescriptions, posted mail and

supported people on the phone.

He said: "Our project is all about local people helping each other at a time of need regardless of background.

By reaching out to everyone in the community we are trying to demonstrate that by pulling together we can not only help people to get through this difficult time but also develop a sense of community spirit that unfortunately is not as strong as it once was.

"Our area has seen a great number of changes over the past 60 years. Thornhill & the villages are from predominantly white Indigenous British backgrounds.

By contrast Thornhill Lees is a mixed community of white & Asian British but the populations are not really integrating. Because this is a multi-cultural, multi-faith initiative we have had the opportunity to show each population the best of ourselves, demonstrating this through practical support, kindness and humanity."

David said the group realised an increasingly high level of support within the community was needed, hence they reached out to more locals whose needs have been caused or worsened by the Covid-19 emergency.

He also said "A 'Kirklees Community Who Can?' grant allowed the group to offer a free

shop for each of the self-isolating households in contact.

"The Kirklees grant was very beneficial and twice weekly we receive free food from Fareshare Go, which was recently supplemented by food from Fareshare Yorkshire thanks to a generous grant from Borough Parish Credit Union.

"We sort out this food into packs for individual households offering them to different streets each time, now with added items for children.

"We work closely with Zakaria Mosque in Savile Town & Neighbourhood Nest in Thornhill."

"Eighteen urgent food parcels & 467 free meals have been sourced for those locked down."

The group are always striving to find better ways of targeting our help towards those in need.

They have just printed a leaflet 'Love never fails' that offers emotional & spiritual support and includes contact details of many local & national organisations.

For those living in our area in increased need due to Covid-19 emergency we encourage them to phone us on 07540985591 or email 4empathy@gmail.com

Iqbal's forty year milestone at Fox's Biscuits

To call someone loyal is one of the nicest compliments that you can pay to another human being.

After all, loyalty is an advantageous trait for anyone to have, no matter if they are your friend, partner, family member or employee.

The importance of loyalty in professional life is great in any business. And you won't believe the milestone one man is celebrating this summer. It's a big deal to celebrate 5 or even 10 years on the job, right? Can you imagine working for someone for longer?

One such beneficiary of a long serving employee is Fox's Biscuits in Batley who have had the pleasure of celebrating an amazing 40 years' of service on 28th May from one very loyal employee.

Iqbal Bulsari who lives less than a mere 10-minute walk from the Fox's Batley site has clocked up the years at the 2 Sisters Food Group owned business, having started out in the baking department.

Having moved onto work as a general operative, Iqbal worked on the Ba2 machine, which produces the iconic Brandy snap plus a variety of cookies, and whilst he learnt how to use most of the machines his area of expertise is the Ba4 machine, where they make and bake products and then pass them through a chocolate process.

Iqbal has since worked on this particular machine for many years.

Keeping it in the Fox's family, Iqbal's two older brothers used to work at the Batley site before retiring. Abdul Qadir worked there for 32 years in the same department as Iqbal and Shabbir also worked at the site for 40 years. His nephew Altaf has worked on the same shift as his uncle for 27 years. The family have amassed an amazing 139 years' service between them!

Iqbal is an inspirational individual who is teaching us more about what it means to find your own happiness. He's found that through her job and years of hard work.

Iqbal said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working for Fox's Biscuits for the past 40 years. Fox's has always been a very important part of my life. I am very lucky and grateful to have had such lovely employers and colleagues who have always supported me.

"I have made some very dear friends and memories at Fox's. Friends that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I cannot even begin to imagine a life without Fox's Biscuits and all my colleagues who have lovingly called me Bobby for the last 40 years. I honestly cannot remember where this nickname came from!"

Helen Garnett, factory manager, said: "It is such an amazing milestone for Bobby, he is a kind, hard working person and will help anyone inside or outside of work."

Due to Covid-19 Iqbal has been shielding at home and hasn't yet had a presentation on site.

However, when he does return to work, the biscuits are on Iqbal!

Paigaam Sport: Meet BBC Sport's Shamoon Hafez



Batley born BBC Sports Journalist Shamoon Hafez speaks to Paigaam about getting into journalism, interviewing Sonny Bill Williams and what lies ahead.

A graduate of The University of Huddersfield, Shamoon picked Sports Journalism as a career and seemed destined to make a difference in the world of sports media.

He told Paigaam: "I have always enjoyed writing and grew up playing and watching sport so after finishing my A levels and looking at what journalism courses were available, the Sports Journalism course seemed ideal.

"We all dream about becoming professional sportsmen/women and a job as a sports journalist is the closest thing to that."

The reaction from his friends and family did not surprise Shamoon, even though his dad, Shaukat bhai Hafez has been credited by many journalists for helping them achieve a vast amount of success.

"Few were surprised," admits Shamoon. "They had not heard of the course before and it was very different to doing something like law, medicine or business studies and on the whole it was quite an enjoyable course as I made lots of contacts which still come in use in my job today."

Upon being given the job by the BBC's Howard Nurse, Shamoon was understandably delighted when he came through his first journalism interview with flying colours.

"To go from growing up and reading the articles that were on BBC Sport online to writing for them was incredible. I was suddenly sitting next to journalists that I had wanted to be, writing live text commentaries and reports on Premier League and Champions League football matches, as well as other sports like snooker and rugby league."

So what is life like at the BBC for Shamoon personally, as someone who was born and bred in Batley?

"The BBC is very accommodating when it comes to stuff like namaaz, there are a number of places I can pray and if I am working on football then there is no problem for me getting away for five minutes at half-time to go to the prayer room.

"Shifts can be changed in Ramadan to come in late and be given time do Iftari at work, while not many Muslims working here can be an advantage as Eid can be taken off without any issues.

"The BBC is a great place to work, the colleagues are very friendly and a job as a sports

journalist does not feel like work, I am getting paid to write about something I would be doing at home anyway. Doing a job that we enjoy is something everyone wants."

Covering games at football stadiums is every football journalist' dream and Shamoon has certainly lived the dream by covering a number of high profile Premier league football matches.

"As a Manchester United fan, I have been lucky to cover their matches from Old Trafford. On the other hand, I have written from Anfield too, I guess the good thing out of that is I got paid for it and got to watch some Champions League football."

"Emirates Stadium is another and last year I spent a weekend in Istanbul when there were two derbies including the huge Fenerbahce v Galatasaray game. That is probably the best event I have done in my career, spending time with the passionate fans and going to two games in Turkey is something I will never forget."

It is 10 years since Rugby legend Sonny Bill Williams became a Muslim while playing for Toulon in France after a period in his life where he was "wild and at the other end of the spectrum" to where he is now.

Shamoon encapsulated his story with a superb write up which was read worldwide.

"I have interviewed many sportsmen but Sonny Bill Williams was without doubt the friendliest and most welcoming that I have spoken to.

"There are very few Muslim rugby players and even fewer Muslim sports journalists so he enjoyed the opportunity to speak to someone about Islam, what it means to him and how even as a world famous sportsman, his religion is at the forefront of his mind and above everything that he does.

"The piece I wrote was one that went viral on social media, I received some great feedback on it and it was also shared by Mufti Menk to his five million followers

on Twitter."

And what was Snooker legend Ronnie O'Sullivan like to interview?

"Ronnie O'Sullivan is one of my sporting idols, a genius that has produced some amazing moments in snooker," says Shamoon.

"A sport that was widely played and watched in our community growing up, I was in awe when I first got to meet and interview him but as the years go by and seeing him more regularly at tournaments, you start to understand that he is just another sportsman that you have dealt with and there will be many more in the future."

Being a long-suffering Manchester United fan, it is the right time to ask him about Liverpool's glorious season and how the reds have captured their first Premier League title and despite the Coronavirus outbreak, have succeeded in knocking Manchester United of their perch.

"Football works in cycles and it has taken them 30 years to get back to the top and they have deserved it the way they have played, it might take United the same time to win their next title but with the coronavirus outbreak, there were no guarantees as to how and where would to lift the trophy. but they have been patient and congratulations to them."

If there was one person Shamoon could interview, who would he pick?

Without any hesitation, Shamoon insists there is only one person he would choose.

"Definitely Sir Alex Ferguson, a father-figure to a lot of us United fans. Someone who gave us so many memorable moments and a one-of-a-kind individual that we may never get to see again. To spend 26 years at the top and achieve what he did is incredible."

Follow Shamoon on Twitter to find out more about the man himself:

<https://twitter.com/shamoonhafez>

India: OCI Passport holders not allowed to partake in Tabligh



The Indian Ministry of Home Affairs have inserted "indulging in Tablighi activities" as a specific visa violation.

The MHA said all foreigners who break the rules under the provisions of Section 13 and 14 of the Foreigners Act, 1946, punishable by a penalty of \$500 fine and a ten-year ban from entering India and a maximum of five years imprisonment upon conviction.

The guidelines provide details of 24 categories of visas including the OCI and the various conditions under which they could be granted online or by missions abroad.

The amended guidelines read, "Foreign nationals granted any type of visa and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cardholders shall not be permitted to engage themselves in Tabligh work.

"There will be no restriction in visiting religious places and attending normal religious activities like attending religious discourses. However, preaching religious ideologies, making religious speeches in religious places, distribution of audio or visual display/ pamphlets pertaining to religious ideologies, spreading conversion etc. will not be allowed."

The centre also said they have been in touch with foreign embassies to initiate the process of deporting foreign Tabligh members who recently attended religious events at the Nizamuddin Markaz.

The MHA also added that all visas of those convicted will be cancelled and blacklisted under

Category A as per the 2018 blacklisting guidelines. "Thus far the Bureau of Immigration (BoI) has intimated that 960 foreigners of different nationalities as identified on the basis of their travel documents have been found to be involved in Tabligh Jamaat activities on the strength of their tourist visa. Their Tabligh activities have endangered many lives in the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency," the letter said.

Punya Salila Srivastava of the MHA said that 960 cases have been registered against foreign Tabligh members.

The MHA had said that after attending the Nizamuddin event, the foreigners dispersed to other parts of the country where they participated in religious activities that amounted to visa violation.

"We have been receiving requests from foreign governments to repatriate their citizens, as it has been more than three months and they have already completed the quarantine cycle," a senior government official told The Hindu.

A total of 2,594 Tablighi foreigners who had come for the event from January onwards were blacklisted from entering India for 10 years under "Category A" of the Visa Manual 2018.

All international flights were suspended on March 23 and the country was placed under a 21-day lockdown on March 24 to prevent the spread of Covid-19 pandemic.

The blacklisted foreigners include people from America, Ivory Coast, Bangladesh, Malaysia,

Singapore, Sri Lanka and Britain.

The blacklisted foreigners include people from America, Ivory Coast, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Britain.

Sohail Hughes, a 29 year old Joiner who was born and Dewsbury and lives in Mirfield with his wife and three year old son, was one of the men who was arrested and subsequently released on bail.

Speaking to Paigaam, Sohail's sister, Aatika confirmed her brother has been released on bail.

She said: "Sohail has been released on bail and is now awaiting trial unless charges get dropped. We request everyone to make dua."

Aatika along with her family, cannot fathom the situation they and Sohail currently find themselves in.

She said: "There are no words to describe how we are feeling at this moment in time. We are distraught and shocked at how Sohail and all the other foreigners have been treated in India, it is his motherland. Justice has to be served; we need him home."

Aatika also lambasted the 'double standards' of the entire affair. She explained how people of other faiths who found themselves in similar predicaments and were stranded in yoga centres, temples and other places were free to go.

"Where were these foreigners supposed to go," said Aatika.

"However, at the same time (as Sohail) many other people were

in similar situations, stranded in yoga centres, temples and other such places with nowhere else to go but to have to wait to be repatriated. These people were free to go back to their homes, back to their countries, back to their families and loved ones, no questions asked."

However, Police in Bhopal insist Sohail was detained for violating rules.

"He (Sohail) was detained with others for violating visa rules and the Foreigners Act. He was on a tourist visa and was involved in missionary work," said Police Superintendent Rajat Saklecha.

"Hughes has also been charged for disobeying the lockdown rules."

On June 2, the Uttar Pradesh government informed the Allahabad High Court that 279 foreign Tablighi workers were lodged in jails while 46 have left the country after being released from institutional quarantine.

In an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court on June 4, the MHA said that the foreign Tablighi participants obtained tourist visa on "false pretexts."

The MHA said in the affidavit that "all of these foreign nationals have been served with a notice under section 41 A CrPc and all of them have given an undertaking that they would not violate the conditions and abide by the terms of the notice. These foreigners were examined with the help of a questionnaire."

The MHA said they can only grant missionary visa's for organisations that are 'pre-approved' for religious work.

નિખાલસતા

-મહંમદ યુસુફ સુફી લાજપુરી, બાટલી.

એક બુઝુર્ગની શાનદાર મજલીસ થઈ રહી હતી. જેમાં ઘણાં દિલચસ્પ અને મઝેદાર વિષયો ઉપર ચર્ચા થઈ રહી હતી. જે પૈકી એક જાણવા અને અમલ કરવા વાંચકો માટે અહીં રજૂ કરીએ છીએ. આશા છે એમાંથી આપણને સબક મળશે. ઉપરાંત આ લોકડાઉનના સમયમાં તેના ઉપર મનોમંથન કરવાની તક પણ મળશે.

પ્રથમ ચર્ચાનો આરંભ નિખાલસતા ઉપર થયો. નિખાલસતા શું છે? નિખાલસતાની વ્યાખ્યા છે કે, ઝબાનથી જે કંઈ કહી રહ્યા છે તેને આપણું દિલ પણ સચોટ બતાવી રહ્યું હોય. દિલ તે ઝબાનની વાતને સપોર્ટ કરી રહ્યું હોય. ટૂંકમાં એ કે દિલ પણ ઝબાનનો સાથ આપી રહ્યું હોય. આ વાતને જુદી રીતે સમજવા તે બુઝુર્ગો એક રસપ્રદ ઉદાહરણ આપ્યું. જે ખાસ સમજવા જેવું છે.

એક વેળા પતિ-પત્ની રાત્રે ફૂરસદના સમયે એકાંતમાં બેસીને પ્યાર-મોહબ્બતની વાતો કરી રહ્યાં હતાં. બન્ને તેમની વાતોમાં ખૂબજ મશગુલ હતાં કે કોઈએ તેમના દરવાજા ઉપર દસ્તક આપી. પતિએ તેમના આ આનંદના સમયમાં એ શબ્દો ઉચ્ચાર્યા કે ઓહ! આ અમારા ખુબસુરત સમયે કોણ આવી ગયું? પતિ દરવાજા ઉપર પહોંચે છે અને દરવાજો ખોલે છે તો જુએ છે કે, એ તો એમનો ખાસ મિત્ર છે. તેને જોઈને પતિ ઝબાનથી તેને કહે છે કે આવો ભલે પધારો! તમારા આવવાથી મને ઘણીજ ખુશી થઈ.

આ બનાવમાં પતિ જ્યારે દરવાજા ઉપર જઈને પોતાના મિત્રને કહે છે કે, તમારા આવવાથી મને ખૂબજ ખુશી થઈ. એ ફક્ત ઝબાનના શબ્દો હતો. પરંતુ દરવાજો ખોલવા પહેલા પતિએ નારાઝગીના અંદાજમાં જે શબ્દો ઉચ્ચાર્યા હતા, ઓહ! આ અમારા ખુશીના સમયમાં કોણ આવી ગયું એ હકીકતમાં ભૂલ્યાના અંતઃકરણના શબ્દો હતા. અહીં વિચારવા જેવી વાત એ છે કે, ઝબાને તે કહ્યું નથી જે દિલમાં હતું. દિલ અને ઝબાન બન્ને અહીં અલગ થઈ ગયાં. એટલે કે, આ બન્નેમાં તફાવત હોવાના કારણે એ નિખાલસની વાત નથી.

યાદ રાખવા જેવી વાત એ છે કે, કબરમાં માનવીને દફનાવ્યા પછી કબરના એકાંતમાં પ્રથમ મરનાર સાથે જે અનુભવ થશે તે મુન્કર નકીર ફરિશ્તાઓ મરનારને ત્રણ સવાલો પૂછશે. જે પૈકી એક તમારો રબ કોણ છે? બીજો તમારો દીન શું છે? અને ત્રીજો હઝરત નબીએ કરીમ સ.અ.વ. વિષે પૂછશે, આ માણસ કોણ છે. તે સમયે દિલમાં જે હશે તે જ ઝબાનથી નીકળશે. દુનિયામાં આપણે દિલ પર મહેનત કરવાની જરૂર છે. હંમેશાં દરેક પરિસ્થિતિમાં આપણા દિલનો અવાજ એજ હોય કે જે ઝબાન ઉપર આવે. હું મારા રબના દરેક ફેસલાઓ અને દીનના હુકમ ઉપર રાજી છું. જેથી ઝબાન અને દિલનો સમન્વય ખૂબજ જરૂરી છે. દિલ ઉપર દરેક વાતને બેસાડી દઈશું તો તે આપોઆપ ઝબાનથી બહાર આવશે. આ એક આપણા માટે ઈબ્રતનો સબક છે અને તેના ઉપર આપણે મહેનત કરવાની જરૂર છે. ઉપરોક્ત સાદી પરંતુ અહમ વાત તરફ ધ્યાન આપીશું તો આપણને

નિખાલસતાની સાચી અગત્યતા સમજાશે અને ઈ.અ. તે ઉપર મહેનત કરવાની દિશામાં આપણે આગળ વધીશું. અલ્લાહપાક અમલની તોફીક અતા ફરમાવે આમીન.

સોસાયટીની રમજાન ચેરિટીનો આંક ₹૧,૦૪૦૦૦

રમજાન અને ત્યારબાદ ઈદનો મહિનો પણ પૂરો થયો. કોરોના વાયરસના કારણે લોકડાઉનમાં થોડી રાહત થઈ છે પરંતુ પરિસ્થિતિને સંપૂર્ણ કાબુમાં આવતા અને આપણું જીવન સામાન્ય થતાં હજુ સમય લાગશે એવું જણાય રહ્યું છે. દુઆ કરીએ આ વાયરસ ઉપર કાબુ મેળવી ફરીથી આપણે આપણું નોર્મલ જીવન જીવી શકીએ. લોકડાઉનના કારણે રમજાન માસમાં આપણી મસ્જિદો બંધ હતી અને પરિણામે આ માસમાં આપણી ચેરિટીની રકમ ઝકાત, સદકા વગેરે ઉધરાવવા માટે આપણી સોસાયટીએ જુદા જુદા માધ્યમથી કલેક્શનની વ્યવસ્થા કરી હતી. જેમાં આપ સૌ ભાઈ બહેનો તરફથી અમને સુંદર સહકાર મળ્યો હતો. આ ચેરિટી અંગે થોડી જાણકારી અત્રે આપીએ છીએ.

ખાસ કરીને રમજાન માસમાં ઈફતાર પ્રોજેક્ટ જે આ વર્ષે યમનના મઝલુમો માટે, સદકતુલ ફીત્ર ઈદના દિવસે જે મ્યાનમારમાં ગરીબો અને હાજતમંદો માટે, સિરીયા હેલ્પ પ્રોજેક્ટ, ગાઝાના મઝલુમો માટે સહાય, સાઉથ ગુજરાત પ્રોજેક્ટ અને જનરલ ચેરિટી વગેરે માટે અપીલ કરવામાં આવી હતી. જેમાં કુલ એક લાખ ચાર હજાર પાઉન્ડ જેટલા એકત્ર કરવામાં સફળતા મળી હતી. જે પૈકી યમન ઈફતાર પ્રોજેક્ટમાં ૨૧ હજાર પાઉન્ડ, સદકતુલ ફીત્ર મ્યાનમાર માટે ૧૭ હજાર પાઉન્ડ, સિરીયા માટે ૧૦ હજાર પાઉન્ડ, ગાઝા, પેલેસ્ટાઈન માટે ૧૭ હજાર પાઉન્ડ સાઉથ ગુજરાત પ્રોજેક્ટ માટે ૩૩૫૦૦ પાઉન્ડ અને જનરલ ચેરિટીમાં ૫૫૦૦ પાઉન્ડ જમા થયા હતા. જે પૈકી યમન અને મ્યાનમારમાં વ્હેંચણી વગેરેનું અને ગાઝામાં ફૂડ પેકેટ વિતરણનું કામ સંપૂર્ણ થયું છે જેના ફોટા વગેરે પચગામના ગયા અંકમાં અને સોશયલ મિડીયા ઉપર મૂકવામાં આવ્યા હતા. ગુજરાત પ્રોજેક્ટની રકમ પણ મોકલી દેવામાં આવી છે અને સિરીયા પ્રોજેક્ટનું કામ હાલમાં થઈ રહ્યું છે.

આપ સૌ ભાઈ બહેનો તરફથી જે સુંદર સહકાર મળ્યો છે તે બદલ અમે આભાર વ્યક્ત કરીએ છીએ. અમારી ચેરિટી કલેક્શનની કામગીરી આખું વર્ષ ચાલુજ હોય છે. વધુ માહિતી માટે અલ-હિકમાહ સેન્ટર ખાતે રૂબરૂ અથવા ફોન નંબર: ૦૯૮૨૪ ૫૦૦૫૫૫ ઉપર સંપર્ક સાધી શકો છો.

સોનેરી વાતો.....

- ❖ મંઝિલ મિલે ન મિલે યે તો મુકદરકી બાત હૈ હમ કોશિશ ભી ન કરે યે તો ગલત બાત હૈ.
- ❖ મૌકા સબકો મિલતા હૈ, વક્ત સબકા આતા હૈ કોઈ ચાલ ચલ જાતા હૈ, કોઈ બદાઈશત કર જાતા હૈ.
- ❖ પ્યાર વો ચીઝ હૈ, બચપનમેં મુફત મિલતી હૈ, જવાનીમે કમાની પડતી હૈ, ઔર બુઢાપેમેં માંગની પડતી હૈ.
- ❖ વીતી ગયેલા સમયને આપણે બદલી ન શકીએ પણ આવનાર સમયને આપણે જરૂર સુંદર બનાવી શકીએ.
- ❖ બધુંજ સમજવાની જિંદગીમાં કોશિશ ન કરશો..કેમ કે કેટલીક વાતો સમજવા માટે નથી હોતી પણ સ્વીકારી લેવાની હોય છે.

વિચાર વિનિમય

-અહમદ ગુલ

હું શ્વાસ લઈ શકતો નથી

આ આખરી શબ્દો હતા, અશ્વેત જ્યોર્જ ફ્લોઈડના: જેના મૃત્યુએ આખી દુનિયાને હચમચાવી નાંખી. અમેરિકામાં અશ્વેતોની ૧૪ ટકા વસ્તી, જેઓ આફ્રિકન-અમેરિકન તરીકે ઓળખાય છે. આખી વાત વિગતે જોઈએ.

તારીખ ૨૫મી મે ૨૦૨૦ના અમેરિકાના મીનીસોટા (ઘણાં મીની સોડા પણ ઉચ્ચારે છે.) રાજ્યના મીનીઆયલીસ શહેરમાં જ્યોર્જ ફ્લોઈડ એક દુકાન (એશિયનની)માં કંઈક ખરીદવા ગયેલો. તેણે ૨૦ડોલરની નોટ આપેલી. દુકાનદારને એ નોટ નકલી લાગતા પોલિસ બોલાવેલી. ત્રણ પોલિસો આવેલા. તેમાના ડેરિક ચોવલીન નામના પોલિસે જ્યોર્જને નીચે પાડી દઈ તેના ગળા ઉપર ઘૂંટણથી ગળુ દબાવી રાખેલું. જ્યોર્જ બૂમો પાડતો રહ્યો, “હું શ્વાસ લઈ શકતો નથી.” એની કાકલૂદીની અવગણના કરી વધુ બળપૂર્વક ગળુ દબાવે છે. છેવટે જ્યોર્જ હોસ્પિટલમાં મૃત્યુ પામે છે. આ આખો બનાવ કોઈએ મોબાઈલ પર રેકોર્ડ કરે છે. જે વાયરલ થતાં લોકોનો આકોશ ભભૂકી ઉઠે છે. આ વાયરલ સમગ્ર અમેરિકામાં જંગલની આગની જેમ ફેલાઈ જાય છે. અશ્વેતોમાં ગુસ્સો અને આકોશ વધે છે. લોકો લોકડાઉનની પરવા કર્યા વિના રસ્તા પર નીકળી પડે છે. રેલી કાઢે છે. રંગભેદ અને અત્યાચારો વરિધ્ધમાં દેખાવો કરે છે. આકોશ પરાકાષ્ટાએ પહોંચે છે. પછી તો શ્વેતો અને બીજી અન્ય કોમો જોડાવા લાગે છે. જોતજોતામાં વિરોધની આગમાં સમગ્ર અમેરિકા લપેટાઈ જાય છે. ૪૦ જેટલા શહેરોમાં કરફ્યુ લગાવવો પડે છે. પણ લોકોનો ગુસ્સો શાંત પડતો નથી. ઠેર ઠેર આગ ચાંપવામાં આવે છે. દુકાનોમાં તોડફોડ થાય છે. લોકો એનો લાભ ઉઠાવી દુકાનો, સુપર સ્ટોરો લૂંટવા માંડે છે. કપડા, ઈલેક્ટ્રીકલનો સામાન જે કંઈ હાથમાં આવે તે લઈને લોકો નાસવા માંડે છે. આખું અમેરિકા સળગવા લાગે છે. જાણે વરસોથી દબાયેલો ગુલામી પ્રથાનો, અન્યાયનો, અત્યાચારનો જ્વાળામુખી ફાટ્યો હોય.

પ્રેસીડન્ટ ટ્રમ્પ આર્મા ઉતારવાની ધમકી આપે છે. મામલો કન્ટ્રોલ બહાર થઈ જાય છે. લોકો વ્હાઈટ હાઉસને ઘેરી વળે છે. હુમલો થાય છે. અને જગતના સૌથી બળવાન દેશના બળવાન પ્રમુખને “બન્ડર” માં છૂપાઈ જવું પડે છે. માનવઅધિકારના એક્ટીવિસ્ટો અને માનવતાવાદીઓ પણ વિરોધમાં જોડાઈ છે. અને વિરોધના દેખાવો અમેરિકાની બહાર નીકળી જાય છે. ઘણાં દેશોમાં દેખાવો થાય છે. યુ.કે.માં પણ દેખાવો જોર પકડે છે. આખી ઘટના આંતરરાષ્ટ્રીય રૂપ ધારણ કરે છે. સદીઓ પહેલાં ગુલામી પ્રથામાં સંડોવાયેલા અને સન્માન પામેલા નેતાઓ, બીજાનેસમેનોના પૂતળાંની તોડફોડ થાય છે. એ ધ્વારા રોષે ભરાયેલા લોકો રંગભેદના અત્યાચારને જડમૂળથી ઉખેડી ફેંકવાના સંકેત આપે છે. આપણી સરકાર એ બાબતમાં કાયદાને વધુ સખત કરવા કમીશનની નીમણુંક કરે છે.

આ આખી ઘટનાને તુલનાત્મક રીતે તપાસીએ કે, ભારતમાં શું થઈ રહ્યું છે તેની થોડીક ચર્ચા કરીએ. ભારતમા મુસ્લિમ લઘુમતીની

લગભગ ૧૮ થી ૨૦ ટકા જેટલી વસ્તી છે. જેના ઉપર આઝાદી મળી ત્યારથી જ ભેદભાવો અને અત્યાચારો થઈ રહ્યા છે. શિક્ષણ, રોજગાર, નોકરીઓ, અરે! રહેઠાણ સુધ્ધામાં અન્યાય તો હવે સામાન્ય વાત ગણાય રહી છે. કોમી હુલ્લડો કરાવવામા આવે છે. જેમાં મુસ્લિમોના જાન-માલનું પારાવાર નુકસાન થાય છે. એવા હુલ્લડોમાં એક તરફી મુસ્લિમોની ધરપકડો થાય છે. વરસો વીતે પણ ઈન્સાફ ન મળે. અને લોકોની જિંદગી જેલોમાં સબડી રહે છે. તેમાયે છેલ્લા ૬ વર્ષથી મુસ્લિમો પર અત્યાચારોની હદ થઈ રહી છે. ગાયના નામ પર લીન્ચીંગથી ૭૦-૭૫ નિર્દોષ લોકોને મૃત્યુના ઘાટ ઉતારી દેવામાં આવ્યા છે. ૨૦૦૨માં ગુજરાતના રમખાણમાં તો ૨૦૦૦ મુસ્લિમોને ભાજીમૂળાની જેમ કાપી નાંખવામાં આવ્યા હતા. જ્યાં ઈન્સાફ નહીવત રહ્યો. જે થોડા ઘણાને જેલ થએલી તેઓ પણ ધીમેધીમે છૂટી રહ્યા છે. અત્યાચારીઓની લીસ્ટ એટલી લાંબી છે કે, અહીં વર્ણન કરવું લગભગ અશક્ય છે.

એ હકીકત છે કે મુસ્લિમો પર એક યા બીજી રીતે જુલ્મ થઈ રહ્યો છે અને મુસ્લિમો સેકન્ડ ક્લાસ સીટીઝન જેવી દશા ભોગવી રહ્યા છે. જાણે પોતાની તકદીર સમજી ચૂપચાપ સહન કરી રહ્યા છે. કોઈ વિરોધ નહીં બંધારણે આપેલા હકોને પણ મુસ્લિમો ભૂલી ગયા. શાંતિપૂર્ણ વિરોધ કરવાનો એમનો હક છે. કારણ કે, બંધારણે ભારતના તમામ નાગરિકનો સમાન ગણ્યા છે. એ હકોની રક્ષા કરવાના પ્રયાસો કરવાની મુસ્લિમોની જવાબદારી છે. જે કોમ પોતાના હકોની રક્ષા કરવાના પ્રયાસો નથી કરતી તેને અલ્લાહની પણ મદદ મળતી નથી. વખતોવખત થતા પૂનખરાબા, અન્યાયો અને અત્યાચારો સામે જુલુસો કાઢી પોતાનો વિરોધ દર્શાવી શક્યા હોત તો જગતને પણ ખરી પરિસ્થિતિની જાણ થઈ હોત, પરંતુ મુસ્લિમોતો એકતા, સંપ વિનાના, આયોજન વિનાના, લીડરશીપ વિનાના અને બુઝદીલ.

મુસ્લિમોના લીડરો, શિક્ષિત વર્ગ અને ઉલેમાઓ બધાએજ અત્યાર સુધી બુઝદીલી બતાવી છે. મુસ્લિમ સમાજ બેહાલ થતો રહ્યો, ગરીબીમાં સબડતો રહ્યો અને કહેવાતા આગેવાનો ચૂપચાપ લોહીલુહાણ મુસ્લિમોને જોતા રહ્યા. પોતપોતાની લીડરશીપ, પોતપોતાની ગાદીઓમાં મસ્ત. ન એમને ઉમ્મતની પરવા છે ન જ હકોની રક્ષા કરવાની તમન્ના. બેસહાય, હતાશ, નિરાશ હજારો દુકડાઓમાં વહેંચાયેલા ૨૦ કરોડ મુસ્લિમોએ પોતાની અવદશાને સ્વીકારી લીધી છે. યાદ રહે કે, જુલ્મગાર જેટલાજ જુલ્મ સહેનારાઓ પણ ગુનેહગાર હોય છે.

થોડીકવાર શાંત ચિત્તે વિચારો, એક અશ્વેતના ખૂને આખા અમેરિકાને બલ્કે આખી દુનિયાને હચમચાવી મૂકી. દબાયેલા, કચડાયેલાઓને જાગૃત કરી દીધા. ભારતનો મુસ્લિમ સમાજ પોતાના હક્કોનું રક્ષણ માટે અવાજ ન ઉઠાવશે, દેખાવો ન કરશે ત્યાં સુધી જુલ્મ સહન કરતા રહેશે. કદાચ અત્યાચારો સહન કરવાનું એમને કોઠે પડી ગયું હશે!

દેશનું વાતાવરણ શાંતિપૂર્વક હશે તો દેશ પ્રગતિ સાધશે. એ લઘુમતીઓએ પણ સમજવાનું છે અને બહુમતીએ પણ.

જિંદગી જીવો અને સમજવાની કોશિશ ન કરો

-રફીક અહમદ ડભાસ

સમયના સાથે ચાલો, સમયને બદલવાનો પ્રયત્ન ના કરો.

એક ફેમિલી કાર્યક્રમ ચાલી રહ્યો હતો. ઘણાં લોકો સાથે ભેગા મળ્યા હતા. ઘણાં દિવસો બાદ તેઓ એકબીજાને મળ્યા હતા જેથી ખૂબજ ખુશ હતા. બધાની પાસે કરવાની ઘણી વાતો હતી અને સાથે જ સ્વાદિષ્ટ જમવાની પણ વ્યવસ્થા હતી. રસોઈઘર (કીચન) પાસેથી ખૂબજ મધમધતી સુંદર ખુશ્બુ આવી રહી હતી. ખુશ્બુ એટલી સુંદર હતી કે હર કોઈનું મન લલચાય રહ્યું હતું અને ખૂબજ ઉત્સુક થઈ રહ્યા હતા કે, આટલી સુંદર ખુશ્બુ આવી રહી છે કે ક્યારે પુલાવ અમારા સમક્ષ પીરસવામાં આવે અને અમે તેનો આનંદ માણી શકીએ. થોડો સમય લાગી રહ્યો હતો. પુલાવની સુંદર મહેક આવતી હતી જેથી ભુખ અને ઉત્સુકતા વધી રહી હતી. અંતમાં એ સમય આવી ગયો અને દરેકને થાળીમાં ખુશ્બુદાર બાસ્મતી ચાવલનો પુલાવ પીરસવામાં આવ્યો. દરેક જણ ખુશીથી પુલાવ તરફ જોઈ રહ્યા હતા. પરંતુ જેવાજ ખાવાની તૈયારી કરવા લાગ્યા કે રસોડામાંથી રસોઈઓ બહાર આવ્યો અને કહેવા લાગ્યો કે સાંભળો! ‘પુલાવ બધા ધ્યાનથી ખાજો.’ બધાએ કહ્યું કેમ? શું થયું? રસોઈયાએ કહ્યું ‘ચોખામાં ઘણાં કાંકરા હતા. આમ તો મેં વીણીને લગભગ બધા કાંકરા કાઢી લીધા છે પરંતુ કદાચ એકાદ-બે કાંકરા એમાં રહી ગયા હોય જેથી તમે બધા ધ્યાનથી ખાશો. કોઈના મોઢામાં કંઈ તે કાંકરા આવી ન જાય.’

હવે બસ! દરેક વ્યક્તિ ખાવાની ખુશીને એક તરફ છોડી ફક્ત કાંકરા ઉપર ધ્યાન આપી રહ્યા હતા અને ધીરે ધીરે પુલાવ ખાઈ રહ્યા હતા જેમકે બધા તણાવ (ટેન્શન)માં ખાવાનું ખાઈ રહ્યા હોય. જે હસીખુશીનો માહોલ હતો, વાતચીતની મજા હતી તે ખતમ. કોઈ કોઈના સાથે વાત ન કરે બસ ચુપચાપ પોતાની પ્લેટમાં પોતાનું ખાવાનું ખાઈ રહ્યા હતા અને એ પણ ગભરાઈને, સતર્ક રહીને, ચિંતામાં આવીને. જ્યારે ખાવાનું પૂરું થયું ત્યારે કોઈના પણ મોઢામાં કાંકરો ન આવ્યો, તો બધાએ એકબીજાની તરફ જોયું અને રસોઈયાને બોલાવ્યો કે ભાઈ તમે અમારા સાથે આવું કેમ કર્યું? આ ખાવામાં તો કોઈ કાંકરા ન હતા. તો રસોઈયાએ જવાબ આપ્યો કે, ‘જૂઓ મેં કહ્યું હતું કે, મેં સારી રીતે ચાવલ વીણ્યાં છે પરંતુ મને ડર હતો કે, કદાચ એક બે કાંકરા રહી ન ગયા હોય.’ બધા એ વિચારીને ખૂબ દુઃખી થવા લાગ્યા કે, યાર આ રસોઈયાએ કાંકરાની એક ચિંતા આપી દીધી જેના લીધે અમે સ્વાદિષ્ટ પુલાવના ખાવાની મજા ન લઈ શક્યા. ન કોઈએ ખાવાનો સ્વાદ માંણ્યો ન બધા સાથે ખાવાના આનંદને મહેસુસ કર્યો. બધાનું ધ્યાન માત્ર એક કાંકરા ઉપર અને કાંકરો એટલે કે પ્રોબ્લેમ.

આપણે બધા એવુંજ કરીએ છીએ. કોઈ એક મુશ્કેલીનો જીક થઈ જાય તો બસ તમામ ધ્યાન ત્યાંજ એકત્રિત કરી દઈએ છીએ. આ કોરોના વાયરસની જ વાત લઈ લઈએ, ન કોઈ સાથે મિત્રતા ન વ્યવહાર. આસપાસ મળવાવાળા વ્યક્તિ ઉપર બસ શંકાની નજરે જોઈએ છીએ કે, કહીએ કોઈ પ્રકારનું ઈન્ફેક્શન ન આપી જાય. જે માણસ અમારી રોજબરોજની જરૂરિયાતોને પૂરી કરતા હતા, દૂધવાળા, શાકભાજીવાળા ઉપર પણ અમે શંકા કરવા લાગ્યા.

જૂઓ! આ વાયરસથી બચીને રહેવું એ ખૂબજ સારી વાત છે. પરંતુ એ વાયરસને લીધે જિંદગીના હરેક લમ્હાની મજા ખોઈ દેવી ક્યાં સુધી ઉચીત છે. સતર્ક રહેવું અલગ વાત છે પરંતુ હર પળે એ ભયમાં જીવવું કે, કહીએ મારા સાથે ન થઈ જાય તો એ એક અલગ વાત છે. તો પોઝીટીવ (સકારાત્મક) વિચારો. હવે આપણે આ વાયરસના સાથે આગળ વધવાનું છે. એનાથી કેવી રીતે બચવું એ પણ આપણે સારી રીતે શીખી ગયા છે. તો પછી કેમ ગભરાયને, ડરીને અને ચિંતામાં દરેક સમય આપણા મનને પરોવાયેલું રાખીએ છીએ અને જીવનના કોઈ પણ ક્ષણનો આનંદ ન માણીએ. તો વાયરસથી બચો પરંતુ ડરો નહીં. અને જિંદગીને ફક્ત જીવો નહીં પરંતુ દરેક ક્ષણનો આનંદ ઉઠાવો.

ભારતમાં ધાર્મિક સ્વતંત્રતા મામલે અમેરિકા ખૂબજ ચિંતિત

અમેરિકાના રાષ્ટ્રપતિ ડોનલ્ડ ટ્રમ્પના વહીવટી તંત્ર મારફત બુધવાર તારીખ ૧૦મી જુનના ત્યાંની સંસદમાં ઈન્ટરનેશનલ રીલિજિયસ ફ્રિડમ રિપોર્ટ-૨૦૧૮ બહાર પડ્યો છે. આ ૨૭ પાનાના રિપોર્ટમાં જણાવાયું છે કે, ભારતમાં સ્વતંત્રતાના નામે જે કંઈક થઈ રહ્યું છે તેનાથી અમેરિકા ખૂબજ ચિંતિત છે. અમેરિકાના ધાર્મિક સ્વતંત્રતા આયોગ (USCRIF)ના અહેવાલમાં સીએએ, એનઆરસી કાયદાઓ, લઘુમતી સાથે ભેદભાવ, કાશ્મીરમાં કલમ ૩૭૦ની નાબુદી વગેરેની નોંધ લેવામાં આવી છે. તથા એમાં મુસલમાનો સાથે ભેદભાવ, મોબલીંગીગના બનાવો જેમાં તબરેઝ અન્શારી, પહેલુખાન વગેરેના કેશોનો ઉલ્લેખ પણ છે. આ રિપોર્ટમાં અમેરિકન સંસદ ધ્વારા માન્ય વિદેશી વિભાગના સેક્રેટરી ઓફ સ્ટેટ માઈક પોમ્પીઓ ધ્વારા રજૂ કરાયેલ અહેવાલમાં સમગ્ર વિશ્વમાં ધાર્મિક સ્વતંત્રતા થઈ રહેલા ઉલંઘનના દસ્તાવેજો રજૂ કરવામાં આવ્યા હતા.

આ અગાઉ ભારતે અમેરિકાના ધાર્મિક સ્વતંત્રતાના અહેવાલને ફગાવી દીધો હતો અને જણાવ્યું હતું કે, તેઓ વિદેશી સરકાર ધ્વારા તેના નાગરિકોના બંધારણીય રૂપે સુરક્ષિત અધિકારોની સ્થિતિ અંગે ઉચ્ચારણ કરવા માટે કોઈ કાનૂની હસ્તક્ષેપના અધિકારો જોતા નથી. વિદેશી પત્રકારો સાથેની વાતચીતમાં બ્રાઉન બેકે જણાવ્યું હતું કે છેલ્લા કેટલાક સમયથી ભારત કોમી હિંસાનું સાક્ષી રહ્યું છે. ભારતમાં જે કંઈ થઈ રહ્યું છે તેનાથી તેઓ ચિંતિત છે. ભારતમાં આ સમસ્યા ઉકેલવા ઉચ્ચ સ્તરે આંતર ધાર્મિક સંવાદ યોજવાની, આ મામલે વધુ પ્રયાસો કરવાની અને તેનું નિવારણ લાવવાની જરૂર છે. બ્રાઉન બેકે વધુમાં જણાવ્યું હતું કે ભારત આ સ્થિતિને નિયંત્રણ કરવાના પ્રયાસો ન કરે તો અમને ચિંતા છે કે, ભારતમાં હિંસા વધશે અને મોટી સામાજિક સમસ્યા સર્જાશે. આ બાબતે સકારાત્મક રીતે ચર્ચા કરવા અને પરિસ્થિતિનો અભ્યાસ કરવા આયોગની એક ટીમ ભારતનો પ્રવાસ કરવા માંગતી હતી પરંતુ વિદેશ મંત્રી જયશંકરે તેમના વિઝા નામંજૂર કર્યા છે અને જણાવ્યું છે કે, આ પગલું એટલા માટે ભરવામાં આવ્યું છે કે, સંવિધાનથી સુરક્ષા પ્રાપ્ત ભારતીય નાગરિકોના અધિકાર અંગે કોઈ પણ વિદેશી સંસ્થાને એમાં હસ્તક્ષેપ કરવાનો કોઈ આધાર બનતો નથી.

આમ ભારતમાં ધાર્મિક આંતરકલહ અને મોજુદા રાજકીય સરકારની જે વિરોધી નીતિઓ છે તેના પ્રત્યાઘાતો વિશ્વમાં પડી રહ્યા છે પરંતુ હાલની સરકારને એ અંગે કોઈ ચિંતા નથી કે એ તરફ કોઈ જરૂરી પગલાં ભરવા તરફ પણ એમનું ધ્યાન નથી.

સેવક આલીપોરીનો ગઝલ સંગ્રહ ‘ફરિયાદ’

બાટલીના સ્થાનિક કવિ જનાબ ગુલામભાઈ લુણત સેવક આલીપોરીનો ગઝલ સંગ્રહ ‘ફરિયાદ’ પ્રકાશિત થયો છે. આ એમનો બીજો સ્વતંત્ર સંગ્રહ છે. આ અગાઉ એમનો ‘પ્રવેશ’ ગઝલ સંગ્રહ પ્રકાશિત થયેલો. સંગ્રહમાં એમની ગઝલો, નઝમો અને મુક્તકોનો સમાવેશ થયો છે. આ પુસ્તકનું વિમોચન થોડા સમય અગાઉ માદરે વતન આલીપોર, ઈન્ડિયા ખાતે આલીપોર મુસ્લિમ એસોસિએશન અને કે એન્ડ બી સાર્વજનિક હાઈસ્કૂલના ઉપક્રમે યોજાયેલા સમારંભમાં વિદેશથી પધારેલા મહેમાનો, સ્થાનિક આમંત્રિતો અને શાળાના કર્મચારીગણની ઉપસ્થિતિમાં કરવામાં આવ્યું હતું. પુસ્તકનું લોકાર્પણ ભરૂચના ડેપ્યુટી કલેક્ટર શ્રીમતી યાસ્મીનબેન શેખના હસ્તે કરવામાં આવ્યું હતું. પ્રસંગોચિત ઉદબોધન કરતા ઉપસ્થિત રહેલા બાટલીના સાહિત્યકાર જનાબ અહમદભાઈ લુણત (ગુલ), આચાર્ય શ્રી સફી એમ. ઘોરા અને સંસ્થાના મેનેજિંગ ટ્રસ્ટી સલીમભાઈ પટેલે એમની રચનાઓ અને સામાજિક સેવાઓનો ઉલ્લેખ કરી બિરદાવ્યા હતા.

‘ફરિયાદ ગઝલ સંગ્રહના ગઝલકાર જ નહીં એક સાચા સમાજ સેવક પણ...’ શીર્ષક હેઠળ બોલ્ટનના ગઝલકાર જનાબ મ્હેક ટંકારવીએ આવકાર લેખમાં સેવક આલીપોરીના ગઝલ સંગ્રહની સર્જન પ્રતિભા વિષે નોંધ્યું છે કે, તૌહીદ એટલે એકેશ્વરવાદ, ઈશકે રસૂલ, સંતની સોબત, સમાજમાં પ્રવર્તતા વિષવાદો, ધાર્મિક મતમતાંતરો, એકતાનો અભાવ, મિત્રોની બેવફાઈ, સ્નેહ વિહોણા સંબંધો, વતન પ્રેમ અને વતન ઝુરાપો- આ બધા વિષયો એમની ગઝલોમાં દર્દ બનીને ઘુંટાયા કરે છે. કવિના શબ્દોમાં સેવકે તો દર્દદિલની દાસ્તાં, એની ગઝલોમાં મઢેલી હોય છે જે એમના શેરોમાં પ્રતિબિંબિત થયેલી જોઈ શકાય છે જેમકે,

ધ્યાન તું માલિકનુ ઘર, આ ફાની દુનિયા કઈ નથી

એજ સાચા રાહબર, આ ફાની દુનિયા કઈ નથી

નામ રબનું લઈને તું નિશ્ચિંત થા, ઝંઝટો ચોપાસ છે જોતો નથી

હું નથી સેવક હજી પણ નાઉમેદ,

જાગૃતિ આ કોમમાં પણ આવશે.

સુરત ઈન્ડિયાથી પ્રકાશિત થતા ગુજરાત મિત્ર દૈનિકના અક્ષરની આરાધના વિભાગમાં સેવકના ગઝલ સંગ્રહ ફરિયાદ વિશે પ્રતિભાવમાં વિવેચક ડો. પ્રોફેસર કિશોરભાઈ વ્યાસે લખ્યું છે કે, ‘કવિના આ સંગ્રહમાં માનવીય બાજુઓને સ્પર્શ આપતી ગઝલો ધ્યાન ખેંચે છે. મનુષ્ય આખરે તો એકજ છે એવો ધ્વની સાદગીમા વ્યક્ત કરતા કવિ એકજ હોવાની વાત જુદી જુદી ભાતે કરે છે. સાફ વાત કહેનારા ક્યાંથી માનીતા બને? કાયધર સાચવવાની ચિંતા કરીએ પણ નગર આખું પત્થરોનું છે એ કવિને પીડે છે.’

‘ચોતરફના વાદ વિવાદોના કારણે આવી પડેલી બરબાદી પણ કવિને ડંખે છે. જાતને જોવા તપાસવાની ગઝલો કવિએ ઘણી લખી છે. જગતની રીત અને વ્યર્થ ભાતો પર કટાક્ષ કરી શકવાની શક્તિ પણ આંખે ચડે. વસંતે નમી પડેલા ડાળ કે સૂકા પર્ણો હેઠળ છૂપાયેલી કેડી પણ કવિની આંખ જુએ છે. ટૂંકી બહેરની ગઝલોમાં કવિ સાફ કામ કરી શક્યા છે. પ્રેરક પછી બોધ આપતી રચનાઓથી તો કવિએ છેટા રહેવું જ સાફ. સરળતા, સાદગી અને મનુષ્ય પ્રેમ આ સંગ્રહનો વિષય છે. ગઝલ પ્રેમીઓને આ ફરિયાદમાં પણ કવિનો વિધાયક સૂર ચોક્કસ સાંભળવા મળશે.’

ભારતમાં તબ્લીગી કામનો વિઝાના ઉલંઘનમાં સમાવેશ

ભારતમાં પ્રવાસી વિઝા પર પ્રવેશવા માંગતા તબ્લીગી જમાતના કોઈ પણ વિદેશી વ્યક્તિ માટે અવરોધ ઊભો કરવાનો પ્રયાસ ત્યાંની સરકારે કર્યો છે. ગયા માસમાં એક મુખ્ય ન્યુઝ પેપરમાં પ્રસિધ્ધ થયેલ સમાચાર અનુસાર ભારતના ગૃહ મંત્રાલયે વિદેશી વિઝા પોલીસી માર્ગદર્શિકામાં વિઝાના ઉલંઘન માટેમાં એક ધોરણ તરીકે તબ્લીગી કામ કરવાની પ્રવૃત્તિને ઉમેરવામાં આવ્યું છે. આ ઉલંઘન માટે આવી વ્યક્તિના પ્રવેશ ઉપર ૧૦ વર્ષનો પ્રતિબંધ ઉપરાંત નવા નિયમનો ભંગ કરવા વદલ ૧૦૦ ડોલરના દંડની જોગવાઈ કરવામાં આવી છે.

આ અનુસાર જેમને કોઈ પણ પ્રકારની વિઝા અપાય હોય અથવા ઓસીઆઈ કાર્ડ ધરાવનારા વિદેશી નાગરિકોને તબ્લીગી પ્રવૃત્તિ કરવાની મંજૂરી મળશે નહીં. ધાર્મિક સ્થળોની મુલાકાત લેવા પર કે ધાર્મિક ઉપદેશ જેવી સામાન્ય પ્રવૃત્તિમાં હાજરી આપવા માટે કોઈ નિયંત્રણ રહેશે નહીં. પરંતુ ધાર્મિક વિચારધારાનો ઉપદેશ, ધાર્મિક સ્થળે ભાષણ આપવા અથવા ધાર્મિક વિચારધારાના લીફ્લેટો કે ઓડિયોનું વિતરણ જેવી પ્રવૃત્તિઓ કરવા દેવામાં આવશે નહીં. મતલબ કે ધાર્મિક કાર્યક્રમ કે બયાનમાં હાજરી પર કોઈ પ્રતિબંધ નથી પરંતુ ધાર્મિક સ્થળે કોઈ પણ પ્રકારની વિચારધારા કે ભાષણ કરવા પર પ્રતિબંધ લગાયો છે. ગૃહ મંત્રાલયે સ્પષ્ટતા કરતા કહ્યું છે કે પ્રવાસી વિઝા ઉપર ભારતમાં દાખલ થતી કોઈ પણ વ્યક્તિનો હેતુ મનોરંજન, પ્રવાસી સ્થળોની મુલાકાત, મિત્રો અને સગાઓની મુલાકાતનો જ હોવો જોઈએ. કોરોના વાયરસ વખતે માર્ચ એપ્રિલ માસમાં લોકડાઉન વખતે દિલ્હી નિઝામુદ્દીન ખાતે થયેલ ઈઝતેમામાં ઘેરાયેલ જમાતીઓને નિશાન બનાવી મિડીયા ધ્વારા આખા દેશમાં મુસલમાનો વિરૂધ્ધ નફરતની આગ ફેલાવવામાં આવી હતી

ઘણે દૂર દોડવાનું છે

ભલે ને હોય અંધારું છતાં યે ચાલવાનું છે વિકટ છે માર્ગ, મારું લક્ષ્ય મંઝિલ પામવાનું છે ઘણાં કડવા અનુભવ તો સંબંધોમાં થશે અહીંયાં કરીને લાખ યત્નો દિલને મારા ઠામવાનું છે તરસને મારી લઈને ક્યાં સુધી ફરતો રહું રણમાં નિહાળી ઝાંઝવાનાં જળ ઘણે દૂર દોડવાનું છે બધે છે પેંતરાબાજી, જમાનો કાવાદાવાનો હવે તો સાવધાનીથી અહીં પગ મૂકવાનું છે હવે દુષ્ટોનાં રૂપ લઈને અહીં ફરનારા લોકોની ભયંકર ચાલ જોઈ આપણે તો ભાગવાનું છે હૃદય તો મૌન રહીને મર્મ સમજાવી ગયું સઘળાં હવે વાણી અને શબ્દોને પડતા મૂકવાનું છે નિહાળી લે તું ‘સેવક’ જિંદગીના ભિન્ન રંગોને હવે નાટક આ જીવનનું યે તો પૂરું થવાનું છે

-સેવક આલીપોરી, બાટલી.

(કવિના ગઝલ સંગ્રહ ‘ફરિયાદ’માંથી)

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ایوان طریقت کا ایک اور ستون
فنا کی منزل سے بقاء کی منزل تک
جس کے حسن تصرف نے لاتعداد کو خدائے وحدہ لا شریک لہ کے حضور جھکا دیا۔ جس کے فیض نظر نے ایک زمانے کو عشق و غیرت رسول کی دولت لازوال سے مالا مال کیا۔۔۔۔۔ جس کے در کی گدائی سرمایہ پرستوں جاگیر داروں اور گدی نشینوں کی آستیاں بوسی اور کاسہ لیبی سے بے نیازی کی ضامن تھی۔ جس کا دامن توسل دنیا داروں کی تیغ ستم کا شکار افراد کے لئے بہترین پناہ گاہ تھی۔ جس کا اشارہ ابرو نہ جانے کتنے لوگوں کے مقدر کا صورت گر تھا۔ جس کی محبت و سنگت اسرار کی کشف، جس کی ذات ستودہ صفات انوار کتاب و سنت کے آئینہ دار، جس کی تجلیات صورت ہی نہیں حسن سیرت بھی بے مثال و بے نظیر اور جو مجھ ایسے ہزاروں بے کسوں کا قبلہ مراد تھا۔۔۔۔۔ ہاں ہاں وہی بیکر رشید ہدایت، منبع فیض کرامت، سلطان الواصلین، برکان اکالمین، مخزن اسرار حقانی، مطلع انوار رحمانی، قیوم زمانی، غوث صمدانی وارث افکار امام ربانی محبوب الذاکرین حضرت ابو الخیر الشیخ عبداللہ جان رح۔ جن کو طبقہ اولیاء میں ایک خاص مقام اور شان و عظمت حاصل تھی۔ ایسے ہی لوگوں کی صحبت و سنگت اختیار کرنا ان سے محبت کرنا ان کی سیرت کا اتباع سب نفع بخش امور ہیں۔ مولانا جامی فرماتے ہیں حدیث شریف میں ہے کہ قیامت کے دن ایک بندہ بد عملی کے سبب ناامید ہو جائے گا۔ حق سبحانہ فرمائے گا: اے میرے بندے کیا تو فلاں عارف کو پہچانتا تھا؟ وہ جواب دے گا ہاں میں پہچانتا تھا تھا۔ اللہ تعالیٰ فرمائے گا جا میں نے تجھے اس کے طفیل سے بخش دیا۔ مقام غور ہے کہ جب محض شناخت ولی و وسیلہ نجات ہے تو اولیاء کی اسی طرح بخاری و سنگت و محبت اور ان کی سیرت کا اتباع بطریق اولیٰ وجہ نجات و بخشش ہوگا۔ مسلم میں ہے کہ ایک شخص نے رسول سے عرض کیا، آپ اس شخص کی نسبت کیا فرماتے ہیں جس نے ایک قوم (مثلاً گروہ اولیاء) کو دوست رکھا مگر انکی ملاقات سے مشرف نہ ہوا۔ آپ نے ارشاد فرمایا: المرء مع من احب۔ یعنی قیامت کے دن انسان اس کے ساتھ ہوگا جس کو وہ دوست رکھتا تھا۔ ان ہی کے قدموں کی برکت سے آسمان سے بارش برستی ہے۔ بھم تظرون میں سے نباتات اگتی ہے، بلائیں دور ہوتی ہیں۔ فریادیں سنی جاتی ہیں۔ اور انکی برکت سے مدد کجانی ہے۔ اولیاء کرام وہ مبارک ہستیاں ہیں کہ جہاں ان کا ذکر ہوتا ہے وہاں بحکم قرآنی منزل الرحمۃ عند ذکر الصالحین رحمت الہی نازل ہوتی ہے۔ انہی امور کے سبب صالحین امت کے تذکرے کفارہ سینات ٹھہرائے گئے ہیں۔ ذکر الصالحین کفارۃ۔ سید الطائفہ جنید بغدادی سے دریافت کیا گیا کہ تذکرہ مشائخ سے مریدین کو کیا فوائد حاصل ہوتے ہیں؟ آپ نے فرمایا! الحکایات جند من اللہ یقوی بھا قلوب المریدین ترجمہ: حکایات مشائخ خدا کے لشکروں میں سے ایک لشکر ہے جس سے مریدین کے دل قوی ہو جاتے ہیں۔ اس پر سوال کیا گیا کہ کیا آپ کے اس قول کی صداقت پر کوئی دلیل ہے؟ فرمایا کہ ہاں اور وہ عزم و جمل کا یہ ارشاد ہے۔ وکلا نقض علیک من انباء الرسل ما نثبت بہ فوادک۔ ترجمہ: اور سب کچھ ہم تمہیں رسولوں کی خبری سناتے ہیں جس سے تمہارا دل ٹھہریں۔ اس آیت میں رب کریم اپنے حبیب کریم سے فرماتا ہے کہ ہم رسولوں کے قصے آپ سے اس لئے بیان فرماتے ہیں کہ جب آپ کو کوئی رنج و مصیبت پہنچے تو غور کریں کہ ایسی تکالیف میں ان نبیوں نے صبر و عقل سے کام لیا ہے۔ اس سے آپ کے دل میں سے ثبات و قوت و عزم پیدا ہو جاتا ہے۔

مولانا جامی علیہ رحمہ نے سید الطائفہ کے مذکورہ ارشاد کو بھارتستان میں یوں منظوم کیا ہے۔
حجوم نفس و ہوا کر سپاہ شیطانند
چو زور بردل مرد خدا پرست آرد
بجز جنود حکایات رہنمایاں را
چہ تاب آنکہ برال رہر ناں شکست آرد
اولیاء کرام کے تذکار کا ایک فائدہ یہ بھی ہے کہ جب مطالعہ کرنے والا دیکھتا ہے کہ میرے افعال و احوال ان بزرگوں جیسے نہیں تو وہ بہتری کیلئے مستعد ہو جاتا ہے۔ اور غرور و تکبر ریاد خود پسندی اور اس جیسے دیگر کمزوریاں سے بچ جاتا ہے۔ ایسے بھی بول سکتے ہیں کہ محبت میں جذبہ اطاعت کو مستحکم کرنے کا عنصر پایا جاتا ہے، چنانچہ جب اولیاء جو اعلیٰ و بلند ترین سیرت کے مالک ہوتے ہیں، کے حالات ایک قاری پڑھتا ہے تو لامحالہ ان کی محبت میں گرفتار ہو کر راہ اطاعت پر گامزن ہو جاتا ہے جو بالآخر رضائے الہی پر اختتام ہوتی ہے۔ زیر نظر تحریر بھی اسی سلسلہ زریں کی ایک کڑی ہے اس میں مہر سپہر، ولایت ماہ سائے حقیقت، محبوب الذاکرین حضور قبلہ الشیخ محمد عبداللہ جان کا ذکر جمیل ہے۔ جنہوں نے اس دھر ناپیدار میں زندگی کے دن جس حزم و احتیاط، بصیرت و فراست، راستی و پاک بازی سے گزارے کم از کم دور آخر میں اس کی مثال کم یاب ہے۔ سیرت مقدسات کا ہر ورق زریں اور ایک ایک نقش کو جلا ہے۔ مثالی علوئے استعداد، انتھک جذبہ خدمت اور شیخ کامل کی نظر کیما اثر نے اس اونچے مقام پر فائز کر دیا کہ حقیقی وارث امام ربانی ٹھہرے۔ یہی سبب ہے کہ حب خدا اور رسول اتباع شریعت و سنت، خدمت دین متین، سرکوبی فتن دور حاضر، تحفظ ناموس رسالت و ولایت اور جذبہ سر بلندی اسلام جیسے محاسن و محامد سے کچھ اس طرح متصف تھے کہ محبوب الذاکرین اور ابو الخیر جیسے القاب سے ملقب نہ ہوئے۔ آپ شریعت و طریقت کے مجمع البحرین، دور حاضر میں اسلام کے مبلغ اعظم، کتاب و سنت کے خوشنما پیکر، صدق و صفا اور بذل و عطا کے نورانی مصدر تھے، تحفظ ختم نبوت کا شعبہ ہو، سوشلزم کا فتنہ ہو، لبرل و سیکولر ازم کی واہیات ہوں، باطل فرقوں کی تیغ کشی کا میدان ہو، نئے نئے فتنوں کی گوشالی کا معاملہ ہو، اہل اسلام کی دینی و ملی غیرت کو جگانے کا پروگرام ہو، پاکستان کا لکھا کر پاکستان ہی کو ڈسنے والوں کی تیرگی کو ختم کرنا مقصود ہو، ارباب سیاست اور مقتدر حلقے کی اصلاح مطلوب ہوں، اصلاح معاشرہ کا مسئلہ درپیش ہو غرض سے ان تمام شعبہ جات میں آپ کے کارہائے نمایاں از حد لائق ستائش اور کردار مجاہدانہ، غازیانہ، حسینانہ ہے۔ یہ کہنا بالکل غلط نہ ہوگا کہ آپ کی حیات نور نہ صرف جہد مسلسل سے عبارت تھی بلکہ عبداللہ نام کی لاج رکھتے ہوئے آپ عبداللہ کی حقیقی تفسیر تھے۔ آپ کی حیات طیبہ کا ماٹو۔ بقول ہیدم وارثی۔ مر کے بھی میکدے سے ہم باہر نہ جائیں گے میکش ہماری خاک کے ساغر بنائیں گے۔ یہی سبب ہے کہ دنیا میں رہتے ہوئے بھی دنیا سے کوئی علاقہ نہ تھا آپ کی پاک و طیب حیات میں فضولیات کا ہلکا سا تصور بھی نہیں ملتا۔ چنانچہ رب کریم نے اپنے حبیب کریم کے توسل و تصدق اور خواجہ خواجگان خواجہ نواب الدین علیہ الرحمہ اور خواجہ معصوم علیہ الرحمہ کی دعاؤں سے آپ کی حیات طیبہ کو خیر و برکت کا سرچشمہ بنا دیا تھا۔ کسی اہل دل نے کیا خوب کہا
قرنہا بید کہ تا یک مرد صاحب دل شود
بایزید اندر خراساں یا ویس اندر قرن
حقیقت یہ ہے کہ ایسی پاکیزہ اور محبوب ہستیوں کی آمد سے پہلے روح فطرت انکا انتظار کرتی ہے اور ان کے وصال باکمال کے بعد زمانہ ان کے گیت گاتا ہے۔

Residents make desperate plea for change

Following the tragic murder of Bradley Stewart Gledhill in the Park Croft area of Batley, for which four men have been detained in custody to appear before Leeds Crown Court, concerns have been expressed by community members about the state of a park situated within Woodsome Estate and Jessops Park which is adjacent to both Park Croft and Healey Lane.

Residents say the parks have been used as 'dumping grounds', with glass and household rubbish scattered everywhere.

Locals also insist the parks have been used by gangs to pedal illegal substances.

West Yorkshire Police say they are taking the matter seriously and will be increasing patrols in and around Park Croft and surrounding areas.

Detective Superintendent Jim Griffiths of Kirklees Police, said: "We fully realise the concern this incident will cause in communities

in Batley and officers from Kirklees District are working to support HMET colleagues.

"Our local neighbourhood policing teams, in conjunction with our partner agencies, are working closely with our communities to understand problems and identify areas where greater support is needed.

"This incident has taken place against a backdrop of big falls in knife crime in Kirklees over the past 12 months following multiple police operations and continued proactive patrolling by colleagues from the force's Operation Jemlock team.

"These sort of offences are treated exceptionally seriously by Kirklees Police and we continue to deploy significant resources into combatting offending of this kind.

"Officers will be available within the area for local residents to liaise with directly."

Paigaam will investigate why Woodsome Estate and Park Croft are now supposedly

havens for crime.

There are many more questions that we need to ask and obtain answers for and hold the relevant people and authorities accountable.

Questions that need to be asked include:

1. What are the factors that have led to young people from our community being involved in drug related and gang activities.

2. The Community, parents, relevant organisations need to take a lead on tackling these issues and not to brush it under the carpet.

3. What have the police been doing? Have they proactively worked with the community on these issues?

4. What responsibility does the Police and Crime Commissioner take for working with and helping communities?

5. What have the Local Authority and local Councillors been doing over the last 10 years or more?

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APEX

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