

BI-LINGUAL MONTHLY PUBLISHING FROM LONDON



INTERNATIONAL Lahore

February
2020



A Magazine for Scholarly, Literary, Political, Economic and Religious Activities

www.lahoreinternational.com



EDITOR IN CHIEF
Mohiuddin Abbasi



EDITOR
Zakaria Virk

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Munazza Khan

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Amina Nuzhat

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER
Syed Mubarak A. Shah
Ph. No. 0047-91698367

ADVERTISING MANAGER
M. Sultan Qureshi
Ph. No. +1(416)433-0112

STENZOC

03. Editorial *Tyranny of the Mullahs in Iran*

04. *Why PM Imran Khan did not attend Malaysia summit?*

06. *What Pakistan can learn from BANGLADESH*

08. *Ahmadis and Kashmir*

14. *Is being a lawyer in Pakistan contingent upon one's faith?*

16. *UK: Muslim leader charts journey from persecution in Pakistan to leafy Tilford*

19. *Pakistan's Relations with Iran have remained tense and Enigmatic*

22. *US: Military training program for Pakistan resumed to strengthen defense cooperation*

24. *Some Qualities Of Leadership*

26. *Anti-headscarf law activist sues Iran in U.S. over harassment*

27. *Battle of the Ages to stop Eurasian integration*

29. *No going back on women's rights,' says -30year-old Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan*

30. *SA: Wanted: 20,000 Saudi taxi drivers (women especially welcome)*

31. *NEPAL: Khagendra Thapa Magar: World's shortest mobile man dies aged 27*

32. *The Changing Colors of Istanbul*

34.

Issue : February, 2019

Price : UK Pound 2, per copy

Annual Subscription : 24 UK Pound

E-mail : lahoreintlondon@gmail.com

Send your writeups at
m.abbasi.uk@gmail.com

Write to:

Monthly Lahore International

Phone : +44 794 007 7825

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of magazine.



Editorial

TYRANNY of THE MULLAHS in IRAN



Zakaria Virk, Editor

Last month saw some of the most strident anti-government protest in Iran, prompted by obfuscation of their military shooting down a Ukrainian airliner packed with Iranians, including 57 from Canada. That happened on Jan. 8, hours after a retaliatory missile strike aimed at U.S. forces in Iraq, which did not prompt an American military response. For three days Iranian officials knew they had shot down the airplane, while the government continued to deny the responsibility.

We give below Maryam Rajavi's, president of National Council for Resistance, remarks to encapsulate the situation in Iran. "So, shame on the corrupt and charlatan mullahs who have distressed the people of Iran. Those who falsely pray and fast, but exploit the underprivileged to the maximum extent possible. Iran's needy have reached the point where they have to sell their kidneys and corneas. Mothers have become so devastated that they sell their unborn fetuses.

Indeed, the mullahs are the worst enemies of God and His people. They inflict the worst oppression and injustice on people under the name God and Islam. The people of Kurdistan mostly work as porters due to extreme poverty. They carry heavy loads (across borders) to earn their living and yet they are shot for carrying a few bags of rice. Farmers have been deprived of water and workers' salaries are not paid.

Shame on the mullahs, who fake their faith in Islam, and deprive the people of Iran even of bread and water. In a land rich with oil and minerals, our people have to scavenge among garbage for food scraps. While the mullahs have stashed legendary wealth for themselves and their relatives, they plunder the people's savings. They have doomed

Iranian teachers and nurses to live below the poverty line, arresting and torturing them for their righteous protests.

Thousands have been arrested since the uprising and protests in December and January. A number were killed under torture or shot dead by Revolutionary Guards. Quite a few young protesters have also disappeared. They have plundered or squandered the wealth of the Iranian people. Every year, they spend billions of dollars on war and slaughter of the people of Syria. It was recently revealed that they have sent cartons filled with \$100 notes to Iraq to fund their terrorist proxies.

Indeed, the history of Islam has never seen any ruler more corrupt or criminal than the demagogues ruling today in Iran, where protesters have risen up against their injustice, for freedom and national sovereignty.

Iran's uprising erupted in late December 2017, but its waves have continued ever since, through the strikes and protests of workers, farmers, teachers, plundered people and other social strata. Iranian society is in a volatile state and protests have continued in various parts of the country.

The essential significance of the revolt is that it has opted for the regime's overthrow. The uprising in December and January heralded the defeat of Islamic fundamentalism. The protesters attacked many of the manifestations of the mullahs' religious rule. They thus showed that they do not want the mullahs' compulsory religion or religious compulsions. "We leave it to our readers to decide as to how they can help people of Iran in their struggle for freedom.



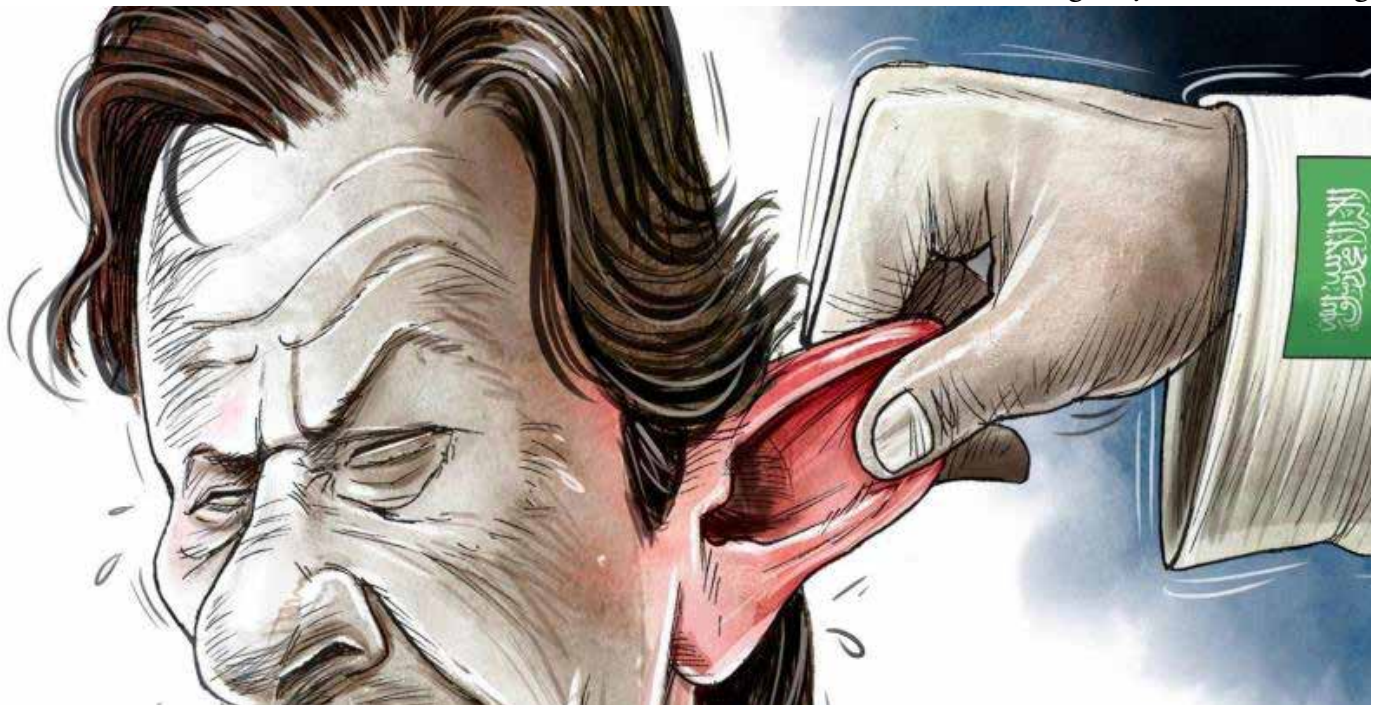
Why PM Imran Khan did not attend Malaysia summit?

By Karamatullah K. Ghori, Toronto

In the game of cricket there are many ways in which a batsman can get out. However, everyone feels sorry when a batsman gets out inadvertently hitting his own wicket while attempting to play a shot. Imran Khan of Pakistan made his debut as his country's leader with a sterling reputation garnered in his career as a cricketer. All his fans expected the Kaptan (Captain)—the sobriquet his admirers affectionately use for

and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, the host of the gathering.

But the leader most conspicuous by his absence was Imran. The Pakistani prime minister begged himself off from attending the meeting, without providing a logical reason for his last-minute no-show. What's galling to most—especially to the host of the meeting—is the fact that the conference was the brainchild of Imran, and he becomes guilty of not owning



him—to make waves, earn laurels and carve new records in his new vocation, just as he had excelled in cricket. However, Imran recently hit his own wicket and Pakistanis—friends and foes of his—are agog: Why did he do it?

An important conclave of leaders of several Islamic countries was held recently in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Billed as the KL Summit, it brought together under one roof, among other notables, President Recep Erdogan of Turkey, President Hassan Rouhani of Iran

his own invention. It was on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's annual session last September in New York that he met Erdogan and Mahathir and the three of them came up with the idea of pooling the collective efforts of like-minded Islamic states for promoting a better image of Islam—their common faith and identity.

Among the three proponents of the idea, Imran was seen as 'more equal than others' because he had just delivered a strong message to the world audience—in his

straight-from-the-heart address from the UNGA podium—to drop their pre-conceived notions of Islam being a religion or faith that promotes terrorism. Imran had made a passionate appeal to non-Muslims to shirk their ‘Islamophobia’ and rethink Islam.

Imran found receptive listeners among Muslim leaders like Erdogan and Mahathir, who shared his vision that it was their responsibility to promote and sell a healthier image of Islam. The idea of the KL Summit, bringing together thinkers, authors, social scientists, social activists, et al., from across the spectrum of the Islamic world, was germinated right there in New York among these three leaders. Mahathir offered to play host to what the leaders thought would be a watershed, a new groundbreaking assembly of Muslim intellectuals and policy thinkers.

Punditry that followed the birth of what was hailed as a noble initiative noted that all three promoters of it happened to be non-Arabs and shared a wealth of ideas on how to revive the Muslim world as a collective and dynamic force in the 21st century. There was consensus among pundits that this non-Arab initiative was an idea whose time had come, largely because the Arab world had failed to provide a path to the Islamic ummah on how to resuscitate itself. There was lamentation all around that the existing collective body, the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), had failed, miserably, to be a beacon to the Islamic world.

OIC, conceived and born in the wake of the arson attempt back in 1969 at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem—the third holiest shrine for Muslims—has done nothing spectacular in its half a century of being there. It’s as good as a dodo, a paralysed body that does precious little beyond assembling pompous Muslim leaders

under its umbrella for routine, inane meetings and issuing communiques that hardly merit any notice.

OIC has been rendered dysfunctional and moribund by the Saudis who largely bankroll it and want it to play a second fiddle to their foreign policy. Instead of working for unity of the ummah, Saudi Arabia has become its divider and spoiler—its incursion and ill-fated adventure in Yemen being ample evidence of its nihilistic role.

But then, the Saudis leaned on their ‘brother’ Imran to sabotage his attendance at KL Summit. The Saudis and the Emiratis in the UAE took fright that the KL conclave was going to become a parallel body to their subservient OIC. They couldn’t exert pressure on the leaders of Iran, Turkey and Malaysia. But Pakistan is indebted to them. Their largesse bailed out Pakistan from its economic misery. Imran is personally beholden to them.

So Imran was summoned to Riyadh for an ‘audience’ with Saudi Arabia’s de facto monarch, the incorrigible MBS. Upon his return from there it was announced that Pakistan would not be attending the KL Summit. The risible explanation for Imran shooting himself in the foot was that Pakistan wanted to be “neutral” and work as “a bridge” to unite Islam-ic countries. The message between the lines was that the ‘brave’ Kaptan had wilted, succumbed to Saudi arm-twisting and didn’t mind hitting his own wicket. Never mind the egg on his face, it’s all between ‘brothers’.

Email: K_K_ghori@hotmail.com

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2020/jan/07/imran-khan-hits-his-own-wicket-2086133.html>



What Pakistan can learn from **BANGLADESH**

By Syed Akhtar

Henry Kissinger, the secretary of state during the Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford administrations, ominously dubbed Bangladesh a basket case, and the moniker stuck, causing disappointment and dismay among Bangladeshis.

In the 1970s, the derogatory appellation painted a dire picture of a country struggling with negative growth rates, dismal export potentials, empty coffers, and, to top it all off, the burden of meeting the needs of a traumatized population. The future of Bangladesh, at the time, looked very bleak indeed.

Five decades later, Bangladesh has come out roaring. It has become one of the leading Asian economies and has, for over a decade, grown at a good clip. In fact, since 2011, Bangladesh's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

growth rate has been consistently over 6 %. In its latest report, the Asian Development Bank paints a promising picture of Bangladesh and puts it on a sure footing for achieving a growth rate of 8% in 2020, the highest in the region.

Due to the constant economic upheaval, the Bangladeshi economy will cast off the status of a least developed economy in less than five years and will join the list of developing economies. Bangladesh's story of economic success is strewn with lessons on how to exploit

resource endowments, not only to achieve economic growth, but also inculcate human development. That is why Bangladesh is higher on the human development index (HDI) than Pakistan.

It is somewhat ironic that it was Mahbubul Haq, a Pakistani economist, that developed the HDI along with Amartya Sen to assess the quality of life and standard of living of people within a country. Sen, a Nobel Laureate, called Haq an "outstanding economist and a visionary

social thinker." Haq believed that the policy outcomes that mattered the most were what a government did for its people so that they could lead a healthy and prosperous life. Taking a people-centric approach to judge the success

of governmental policies, the HDI draws attention to three dimensions of people's lives: education, health, and income.

During the last two decades, Bangladesh has made great strides with regards to improving the lives of its people. To get a sense of where it stands today, we will compare Bangladesh with Pakistan on some of the key indicators of HDI, knowing full well that such a comparison can generate controversy due to the long standing friction between the two countries.



When we look at the ranking of the two countries on the human development scale, Bangladesh is ahead on the 135th position as opposed to Pakistan's 152nd. The average life expectancy in Bangladesh is also higher at 72.3 years in comparison to Pakistan's 67.1 years whereas the mortality rate is also significantly lower in Bangladesh at 26.9 versus 61.2 in Pakistan. A child born in Bangladesh can expect to be in school longer than a child born in Pakistan at an average of 11.2 years versus 8.5 years while the mean years of schooling for females in Bangladesh is 5.3 years compared to 3.8 years in Pakistan. What is perhaps most surprising is that, according to the World Bank, Bangladesh now has a higher per capita Gross National Income than Pakistan, \$1,750 versus \$1,590 to be precise. Overall, Bangladeshis now enjoy a higher standard of living than their Pakistani counterparts.

Among the different developmental policies that Bangladesh implemented to improve the standard of living for its people, the two that stand out are the economic empowerment of women and the focus on infrastructural development. Comparatively, while both Pakistan and Bangladesh essentially exported their unemployment problems by sending people to work in the restrictive environment of the Middle East, Bangladesh also looked for ways to create employment opportunities internally for its labour force. It slowly and steadily expanded the textile sector to create employment opportunities, especially for women, who now form the backbone of the industry.

As a result, female labor now accounts for more than 90% of the workforce in the textile sector which currently employs over four million people. These jobs have not only improved the lives of families, but have also

given women discretionary purchasing power and access to financial instruments.

Bangladesh has become a textile powerhouse, exporting apparel products and producing for retailers such as Zara, Gap, Uniqlo, Hugo Boss, H&M and other multinationals. A once fledgling industry has now been transformed into a \$30 billion business which has established Bangladesh as the second largest exporter of garments and apparel products in the world after China. The experience and the network of relationships that its executives have developed along with the business prowess they have gained will be instrumental in moving Bangladesh towards the next phase of development which is the production and marketing of high value-added products.

Unfortunately, in the case of Pakistan, the data on human development looks bleak. Its story is one of lost opportunities. Once a beacon of development and modernity in South Asia, Pakistan's economy has stagnated due to rampant corruption and mismanagement.

Successive governments have failed to construct a growth-conducive economic model whereas a feudal mentality has curtailed the entrepreneurial spirit that propelled growth during the early years of Pakistan's existence in the financial, educational, healthcare, aviation, and transportation sectors. Therefore, sooner rather than later, Pakistan will need to create conducive conditions in order to achieve what Mahbub ul Haq valued – a good life for the general populace.

<https://blogs.tribune.com.pk/story/92997/bangladesh-not-a-basket-case-anymore/>



Ahmadis and Kashmir

Hamid Hussain, USA

The following is a research thesis of Dr. Hamid Hussein of Long Island, New York, who has tried to trace the true facts about the formation of All India Kashmir committee in 1931 and its significant role for infusing a new spirit in the

Muslims of Kashmir, who were suffering inhuman treatment under the Dogra rule. He has rightly termed this era “*Forgotten Chapter Of History*” because the Muslim his-



torians has purposely tried to hide the real facts, particularly about the role played by the second Head of The Ahmadiyya community and his Jamaat, for the restoration of basic human rights of the Muslims of Kashmir, who were being treated like beasts by the ruling elite. We wish to pay high tribute to Dr. Hamid Hussain for his courage and hard work on this important topic and to present the missing links of the history.

“*Independence of Kashmir can only be achieved by Kashmiris. Outsiders can only help in two ways; with financial support and by advocating their cause. Kashmiris should forget that outsiders will fight their war. Such outside help will not be useful; in fact, it will have opposite effect on the struggle for independence. If control of the struggle is in the hands of outsiders, it is possible that they will sell Kashmiris for their own interests. It is in the*

interest of Kashmiris that they should get advice as well as financial help from outsiders but never ask them to come and fight their war in Kashmir. In this case they will lose control. Long term sacrifice and not temporary emotional outburst will

serve their cause and long term sacrifice can only be done by Kashmiris”. Head of Jama'at Ahmadiyya, Mirza Bashir Uddin Mahmud, 27 September 1931

Jama'at Ahmadiyya is a sect founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908). In early twentieth century, it was a small

community with disciples mainly from Punjab; the birthplace of the founder. There was much hostility against the group in view of doctrinal differences especially when Mirza claimed to be Messiah and prophet. Agitation of orthodox clerics over decades finally culminated in an unprecedented act where Pakistan's parliament declared the sect non-Muslim in 1974. This started a wave of persecution forcing many Ahmadis to leave the country and find refuge all over the world. General hostility including outright abuse against the group is at such an abnormal state that it is impossible to have any kind of meaningful discourse about the role of Ahmadis in Kashmir as well as independence movement of Pakistan. This part of the history disappeared from almost all historical works in Pakistan.

Kashmir was a Muslim majority princely state ruled by a Hindu Dogra ruler. Kashmiri Muslims were economically poor and politically powerless. Muslims of neighboring Punjab, many with Kashmiri heritage were concerned about the plight of Kashmiri Muslims. In 1911, they established All India Kashmiri Muslim Conference (AIKMC) in Lahore.

This organization remained only on paper with no connection with Kashmiri Muslims and no program. In the summer of 1931, simmering discontent in Kashmir resulted in riots. On 25 July 1931, leading Muslims mainly from Punjab gathered at Simla and established All India Kashmir Committee (AIKC). The list of attendees of this meeting included literary and intellectual powerhouse Sir Muhammad Iqbal, head of Ahmadiyya community Mirza Bashir Uddin Mahmud Ahmad, leading Punjabi politician Sir Mian Fazal Hussain, Nawab of Maler Kotla Sir Muhammad Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Nawab of Kanj Pura Ibrahim Ali Khan, leading cleric of Delhi's Bareilvi community Khawaja Hassan Nizami and a former teacher of the leading orthodox Sunni seminary Darul-Uloom Deoband Maulvi Mirak Shah. Fazal Hussain wanted Iqbal to head the organization but on recommendation of Iqbal, Mirza Mahmud was unanimously chosen as president of AIKC. Muslims of different walks of life were members

of AIKC including politicians affiliated with different parties, lawyers, educationalists, landed aristocracy, clerics from different schools of thoughts, journalists and businessmen. At no other time, such a consensus developed among diverse Muslim population of India.

Mirza Mahmud embarked on a wide ranging



Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad

strategic journey to address Kashmir issue. He was far ahead of his times and not only grasped essential problem but also devised and implemented a well thought out long term strategic plan to achieve the goals of AIKC. The first step was to put Kashmiris on the forefront of this struggle. An organization named Reading Room Party was established in Kashmir with branches in major cities. Young Kashmiris gathered at the meetings, discussed ideas and were involved for the first time

in organized political activity. Mahmud interviewed over a dozen Kashmiris for leadership role and finally decided on a young Kashmiri Shaikh Abdullah. He was given 238 Rupees monthly stipend so that he could work full-time for Kashmir cause.

Inside Kashmir, handbills were printed and secretly distributed to the population. Propagation of Kashmir cause in India as well as advocacy in England was done by publication of reports on situation in Kashmir. Regular reports started to appear in major Muslim vernacular and English newspapers. Inside Kash-

mir, Shaikh Abdullah founded a newsletter named *Islah*. In 1932, Mahmud played a major role in establishment of All Kashmir Muslim Conference (AKMC) for organized political activity inside Kashmir.

Religious leadership of Muslims of different theological schools of thought invariably addressed political issues faced by Indian Muslims. Mirza Mahmud was the religious and administrative head of his community and major focus was well being of the community and missionary activities. Like many other Muslim groups, Ahmadi leadership defended general Muslim causes but avoided direct involvement in party politics. It was also a general practice that community's leader will not head any other organization.

In 1930s, there was a very small Ahmadi community in Kashmir. Most were concentrated in Kulgam, Baramulla, Mirpur and Poonch. In 1920s, Hindu revivalist party Arya Samaj started campaign of reverting Muslims to Hinduism in Kashmir. Ahmadi missionaries came to Kashmir to fight this campaign and general population had a positive impression of the community.

Mirza Mahmud used his position as head of his community to channel all resources of Ahmadi community towards Kashmir cause. He asked every follower to contribute towards Kashmir Relief Fund. Ahmadi lawyers came to Kashmir to work on behalf of hundreds of incarcerated Kashmiris. Medical facilities were provided to injured in clashes with police.

10 Out of sixty four members of AIKC, only six were Ahmadis. However, the most committed members were Ahmadis and more importantly, as President of AIKC, Mirza Mahmud was at the forefront. Anti-Ahmadi question became

an issue at AIKC. Some orthodox Muslim clerics had a negative view about Jama'at Ahmadiyya. Core issue of contention was claim of prophethood by the founder. Finality of prophethood of Muhammad was considered basic tenant of faith and based on this many orthodox clerics had declared Ahmadis outside of pale of Islam. Majlis Ahrar ul Islam (MAI) was at the forefront of this anti-Ahmadiyya movement in Punjab.

Mirza Mahmud wrote letters to MAI leaders Mazhar Ali Azhar and Chaudhry Afzal Haq to join this struggle, but they declined. Then he wrote letters to Iqbal, Maulana Ghulam Rasul Mahar and Maulvi Ismail Ghaznavi to work with MAI leaders and convince them to join AIKC and if their reluctance was due to Mahmud's presence as President, he was willing to resign. In fact, he said in that case, they can consider his letter as resignation. Inside Kashmir, Mahmud worked with Muslim religious leadership of Srinagar. Two main clerics were Mir Waiz Ahmadullah Hamdani head of Barelvi Khanqa-e-Muallah and Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah head of Deobandi Jamia mosque of Srinagar. Later, Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah aligned with Ahrar. He accused Abdullah of being Ahmadi resulting in clashes in the mosque.

Opponents of Ahmadis alleged that Mirza Mahmud was trying to use AIKC platform as a vehicle for Ahmadi missionary activity in Kashmir. This was first propagated by a Hindu newspaper 'Milaap' of Lahore supportive of Dogra government of Kashmir. Mahmud denied it and issued public statements to Ahmadi workers in Kashmir to refrain from any missionary activity. However, many prominent Ahmadi missionaries were also active in AIKC. Secretary of AIKC Abdul Rahim Dard was former missionary in England and in-charge of

administration Maulana Jalaluddin Shams was former missionary to Syria & Palestine. Another missionary Syed Zainul Abideen Waliullah Shah worked at foreign relations department. However, there is no evidence from Ahmadi or non-Ahmadi sources that suggest that any large scale organized missionary activity was done on part of Ahmadi volunteers.

The tangible proof is that there was no significant increase in Ahmadi population of Kashmir during this time period. Church Mission Society (CMS), by helping Indian communities through education and healthcare, hoped that natives will see Christianity in positive light and may convert. In this context,

it is not unreasonable to assume that Mirza Mahmud as head of a missionary community, hoped that by helping struggling Kashmiri Muslims, a positive attitude may win some converts for Jama'at Ahmadiyya. It is also possible that Mirza Mahmud saw his involvement in Kashmir in political context. If he could lead diverse segments of Muslim community in resolving the crisis of oppressed Kashmiris, then he could very well be given a bigger role in Muslim political struggle in India. Many Muslim organizations and personalities may have viewed the rise of Mirza Mahmud as a challenge to their own leadership.

Main opposition to Jama'at Ahmadiyya was from MAI and limited mostly to Punjab. The reason was that most Ahmadis were Punjabis. Ahrar's opposition was not only on theological grounds but also related to political competition and leadership of Muslims of Punjab. Sir

Sikandar Hayat Khan invited Mirza Mahmud and Ahrar leader Chaudhry Afzal Haq to his house to reconcile them. Afzal Haq provided the reasons for his opposition stating that 'Ahmadis had opposed me in every election, and we have decided that we will eliminate Jama'at Ahmadiyya.'

In less than two years, AIKC under Mirza Mahmud had achieved unprecedented success. Many non-Ahmadis feared that anti-Ahmadiyya campaign at this stage would have negative impact on Kashmir struggle. Twenty two leading Muslims of Punjab appealed to avoid such divisive actions at this stage.



Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah

In May 1933, Ahmadi issue came to the forefront and thirteen members of AIKC sent a letter to Mirza Mahmud asking for an urgent meeting for electing new office bearers. Three days later, Mahmud summoned an emergency meeting in Lahore where he announced his resignation at the start of the meeting. Iqbal was nominated interim president and Malik Barkat Ali as secretary. Six weeks later, Iqbal resigned from his post, but his statement was full of contradictions. He stated that "there is no difference among committee's members about general policy. Differences are on issues that are irrelevant. However, I think that committee will not be able to work with full concentration therefore I suggest that committee should be disbanded".

He also stated that Ahmadi members of the committee will follow Jama'at's leader and no one else. In the end, he suggested that "Kashmiri Muslims need help therefore if Muslims

of India want to help Kashmiris, they should establish a new Kashmir committee in a public meeting". These comments from a towering personality like Iqbal surprised many. Many prominent Muslim leaders disagreed with Iqbal on this point. This is evident by the fact that after the split, some including prominent religious personalities like Khawaja Hassan Nizami, Maulvi Mirak Shah, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Maulana Abu Zafar and Maulana Aqil ur Rahman Nadvi joined the new organization that had blessing of Mirza Mahmud rather than join hands with Iqbal. Mirza Mahmud along with many other prominent Ahmadis were also members of this new organization. These religious personalities had no special affinity for Jama'at Ahmadiyya and many opposed its doctrine on theological grounds, however, they felt that a common platform was needed to help Kashmiri Muslims.

Iqbal's own views about Ahmadiyya evolved over time. He had family connection with Ahmadiyya and had sympathetic view about the movement. He had personal relations with many leading Ahmadis and prayed with them. Even if he had theological concerns, at least until 1931, he was comfortable to nominate head of Jama'at Ahmadiyya as President of AIKC. In a letter written by Iqbal to private secretary of Mirza Mahmud in September 1930 about ten months before formation of AIKC provides the reasons why Iqbal later recommended Mirza Mahmud to head the committee. He wrote that 'your organization is most disciplined and with many committed and active members, therefore you can be very useful in serving Muslim causes'.

12

By 1933, his views had changed and now he was not able to continue that relationship even for a larger political cause. In this he was prob-

ably influenced by some Ahrar leaders. Ahrar leader Ataullah Shah Bukhari's recitation of Quran was mesmerizing. He was also a great orator and he could have a hypnotic hold on a crowd of thousands for hours. Iqbal and Bukhari had mutual affinity for each other. Iqbal's views probably changed with this interaction and he now came out against Ahmadiyya. By 1935, he asked British government to declare the community out of the fold of Islam. Jama'at Ahmadiyya had split in Qadiani and Lahori factions after the death of first successor in 1914. The Lahori faction did not consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a prophet but simply a reformer and Iqbal had continued his relations with members of Lahori faction.

By 1930s, allegation of being an Ahmadi had become a slur in Punjab. Non-Ahmadi Punjabi Muslims with family members who had become Ahmadis or had personal social relations with Ahmadis had to openly declare that they were not Ahmadis. Even Shaikh Abdullah had to declare several times that he had not become Ahmadi although he publicly thanked Ahmadis for their support. The issue had reached a point where it now had direct impact on the effectiveness of political struggle for the freedom of Kashmiris.

Anti-Ahmadi factor fractured Kashmiri leadership inside Kashmir and splintered Punjabi support outside Kashmir. In Kashmir, the religious leadership got divided. Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah joined Majlis Ahrar faction and opposed Ahmadis. On the other hand, Hamdan faction continued to cooperate with Ahmadis working for Kashmir struggle. Shaikh Abdullah's meeting with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru changed the dynamics. In view of collapse of powerful support structure of Kashmir struggle, Shaikh Abdullah looked for alternatives. Increased sup-

port of Indian National Congress (INC) and linkage of Kashmir with Indian freedom struggle diluted religious factor. Abdullah changed the name of the party to National Conference (NC). He fully aligned with INC and in turn Nehru gave him full support by linking struggle of Kashmiris with Indian freedom movement.

Shaikh Abdullah's confidant Ghulam Abbas parted ways and revived old Muslim Conference (MC). The groups opposing Ahmadis as well as Shaikh Abdullah joined MC. On national scene things were moving fast towards partition and with INC support of NC, Muslim league aligned itself with MC.

Mirza Mahmud continued in his own efforts to help Kashmiris, but they were not as effective as before where whole Muslim leadership was united on this cause. In the aftermath of partition, when first India-Pakistan war started in Kashmir in 1947-48, Pakistani Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan asked for Mirza Mahmud's help in view of his previous involvement in Kashmir. A small volunteer Ahmadi force named Furqan Force was organized and placed under the control of nascent Pakistan army.

Adil Hussain Khan in his Ph. D dissertation is correct in his assessment that prior to the leadership of Mirza Mahmud, "the committee was an unorganized group of influential and wealthy Muslims, predominantly from Punjab, who were understandably upset about the conditions of their co-religionists in Kashmir: However, "their shared sentiment did not translate into political power on the other side

of the border in Kashmir". In less than two years, AIKC under Mirza Mahmud achieved remarkable success in awakening Kashmiris, establishing a grass root infrastructure, robust public awareness campaign outside Kashmir and utilization of political and government connections of influential Ahmadis to advance

Kashmir cause. This was possible due to full attention of Mirza Mahmud and channeling of all resources of Ahmadi community on Kashmir front.

After establishment of Pakistan, anti-Ahmadiyya movement gained momentum with final excommunication declared not by a religious authority but parliament. In this environment, an important chapter of Kashmir struggle was completely erased from

nation's history. This long forgotten chapter also raises an important question that when a group is faced with a critical social and political question, should theological difference be put aside for a while until immediate crisis facing the collective community is resolved? On the other hand, if theological question is seen as existential in nature, then it will trump everything else.

"From the deepest desires; often come the deadliest hate". Socrates

Acknowledgement: Author thanks Ahmadi scholar & author Mr. Muhammad Ajmal Shahid for his input to clarify Ahmadi perspective about the subject. He was also a volunteer who served in Kashmir in 1948 with Furqan Force.



Is being a lawyer in Pakistan contingent upon one's faith?

By Ahsan Pirzada

As Muslims, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we treat non-Muslims residing in Pakistan fairly and with dignity and respect. It is therefore imperative that we safeguard the rights granted and guaranteed to them by both Islam and the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Unfortunately, we have collectively continued to do the very opposite of this, thereby actively violating not only the injunctions of Islam, but also the vision of our founding father, Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

However, before divulging on the disservice we are doing to Jinnah's legacy, we must reflect upon the important role our religious minorities have played in building Pakistan. It would be hard to name all of them since the list is too long, however, here are some names and their contributions for the country:

Iqbal Masih, who became a symbol of resistance against abusive child labour, he laid down his life for this cause when he was only 13 years old.

14 Retired justice Rana Bhagwandas, a Pakistani Hindu legal scholar who also served as the acting chief justice of Pakistan. He was a man of integrity and a patriot.

Retired group captain Cecil Chaudhary, a

Pakistani Christian fighter pilot is a veteran of the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. He received the Sitara-e-Jurat.

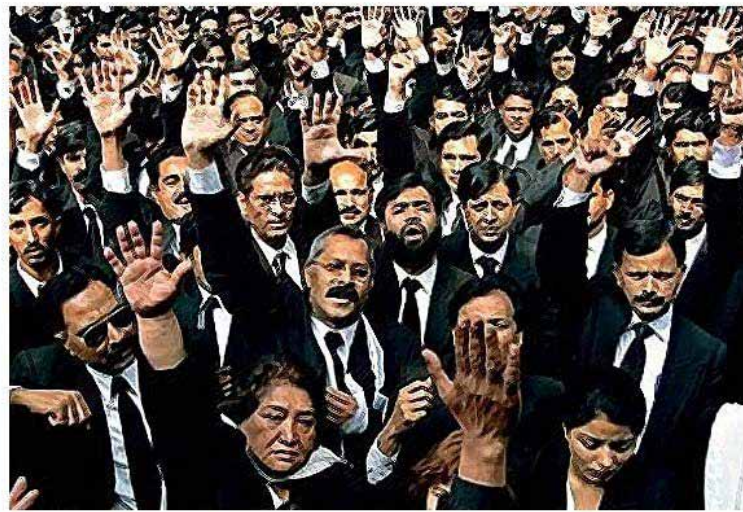
Retired chief justice Alvin Robert Cornelius served as the fourth chief justice of Pakistan and is widely recognised by our legal fraternity as Lord Denning of Pakistan.

Jamsheed Kaikobad Ardeshir Marker, a Hilal-e-Imtiaz recipient who served as Pakistan's top envoy to the US and more than a dozen other countries for a period of

more than three decades which earned him the distinction of being the world's longest serving ambassador.

Late wing commander Mervyn Leslie Middlecoat fought in the wars of 1965 and 1971 and was awarded Sitara-e-Jurat and Sitara-e-Bisalat for combating Indian fighter jets. He was killed while fighting Israeli pilots in the 1967 war on behalf of Jordan.

Late squadron leader Peter Christy was dubbed the master fighter and undeniably was one of our nation's heroes. He died while serving the country and was awarded the Tamgha-e-Jurat and Sitara-e-Jurat for his tireless contributions to the Pakistan Air Force.



However, in spite of their endless contributions, non-Muslim Pakistanis have gotten little respite from incessant discrimination and persecution. Our founding father was adamant that Pakistan should become a home for all religions, not just Muslims. Mr Jinnah in his policy speech on the 11th of August, 1947, stated that:

“...in any case Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state, to be ruled by priests with a divine mission. We have many non-Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Parsis, but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizen and will play their rightful part in the affairs of Pakistan.”

This speech is testament to the fact that Jinnah envisioned a Pakistan where every citizen would be free to participate in the affairs of the State, regardless of their religious affiliations. However, this vision has been abandoned by the State, not necessarily due to wilful negligence, but because of the copious pressure exerted by the “priests with a divine mission” that Jinnah alluded to. This was exemplified by the removal of Atif Rehman Mian from the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council on the basis of his religious beliefs.

These “priests with a divine mission” only succeed because of the support provided to them by the common man. The general populace has become increasingly intolerant, perhaps because of their narrow knowledge of Islam and an over-arching tunnel vision as to what Pakistan was created for. Even Muslims, more often than not, find themselves having to prove their adherence to their declared faith. The loyalties of federal ministers, army generals and other important public figures have been regularly questioned, simply due to their religious leaning or stance, even if they are, for all intents and purposes, Muslims.

At times, this questioning takes such an extreme

turn that the relevant individuals end up fearing for their lives. All it takes is for someone to accuse a person of committing blasphemy and immediately, a blood thirsty mob surrounds the individual’s house in an attempt to take his or her life. Consequently, most are unwilling to help such a person because alleged “abettors of blasphemers” are met with the same deadly fate.

The only way to stay safe in this country is to somehow ensure that you are recognised as a true Muslim. Regrettably, it appears that one of the ways to obtain such a certificate is through the persecution of minorities or by stripping them of their legal rights. A classic example of this is the resolution passed by the Multan Bar Association, which states that non-Muslims should not be allowed to contest elections for District Bar positions.

Although, this is merely a resolution and there have been far more deplorable attacks against minorities, the significance of this resolution cannot be ignored. The custodians of the law, who should be the advocates of the rights of minorities, have reached a new low by passing such a discriminatory resolution, knowing full well that it is in contradiction with Article 20 and Article 25 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Just as I thought that the situation could not get worst, the General Body of the Islamabad Bar Association, on 6th December, 2019 also put forth a requirement for all members to declare their faith. The existing Muslim members are now required to submit an affidavit by the 31st of January, declaring that they believe in the finality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), failure of which will lead to the suspension of their membership.

https://blogs.tribune.com.pk/story/93117/is-being-a-lawyer-in-pakistan-contingent-upon-ones-faith/?_cf_chl_jschl_tk__

UK : Muslim leader charts journey from persecution in Pakistan to leafy Tilford

By Daniel Gee

LOVE for all, hatred for none. It's a wonderful motto, not least in these times of great tension and uncertainty, and one that the Ahmadiyya Muslim community puts into practice every day.

Forced out of Pakistan by religious persecution, and denounced as heretics by other Muslim states, one could forgive the leader of the movement (and now a Tilford resident) His Holiness, the Caliph Mirza Masroor Ahmad for feeling some bitterness at his plight.

Instead, the Ahmadi teachings, and that of His Holiness, are of "peace, love and harmony" – and it is this unifying message that binds together the community's ten million followers spread across 200 countries worldwide.

Before Christmas, I had the honour of meeting His Holiness at the movement's new global headquarters in Sheephatch Lane, Tilford (on the site of the former Sheephatch School).

Over the course of 40 minutes, we chatted about persecution in his native Pakistan, the battle against extremism, how he arrived in Tilford, the role of young people, women's rights and more.

First though, I asked how it is that his community is increasing when other religions are on the wane, after it was reported in July that Christian belief has halved in Britain in 35 years while those identifying as Muslim has increased one per cent?

16

"Our work is a missionary work," he said. "It was foretold by the prophet of Islam, that in the latter days a person will come to revive Islam. We believe that person has come, and the title



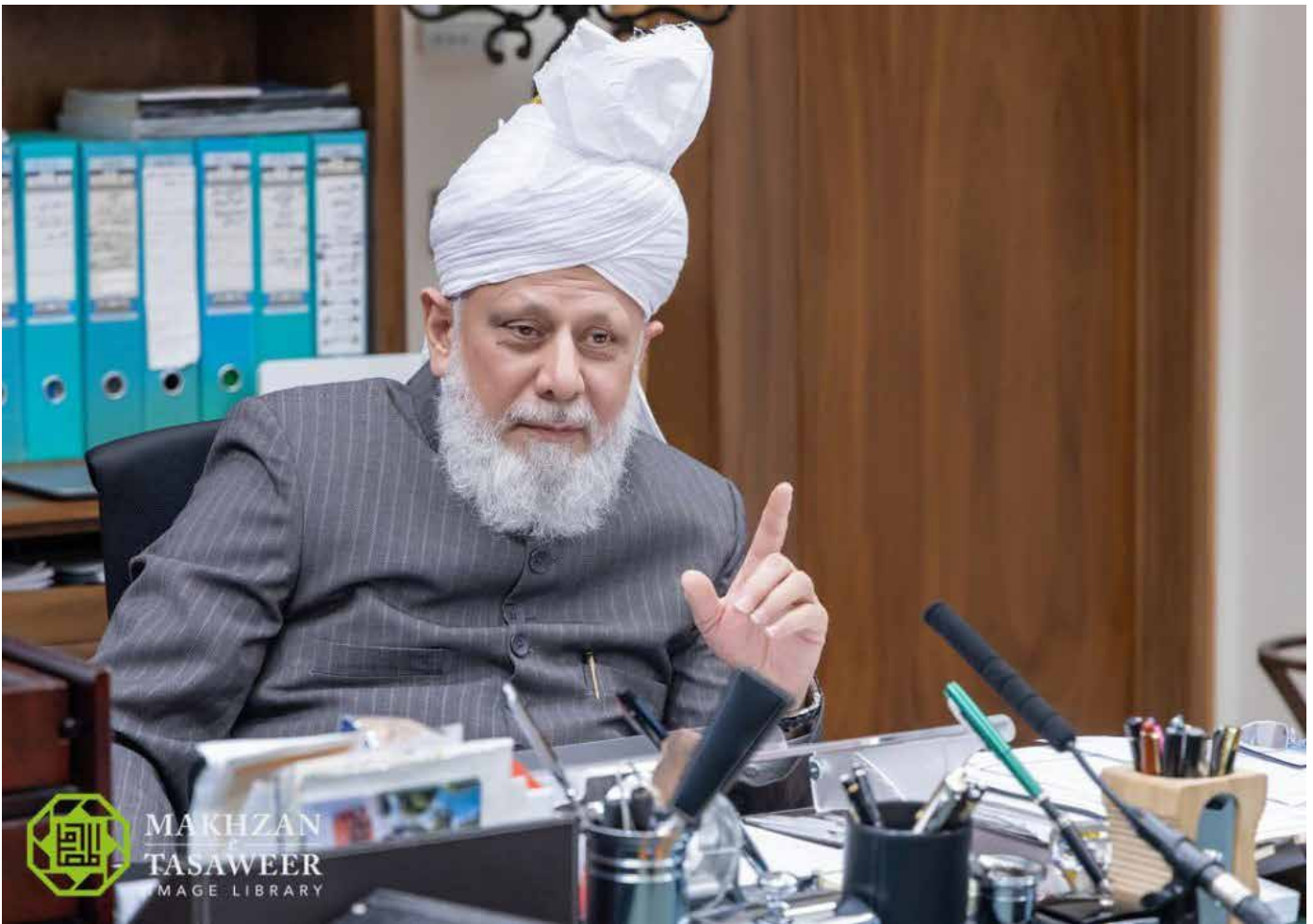
His Holiness, the Caliph Mirza Masroor Ahmad and the Herald's Daniel Gee

of the person is Messiah and Mahdi. "He is the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, and came to revive Islam and spread the true message of Islam, which according to our understanding, and what we have read in the Holy Quran, is peace, love and harmony.

"This is what we are spreading. And we are trying to gather Muslims on one hand so that they follow the teachings of Islam and spread the message of Islam, but also to other faiths and other people of the world – even those who do not believe in God. And this is how our community is increasing. This is our mission."

His Holiness' election as the fifth caliph of the worldwide Ahmadiyya movement in London in 2003 marked the first time in its history the community had appointed a new leader outside of the Indian subcontinent – and from the very outset of his reign, he found himself forced into exile from his native Pakistan.

Ahmadis have been subject to various forms of religious persecution and discrimination



since the movement's inception in 1889. But this escalated in 1974, when constitutional changes in Pakistan criminalised the religious practises of Ahmadis by preventing them from claiming they are Muslim or from "behaving" as Muslims.

"As long as that law prevails, the leader of the Ahmadiyya community cannot go back to Pakistan," his Holiness continued, adding it remains his dream, and that of his followers, that one day they can return home.

"The majority of Muslims are against us," he added. "They say we are misconstruing the sayings of the Prophet of Islam because, according to them, no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet of Islam. But we say that subordinate prophets can come, and that this was prophesied by the Holy Prophet of Islam. "Those are the charges leveled against our community, and this is why we are facing difficulty in Pakistan and some other Muslim

countries."

The Ahmadi community has also played an active role in denouncing extremism globally, and His Holiness is forthright in his view that Islam is a peaceful religion and those committing acts of terrorism are not following the true teachings of his faith.

"These people, extremists, those who are committing brutalities in the name of Islam, are actually misconstruing the teaching Islam and defaming the name of Islam. Islam is a peaceful religion, so much so that the Quran says that even a person who says to you 'salaam' (peace) then you have to reply in the same way.

"Those who are committing all these brutalities, they have their own vested interests. It has nothing to do with the true teaching of Islam. "It's clear in the Holy Quran that there's no compulsion in religion or even punishment for blasphemy. It has never said in the Quran that any person who leaves Islam should be

beheaded, as extremists believe. I don't know where did they get this commandment from? "They are just defending the name of Islam for their own religious interests. "Jihad, for example, means struggle. And the Holy Prophet of Islam said the best jihad is to reform your inner self – that is the true jihad. "And that is why we say that this was the right time for the person to come to revive the true teaching of Islam."

His Holiness also believes young people have a key role to play in combating extremist views, and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) is key to spreading his movement's counter-message of Love for All.

In December, it was reported that AMYA raised more than £1 million for charity in 2019 – and in recent editions the Herald has reported on a busy festive season for young AMYA members locally, including litter-picks, care home visits, donations to foodbanks and feeding the homeless.

"We try to teach our children from a very young age the right way to live their lives according to the teaching, and involve them in our activities to serve the people, to serve mankind and teach good morals to them. "That is the lesson to take, to live for their whole lives, and part of the training is to keep them away from extremism."

A new era in the history of the Ahmadiyya community began in May when His Holiness delivered his first weekly Friday sermon from the new Mubarak Mosque in Tilford, broadcast live around the world on the Ahmadi's own satellite TV network MTA International.

But why relocate the community's global headquarters from London to Tilford?

"It's pollution free!", said His Holiness, adding: "When my predecessor migrated from Pakistan, immediately after his arrival here, they started

searching for some piece of land. Fortunately, this area was available at that time and he liked it, and the council here also agreed to give that area to a religious community. And I like this area too.

"Do you know the history of Sheephatch Lane? You see, in olden days, Jews came here to settle and during the raining season used to keep their sheeps here on the higher ground. So that is why the name was given to this area – Sheephatch Lane.

"I have asked somebody to search more on it, and we shall write the history of this area. Right from the very beginning."

The Ahmadiyya community relocated its annual Jalsa Salana convention from Tilford to Oaklands Farm in East Worldham, near Alton, in 2004 to accommodate a growing number of attendees – and the event now attracts around 40,000 people from all over the world.

"In Pakistan, they have enacted the law against Ahmadis and they are declaring us not Muslim for the purpose of law and constitution, and say you cannot take part in the election of the country as a citizen of Pakistan.

"You see, state has interfered in this way, but what has law and constitution to do with religion?"

But what about the rights of women? In October, His Holiness delivered a keynote address to UNESCO stressing the importance of ensuring that girls are educated and given equal opportunities as boys. And yet men and women remain segregated at Jalsa Salana.

To Read More

<https://www.haslemereherald.com/article.cfm?id=139142&headline=Long%20read:%20Muslim%20leader%20charts%20journey%20from%20persecution%20in%20Pakistan%20to%20leafy%20Tilford>

Pakistan's Relations with Iran have remained tense and Enigmatic

By Nadeem Piracha

The assassination of the controversial major general of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard, Qassem Soleimani, by the equally controversial government of US President Donald Trump, has put Pakistan into a spin. A minister in PM Imran Khan's government announced that Pakistan would side with Saudi Arabia, the oil-rich kingdom that is a firm American ally and strongly opposed to Iran.

However, the spokesperson of the Pakistan

of religious militancy and extremism, that eventually mutated and turned anti-state.

Indeed, this must be on the minds of the state and government of Pakistan for them to declare their neutrality. But there is a lot more to Pakistan's ambiguity in this context. And I use the word ambiguity because relations between Iran and Pakistan have largely remained abstruse, especially in the last 40 years or so. Rand Corporation's 2014 reader



military's Inter-Services Public Relations wing and then Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi were quick to announce that Pakistan would remain neutral in case hostilities intensify between Iran and the US.

Pakistan was a frontline proxy state in the US and Saudi-funded 'Islamist' insurgency against Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s. By the time Soviet troops left Afghanistan in the late 1980s, the fallout of that war greatly impacted Pakistan, deepening sectarian fissures in the country and aiding the mushrooming

Iran's Influence in Afghanistan describes the relationship between Pakistan and Iran as 'a complex mix of cooperation and peer rivalry'.

Iran is a Shia Muslim-majority country headed by a powerful Shia clergy, which came to power through a revolution in 1979. According to Andreas Rieck's 2016 book *The Shias of Pakistan: An Assertive and Beleaguered Minority*, Pakistan has a significant Shia minority. Estimates from 2018 suggest 20 to 25 percent of Pakistan's population is Shia. And according to Jacquelyn K. Davis



in Anticipating a Nuclear Iran, many of the Pakistani Shia support Iran's post-1979 political and ideological set-up.

Until the mid-1970s, Pakistan enjoyed a seamless relationship with Iran. In fact, Pakistan was closer to Iran than it was to Saudi Arabia. Iran, a modern pro-US monarchy, was one of the first countries to recognise Pakistan when it was formed in August 1947. Also, the Shah of Iran became the first major foreign head of state to visit Pakistan in 1950.

During the 1965 Pakistan-India war, when the US had suspended all military aid to both India and Pakistan, Iran sent nurses, medical supplies and 5,000 tons of petroleum to Pakistan. As an oil-rich country, Iran also threatened to impose an embargo on oil supplies to India.

In the 2015 edition of the journal *International Affairs and Global Strategy*, M. Saqib Khan writes that, to sidestep the US and European arms embargo imposed on India and Pakistan during the war, Iran bought 90 Sabre fighter jets from West Germany and sent them to Pakistan.

20 Iran saw Pakistan as a modern extension of Persian culture in South Asia because of the role this culture and language had played during Muslim rule in India between the 13th and

19th centuries. But since the Shah's Iran was known as 'America's policeman in Asia', it also tried to insulate Pakistan from the left-leaning 'Third-Worldism' — an idea first formulated by the charismatic Arab nationalist leader Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and the 'socialist' Indian PM Jawaharlal Nehru. Iran made sure that Pakistan remained firmly in the American orbit during the Cold War.

The state of Pakistan admired Iran's economic and social modernity and tried to emulate it. In his essay, "Pakistan As A Factor in Indo-Iranian Relations", for the December 1974 issue of *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, L.K. Choudhary wrote that, during the 1971 Pakistan-India war, Iran again sidestepped an arms embargo on Pakistan and supplied it with military equipment. The *Times of India* quoted the Shah as saying, "Pakistan and Iran are like one soul in two bodies."

In 1973, when a Baloch insurgency broke out in Balochistan, which shares a border with Iran, the Shah provided lethal American-made combat helicopters to Pakistan so that Baloch insurgents operating in the remote areas near the border could be eliminated. This way Iran also eliminated the threat of the insurgency spilling into Iran's Baloch-majority areas.

Relations between the two countries began to somewhat recede when the populist government of Z.A. Bhutto in Pakistan attempted to formulate an international 'Muslim bloc' in 1974. The planned bloc also included 'enemies' of the Shah, especially 'radical' Soviet-backed Arab regimes, such as Libya, Iraq, Syria, Algeria and the erstwhile South Yemen. Therefore, the Shah was the only major Muslim head of state to decline attending the 1974 Islamic Summit in Lahore, organised by the Bhutto government.

In 1977, the Bhutto regime was toppled in a reactionary military coup by Gen Ziaul Haq. So when the Shah's regime fell in 1979, and was replaced by a radical theocracy, Pakistan became the first country to recognise the new government. But the refreshed relations between the two countries, on the basis of Islam, soon began to nosedive from 1981 onwards.

From the mid-1970s, Saudi Arabia, buoyed by increasing oil prices, had begun to aggressively expand its circle of influence with the power of the so-called 'petrodollar'. It also started to outpace Iran in matters of providing economic aid to Pakistan, which came with the condition of adopting the Arab culture and faith as prescribed by Saudi Arabia.

Iran's Shia theocracy began to be seen as a threat by the puritanical Saudi political and religious establishment — especially when Iran initiated the rather unabashed export of its version of anti-Saudi and anti-US 'political Islam' to other Muslim countries.

In the 1980s, Pakistan accepted hefty financial and military aid from the US and Saudi Arabia during the anti-Soviet insurgency in Afghanistan. This money was also used to

form radical Sunni indoctrination outlets and militant outfits to supplement Afghan militant groups. But many such outfits eventually turned anti-Shia and thus anti-Iran. This saw Iran bankroll militant Shia groups within Pakistan. The result was deadly violence, clashes and riots between Saudi and Iranian proxies in Pakistan.

Even though Pakistan declared neutrality during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, the Zia regime increasingly galvanised Pakistan towards the Saudi and American orbit. Pakistan sent 40,000 soldiers to Saudi Arabia in case the conflict spread to the kingdom. A cultural consequence of this was the 'Saudiization' of Pakistan and the steady erosion of Persian culture; after the 1979 revolution in Iran, it began being seen as 'Shia culture'.

Ever since 1981, Pakistan's relations with Iran have remained tense and enigmatic. Iran has often accused Pakistan of backing radical anti-Iran Sunni groups operating near the Pak-Iran border, and Pakistan has expressed concern that anti-Pakistan groups backed by India have been allowed by Iran to operate near the same border.

Yet, not once have the two countries come close to fighting a war against each other. Soleimani was understood by Islamabad as being an 'anti-Pakistan hawk.' Pakistan, having frenzied borders with India and Afghanistan, and only recently managing to vanquish the extreme consequences of its participation in the anti-Soviet Afghan insurgency, has wisely decided to declare neutrality in the US-Iran conflict. More so, it has downplayed the fact that Soleimani was no hero to Pakistan.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1527469/smokers-corner-pakistan-and-irans-thin-red-line>



US: Military training program for Pakistan resumed to strengthen defense cooperation

President Donald Trump authorized the resumption of Pakistan's participation in a US military training and educational program in order to strengthen military-to-military cooperation on shared priorities and "advance US national security", senior US diplomat Alice Wells said on Saturday.

"The overall security assistance suspension for Pakistan remains in effect," said a tweet by Wells, the in-charge of South Asia affairs at the US State Department. The decision to resume Islamabad's participation in the coveted International Military Education and Training Programme, or IMET — for more

than a decade a pillar of US-Pakistani military ties — was first announced by the State Department last month.

However, the announcement has been reiterated by Acting Assistant Secretary Wells a day after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo reached out to Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa in the aftermath of the assassination of top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani, vowing to remain firm against Iran.

The conversation, which was part of the secretary's telephonic contacts with leaders around the world, was disclosed by Pompeo on Twitter hours after the Foreign Office expressed "concern" about peace and stability in the Middle East.

The resumption of IMET for Pakistan, more than a year after it was suspended, underscores warming relations that followed meetings last year between US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Imran Khan. Washington also

has credited Islamabad with helping to facilitate negotiations on a US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The State Department administers the IMET. It was a small facet of US security aid programmes for Pakistan worth some \$2 billion that remain suspended on orders that Trump abruptly issued in January 2018 to compel the country to crack down on militants. Trump's decision,

announced in a tweet, blindsided US officials.

A State Department spokeswoman had earlier said in an email that Trump's 2018 decision to suspend security assistance authorised "narrow exceptions for programmes that

support vital US national security interests". The decision to restore Pakistani participation in IMET was "one such exception", she said. The programme "provides an opportunity to increase bilateral cooperation between our countries on shared priorities", she added. "We want to continue to build on this foundation through concrete actions that advance regional security and stability."

IMET affords spaces to foreign military officers at US military education institutions, such as the US Army War College and the US Naval War College.

Pakistan's suspension from the programme in August 2018 prompted the cancellation of 66 slots set aside that year for Pakistani military officers in one of the first known impacts of Trump's decision to halt security assistance.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1526230/military-training-programme-for-pakistan-resumed-to-strengthen-defence-cooperation-us>



UK MUSLIM POPULATION PASSES 3 MILLION MARK

The Muslim population of England has passed the three million mark for the first time, according to estimates prepared by Whitehall. They said that Muslims are the fastest-growing faith group in the country – while allegiance to Christianity continues to decline.

The figures were produced by the Office for National Statistics as part of a research project to try for the first time to make regular assessments of the size of different ethnic and religious groups.

Until now religious and ethnic minority populations could be gauged only once a decade using the results of the full-scale ten-yearly national census.

The Muslim population of England has passed the three million mark for the first time (file image)

According to the ONS assessment, Christians continue to decline in number, but the drop in allegiance to Christianity may be slowing.

Among other faith groups, the share of Hindus in the population has climbed slightly, while the proportion of Sikhs has fallen by a similar small amount.

The scale of the Jewish and Buddhist shares of the population have remained stable, the report said.

The share of people who say they have no religion at all or who will not discuss their faith has risen to almost a third of the English population, an increase almost certainly a result of the fall-off in Christian belief.

The ONS also estimated that the proportion of

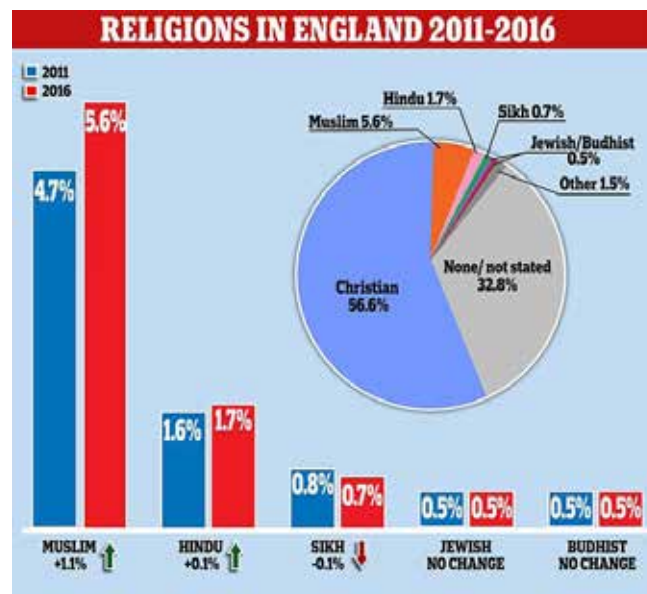
people in England who say they follow a religion other than a major faith more than trebled between 2011 and 2016.

The figures were produced by the Office for National Statistics as part of a research project. The results are shown on the chart above

The increase may again be a result of people searching for new beliefs after becoming disillusioned with Christianity.

The new figures suggest that in 2016 – five years after the 2011 national census – there were 3,138,000 Muslims in England and Wales, up by more than 400,000 from 2.7 million over the five years. This was an increase of roughly 16 per cent.

In England alone, the ONS estimates said, there were 3,092,000 Muslims



in 2016.

As a share of the population of England, the assessment indicated that the Muslim faith group made up 5.6 per cent in 2016 against 4.7 per cent in 2011.

The research report said: 'There is a decline for the Christian group, though it remains the largest group in England.

'The lower proportion of the population in the Christian group is counteracted by higher proportions of all the other groups, with the largest increases seen for the Muslim, none or not stated, and other faith groups.'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7850073/Muslim-population-England-passes-three-million-mark-time.html>

SOME QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

By Air Marshal Zafar Chaudhry Kahlon, Lahore (1926-2019)

I wrote an article captioned "Some aspects of Leadership" in which I emphasized the need for an independent thinking at all levels, free and frank expression of views in appropriate form and manner and extension of courtesy and accommodation to one's colleagues particularly junior.



Leadership is a complex quality made up of several human traits and attributes. The essence of leadership lies in not only acquiring these attributes but also in striking the right balance between them. In other words, the leader should develop a wholesome personality – one which will almost instinctively react appropriately to different and varying situations. In this article, I will discuss two character attributes.

Courtesy

In a military service, instructions and orders must be given in a clear and direct manner, and of course nothing short of immediate and total obedience is acceptable. This is only right, as strict discipline is vital for the efficient working of a military organization and a lack of it will only result in disaster. This does not mean that the atmosphere we create around us during our daily work should necessarily be cold, formal and devoid of any warmth of friendliness and human feelings.

A little thought will show that giving and receiving of orders occupies only a small portion of one's working time. Most of our time, regardless of rank and appointment, is spent in discussion, study of problems, persuasion of colleagues and in the actual performance of our

primary duty: flying, maintenance, administration or other tasks supporting these activities. So, even if we accept the orders must be given in a cold and impersonal manner (and this is open to doubt), we still find that most of our time is taken up activities in which the type of personal relationship we establish

with our colleagues has a profound bearing on the outcome of our effort. Politeness and courtesy will always ensure a better response from "the other fellow" and secure his willing cooperation. This will establish a cheerful healthy atmosphere, resulting in greater efficiency.

Some people are inclined to imagine that courteous behavior towards one's subordinates is a demonstration of weakness or lack of confidence. Surely, nothing can be more wrong; in fact, courtesy is born of confidence in oneself and the knowledge that one can communicate successfully with one's subordinates, without employing the prop of a curt manner. Lack of courtesy and overbearing conduct indicate either a lack of confidence or downright bad manners – both highly undesirable attributes and, therefore, incompatible with good leadership.

We sometimes come across people who are almost servile towards their superiors but tyrants for their subordinates. It has been well said that the greater the variance between a person's attitude towards his superiors and subordinates, the poorer is his character. True courtesy, like honesty, is a part of one's moral make-up; one cannot switch it ON and OFF at will- and those who do, only reveal the shallowness of their

character and demonstrate a perverted sense of values.

However, it is obvious that, human nature being what it is, there will be many occasions when a tick off or dressing down will not only be desirable but absolute necessary. But this does not mean that one should cultivate a rude or rough manner, which only detracts from one's gentlemanly qualities and in the long run, can only be a hindrance in the performance of one's duties.

On the other hand, when a courteous person employs a firm or harsh tone, his admonition registers immediately and the desired effect is obtained instantly. This is something which a haughty person can never achieve; his admonition is taken as part of his normal manner and all it produces is a shrug of the shoulders by those around him. Politeness established goodwill and ensures a prompt and sympathetic response; rudeness only antagonizes others and weakens the spirit of cooperation, this impairing efficiency. Courtesy therefore is not only an intrinsic virtue but also a sound investment.

Independent Thinking

Good leadership is impossible unless the leader possesses both the capacity and inclination to think independently and has confidence in his judgment. Mere collection of facts and figures cannot, by itself, guarantee that such knowledge will necessarily be put to the best possible use. This can be assured only if one has an analytical mind, a sense of proportion and the capacity to think for oneself. If this were not so, research work, dictionaries and computers – and not men – would have been the most successful leaders of the world.

Unfortunately, a great deal of misunderstanding

exists regarding the apparent contradiction between the dictates of discipline and independent thinking. A bit of reflection will show that these two qualities are not at all incompatible; in fact, they are almost complementary. Discipline, an all-important requirement, should not be understood to mean regimented thinking and servile behavior towards one's superiors.

The habit of independent thought and reflection is a part of one's mental make-up and, unless cultivated in the early stages, it will never develop sufficiently. Bridling the thinking of young officers today can only result in rendering ineffective leadership of tomorrow.

Not infrequently, one observes around a conference table that subordinates are reluctant to express their views till they have an inkling of the way the chairman is inclined and should they be so unfortunate to have calculated wrongly, they lose no time in aligning themselves with the views of chairman.

Independent thinking and free expression of one's views at an appropriate juncture are indispensable qualities for one who wears an officer's uniform, no matter how junior. Let us be polite and correct, but not servile and submissive, for this will inevitably lead to stifling of initiative and independent thinking – qualities no good leader can without.

This article has attempted to highlight the importance of only two aspects of leadership qualities. Leadership is many other things as well.

(Excerpt from the *An Airman Remembers* by Zafar Chaudhry, PAF Book Club 1993, pp. 92-96- Ferozsons Lahore)

Anti-headscarf law activist sues Iran in U.S. over harassment

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — An Iranian-American activist famous for her campaign against the Islamic Republic's mandatory headscarf, or hijab, for women has sued Iran in U.S. federal court, alleging a government-led harassment campaign targets her and her family. Masih Alinejad's lawsuit seeking monetary damages comes in the aftermath of nationwide protests in Iran over spiking gasoline prices that reportedly killed at least 208 people in November.



Dissent continues as Iranian authorities separately said Thursday they broke up a plot to cause a gas explosion at a student dormitory at a Tehran university.

But even before the latest unrest, authorities had already announced that women face a possible 10-year prison sentence for sending videos to Alinejad's "White Wednesday" civil disobedience campaign against the mandatory head covering.

The harassment, including the imprisoning of her brother, was to "preclude Ms. Masih Alinejad from continuing her career as a journalist, author, and political activist working to criticize the Iranian government and bring international attention to the regime's human rights abuses, in particular women's rights," alleges her lawsuit, filed on Monday in Washington.

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Alinejad, who recently published an autobiography, fled the country after the disputed 2009 presidential election and crackdown. She is a prominent figure on Farsi-language satellite channels abroad that critically view Iran and has worked as a contractor for U.S.-funded Voice of America's Farsi-language network since 2015, according to the lawsuit.

Alinejad, who lives in Brooklyn, became a U.S. citizen in October.

Her "White Wednesday" and "My Stealthy Freedom" campaigns have seen women film themselves without hijabs in public in Iran, which can bring arrests and fines. But there have been signs of women increasingly pushing back against the requirement.

During a trip to Iran in July, an Associated Press journalist spotted about two dozen women in the streets without a hijab over the course of nine days. Many other women opted for loosely draped colorful scarves

that show as much hair as they cover.

While there have been women fined and arrested, others have been left alone as Iran struggles with economic problems and other issues under re-imposed U.S. sanctions following President Donald Trump pulling out of Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

In recent weeks, Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized and began torturing her brother Alireza Alinejad-Ghomi, the suit alleges.

State television officials and security forces have pressured her mother as well, who at one point "threatened to pour gasoline on herself and set herself on fire" during a confrontation, according to the suit. Later, however, her mother called and disowned her over the telephone, "knowing that the phone lines in Iran are not secure and that she was essentially making a public statement that could be used against Ms. Alinejad at any time," the suit said.

Alinejad seeks monetary damages in the lawsuit. Her suit comes after a U.S. federal judge awarded Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian and his family nearly \$180 million over his imprisonment and torture in Iran. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/anti-headscarf-law-activist-sues-iran-in-u-s-over-harassment>

Battle of the Ages to stop Eurasian integration

Coming decade could see the US take on Russia, China and Iran over the New Silk Road connection

By Pepe Escobar

The Raging Twenties started with a bang with the targeted assassination of Iran's General Qasem Soleimani.

Yet a bigger bang awaits us throughout the

Hybrid War techniques – carrying inbuilt 24/7 demonization – will proliferate with the aim of containing China's "threat," Russian "aggression" and Iran's "sponsorship of terrorism." The myth of the "free market" will continue to drown under the imposition of a barrage of illegal sanctions, euphemistically defined as new trade "rules."



decade: the myriad declinations of the New Great Game in Eurasia, which pits the US against Russia, China and Iran, the three major nodes of Eurasia integration.

Every game-changing act in geopolitics and geoeconomics in the coming decade will have to be analyzed in connection to this epic clash. The Deep State and crucial sectors of the US ruling class are absolutely terrified that China is already outpacing the "indispensable nation" economically and that Russia has outpaced it militarily. The Pentagon officially designates the three Eurasian

Yet that will be hardly enough to derail the Russia-China strategic partnership. To unlock the deeper meaning of this partnership, we need to understand that Beijing defines it as rolling towards a "new era." That implies strategic long-term planning – with the key date being 2049, the centennial of New China.

The horizon for the multiple projects of the Belt and Road Initiative – as in the China-driven New Silk Roads – is indeed the 2040s, when Beijing expects to have fully woven a new, multipolar paradigm of sovereign nations/partners across Eurasia and beyond, all connected by an

interlocking maze of belts and roads.

The Russian project—Greater Eurasia—somewhat mirrors Belt & Road and will be integrated with it. Belt & Road, the Eurasia Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank are all converging towards the same vision.

Realpolitik

So this “new era”, as defined by the Chinese, relies heavily on close Russia-China coordination, in every sector. Made in China 2025 is encompassing a series of techno/scientific breakthroughs. At the same time, Russia has established itself as an unparalleled technological resource for weapons and systems that the Chinese still cannot match. At the latest BRICS summit in Brasilia, President Xi Jinping told Vladimir Putin that “the current international situation with rising instability and uncertainty urge China and Russia to establish closer strategic coordination.” Putin’s response: “Under the current situation, the two sides should continue to maintain close strategic communication.”

Russia is showing China how the West respects realpolitik power in any form, and Beijing is finally starting to use theirs. The result is that after five centuries of Western domination – which, incidentally, led to the decline of the Ancient Silk Roads – the Heartland is back, with a bang, asserting its preeminence.

On a personal note, my travels these past two years, from West Asia to Central Asia, and my conversations these past two months with analysts in Nur-Sultan, Moscow and Italy, have allowed me to get deeper into the intricacies of what sharp minds define as the Double Helix. We are all aware of the immense challenges ahead – while barely managing to track the stunning re-emergence of the Heartland in real-time.

In soft power terms, the sterling role of Russian diplomacy will become even more paramount – backed up by a Ministry of Defense led by Sergei

Shoigu, a Tuvan from Siberia, and an intel arm that is capable of constructive dialogue with everybody: India/Pakistan, North/South Korea, Iran/Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan.

This apparatus does smooth (complex) geopolitical issues over in a manner that still eludes Beijing.

In parallel, virtually the whole Asia-Pacific – from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean – now takes into full consideration Russia-China as a counter-force to US naval and financial overreach.

Stakes in Southwest Asia

The targeted assassination of Soleimani, for all its long-term fallout, is just one move in the Southwest Asia chessboard. What’s ultimately at stake is a macro geoeconomic prize: a land bridge from the Persian Gulf to the Eastern Mediterranean.

Last summer, an Iran-Iraq-Syria trilateral established that “the goal of negotiations is to activate the Iranian-Iraqi-Syria load and transport corridor as part of a wider plan for reviving the Silk Road.”

There could not be a more strategic connectivity corridor, capable of simultaneously interlinking with the International North-South Transportation Corridor; the Iran-Central Asia-China connection all the way to the Pacific; and projecting Latakia towards the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

What’s on the horizon is, in fact, a sub-sect of Belt & Road in Southwest Asia. Iran is a key node of Belt & Road; China will be heavily involved in the rebuilding of Syria; and Beijing-Baghdad signed multiple deals and set up an Iraqi-Chinese Reconstruction Fund (income from 300,000 barrels of oil a day in exchange for Chinese credit for Chinese companies rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure). To read more <https://www.asiatimes.com/2020/01/article/battle-of-the-ages-to-stop-eurasian-integration/>

No going back on women's rights,' says 30-year-old Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan

Highlighting her government's role in the advancement of women's rights, Naheed Esar, 30-year-old deputy foreign minister of Afghanistan had said women in Afghanistan are now in leading roles. Speaking to WION's diplomatic correspondent, Sidhant Sibal, the deputy foreign minister of Afghanistan lauded New Delhi's role in the advancement of the cause. She was forced to flee her country under Taliban rule and after coming back played an important role in reaching out to women especially women who suffered during Taliban rule and decades of strife.



Esar is fluent in Pashto, Dari, English, and Hindi. How do you see India-Afghanistan relations? Naheed Esar: The relationship between India and Afghanistan goes back to thousands of years. We share culture, we share values, we share the same morals and it's a heart to heart connection between Indians and Afghans

On India-Afghan ties, the role you would like to see of New Delhi in the future? Naheed Esar: India has supported Afghanistan in various areas. India has also committed to about \$3 billion to Afghanistan and more importantly, they have focused on fundamental projects, fundamental areas -- education, medical area, and hospitals. Because we are shifting from aid-dependent country to being a self-reliant country, and that was one of the reasons we started our consulate general in Hyderabad to invest more in trade, in the economy. In 2017 we started the air corridor, 22 items we exported. For the future, we are shifting on economic foreign policy so we can expand to that area.

Being a young minister in the Afghan government, how do you hope to change Afghanistan? Naheed Esar: Afghanistan is probably the youngest country in the world with 65% of people constituting the

young generation. Especially in the past 5 years, we have a young generation in the leading position. Before that, you could not see Afghan women and young Afghan women representing their generation at the Afghan foreign ministry. I am very much grateful to the govt for believing in the young generation and believing in women.

How has the role of women increased in the last two decades? Naheed Esar: The biggest difference I see in women's roles in the government is there is a shift in rather a symbolic role to a technocrat or proper leading position. We have women as deputy ministers in the ministry of defense, ministry of interior. We have women leading the most

revenue-generating ministries. We have 25% of women parliamentarians. We have 30% of women staff in the government. With those examples, I see a very bright role for Afghan women from leading positions to grassroots young afghans going to universities, schools, more so than ever.

How will you compare it with the Taliban years? Naheed Esar: In the past 18-19 years after the fall of the Taliban, we shifted from zero percent women in the education system -- in schools and universities -- to about 30% women now. That on its own is a huge achievement. We have laws, Article 22 of the Afghan constitution talks about the equality of men and women. We have laws against harassments and parallel to that we have institutions implementing those laws. We have women in leading positions, and that is the biggest achievement in the past.

<https://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-no-going-back-on-women-s-rights-says-30-year-old-deputy-foreign-minister-of-afghanistan2808798->

SA: Wanted: 20,000 Saudi taxi drivers (women especially welcome)

MAKKAH: Saudi transport chiefs have launched a campaign to recruit 20,000 Saudi drivers to replace expatriates working for Uber, Careem and the Kingdom's other taxi-app services.

The number of Saudis driving taxis had

Any driver found to be working illegally faces a fine of SR1,333 (\$5,000).

The surge in the number of women driving taxis came as no surprise to Kariman Khaled Al-Ghamdi, who drives for Careem. "Saudi families constantly request women drivers," she



risen from 100,000 to more than 600,000 since 2016, and the sector was now ready for Saudization, Majed Al-Zahrani of the Public Transport Authority (PTA) told Arab News. The job had become particularly popular among women since the ban on them driving in the Kingdom was lifted in June 2018, Al-Zahrani said. "The number of female Saudi drivers working at these applications has reached 2,000, and the number is rising because of the good income and the safe work environment," he said.

The PTA and the Ministry of Labor and Social Development will work together to ensure the implementation of the Saudization regulations.

told Arab News.

Al-Ghamdi worked in human resources at a telecommunications company, retired at 46, and sought another job to boost her income. With driver's licenses from the US and Kuwait as well as Saudi Arabia, and having lived abroad, she knew she was ideally suited to the work. Jamilah Al-Mahmoudi, from Makkah, joined Uber seven months ago, and has never looked back.

"I got rid of the financial burden of hiring a driver, and now I drive pilgrims and visitors inside Makkah, which I enjoy," she said.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1610281/saudi-arabia>

NEPAL : Khagendra Thapa Magar: World's shortest mobile man dies aged 27

NEPAL : Khagendra Thapa Magar: World's shortest mobile man dies aged 27

The world's shortest man who could walk, as verified by Guinness World Records (GWR), has died at a hospital in Nepal at the age of 27.

Khagendra Thapa Magar, from Nepal's Baglung district, measured 67.08cm (2ft 2.41in). His brother told AFP news agency he died on Friday

59.93cm.

Khagendra Thapa Magar was named the shortest living man who could walk

Mr Magar lost his title as the world's shortest mobile man to fellow Nepalese national Chandra Bahadur Dangi, who measured 54.6cm. However, he regained it following Mr Dangi's death in 2015.

Mr Magar was first spotted by a travelling salesman



following a battle with pneumonia.

GWR paid tribute to Mr Magar, saying he "didn't let his small size stop him from getting the most out of life".

Mr Magar was recognised as the world's smallest man on his 18th birthday in 2010, at a ceremony attended by local and international dignitaries. "I don't consider myself to be a small man. I'm a big man. I hope that having this title enables me to prove it and get a proper house for me and my family," he said at the time.

GWR has two categories for people of short stature - mobile and non-mobile. Filipino Junrey Balawing, who is unable to walk or stand unaided, is the world's shortest non-mobile man, measuring

when he was 14 and taken to local fairs, where children paid to be photographed next to him.

After gaining recognition from GWR in 2010, he travelled around the world and made television appearances in Europe and the US. He also became an official face of Nepal's tourism campaign. Craig Glenday, GWR's editor-in-chief, said he was "terribly sad" to hear the news of Mr Magar's death.

"His bright smile was so infectious that he melted the hearts of anyone who met him," he said. The record for the shortest living mobile man is now held by Edward Hernandez of Colombia, who measures 70.21cm.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia51158259->

ISTANBUL — When did I first notice that the color of streetlamps and interior lights in Istanbul had slowly changed from yellow to white over the past ten years? It has transformed the nighttime landscape of the city I have lived in for 66 years, and yet it is always difficult to recall — as with aging, or with political or climate change — the precise moment in which one first becomes aware of this kind of thing.

During my boyhood and youth, white

lamps and see the fabric's true color in natural light.

A street in Balat neighborhood of Istanbul, August 2018Credit...Orhan Pamuk

One day, as the surreptitious spread of white light and the decline of orange light had been weighing on my mind for some time, I went to the old convenience store around the corner and asked for a -75watt bulb. I saw the writing on the box the elderly shopkeeper picked out for me. "But this is white!" I said. "Why?" "It



light was something cold that issued from fluorescent lamps. White light filled hospitals, warehouses, factories, waiting rooms and refrigerators. Like wickedness, it was to be avoided. It could grieve and mislead us. When my mother went to the draper's back in the 1960s and '70s, she would have the shop boy take her chosen roll of curtain fabric outside to evade the deceptive gleam of fluorescent

is the only kind anyone buys these days," said the shopkeeper. "They're cheaper."

I grudgingly accepted that very soon the way Istanbul looked at night would be completely transformed. I decided to photograph the neighborhoods and streets of my city while they were still bathed in orange light. I was going to work to preserve the fading image of Istanbul.

In the winter of 2016 I started with the familiar streets of Cihangir, Nisantasi and Sisli — areas on the European side of Istanbul where I had so often walked, and which had brought me such joy over the years. White light proliferated in coffeehouses, department store windows and construction sites.

The more I observed the slow retreat of yellow light, and the way the city streets were acquiring a whole new character, the more photographs I took, animated by anger at all my acquaintances and relatives who seemed altogether indifferent to the issue. My friends, most of them approaching old age and living in relatively wealthy neighborhoods, were not interested in the white light. They remarked that thanks to these photographs they had noticed for the first time the degree to which certain streets and neighborhoods of Istanbul had changed over the past few years.

Some streets had been remolded by the arrival of Arab immigrants from Syria, while other streets bore the signs of a new nationalist fury and hostility toward foreigners and newcomers. And the third aspect of this change was that across the Golden Horn, many neighborhoods had come under the influence of political Islam and fundamentalist sects. It pained and angered me to discover that my friends had failed to notice these social transformations, and that they had become so quickly accustomed and indifferent to them. In the evenings, I began roaming streets and alleyways I hadn't visited for years with a missionary zeal. I was better off walking the alleyways rather than spending yet another evening sitting at home, watching the endless stream of lies being propagated on television by the government. The nightscape of Istanbul always had an enigmatic, beguiling effect on me, reminding me I belonged here. A long, winding, brisk walk always seemed a way of getting closer to the source of that curious energy.

While 30 years ago I might have walked around Istanbul more frequently, I suspect I saw fewer things than I do now.

Between 1974 and 1980, when I was trying to write my first novel, there was a sinister atmosphere hanging over Istanbul: Communist militants and right-wing nationalists ruthlessly and routinely gunned each other down in the streets.

In the late 1980s, when there was a shortage of fuel and energy, and the early 1990s, when the economy was slow, the city was darker at night. Shops did not leave their lights on to advertise their wares, and at home, people switched the lights off when they left a room. I would write in my office until three or four in the morning, and on the way home I would take a roundabout route, basking in the mysterious poetry of barred windows and crumbling, unplastered oriels lit up by the orange light of streetlamps. On these long walks I would always encounter at least one pack of street dogs growling at anyone who happened to pass by, standing in your way or rifling savagely through rubbish bins. I would run into drunks and boza sellers and shopkeepers closing up for the night.

The provincial Istanbul of my youth, where everyone knew each other, changed radically in after the Justice and Development Party was elected in 2002. The liberal and pro-European politics of early A.K.P. years, and an infusion of new money from the West, gave us a sense of Istanbul transforming into a cosmopolitan megalopolis, where we thought the days of shooting writers and journalists in the streets or throwing them into prisons were over.

To Read More:

<https://www.nytimes.com/18/01/2020/opinion/the-changing-colors-of-istanbul.html>