A PUBLICATION OF ALIGARH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTA (AAAA)

ALIGAtlanta

JULY 2019

Carrying Forward the Aligarh Movement for the Betterment of Our Communities



Indo-US AMU-OSU STEM Education and Research Center

Envisioning a Human Future:
Sir Syed's Approach

AMU and ME
My AMU Days: Fond Memories

FAAA at a Glance: Background, Officers, Projects, Past Conventions

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Aligarh to Albuquerque

FAAA CONVENTION SPECIAL



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ALIG Atlanta
July, 2019. Volume 10

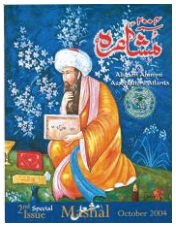


From Editor's Desk

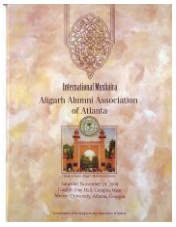
10th Edition! Wow! A great milestone. We started this publication in 2001 under *Mashal* title which changed its name a couple of times before finally settling to ALIGAtlanta in 2015. Let us begin with a bit history of the magazine.



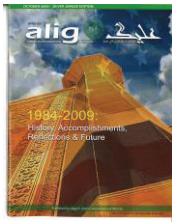
Mashal 2001



Mashal 2004



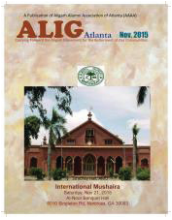
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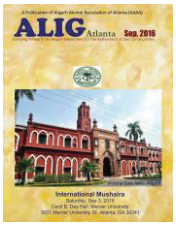
Alig 2009



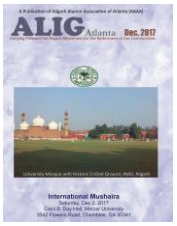
Qandeel 2010



ALIGAtlanta 2015



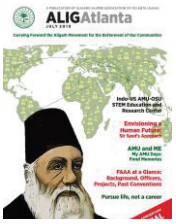
ALIGAtlanta 2016



ALIGAtlanta 2017



ALIGAtlanta 2018



ALIGAtlanta 2019

M. Inamullah and Fazal Khan were the editors of *Mashal* magazine published for the first time in 2001. Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Dr. Muhammed Afzal Shahid, Sadaf Farooqui, Syed Waseem, Fazal Khan and Dr. Rasheed Ahmad consisted the editorial team responsible for publishing 2004 edition. Dr. Shahid Rafique, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui and Dr. Rasheed Ahmad took out the 2008 edition. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of AAAA's founding (1984-2009), the *Alig,* under the editorship of Dr. Shahid Rafique and Dr. Rasheed Ahmad carried out special articles documenting the history of the association and featured several memorable pieces from senior colleagues. In the 2010 edition, Dr. Shahid Rafique, Sadaf Farooqui, Azhar Farooqui, Dr. Asif Taufiq, S. Hasan Kamal, Sultan Khan, Yasir Nomani, Dr. Jalal Zuberi and M. Inamullah were among the main contributors to the magazine. Since 2015, I have had the privilege of serving as honorary editor of the magazine. With regular articles from my AAAA colleagues and prolific contributions from Dr. S. M Ghazanfar, Emeritus-Professor (1968-2008; University of Idaho), Dr. Syed M. Naseem (Washington DC), Dr. Yasmin Saikia (Professor, Arizona State University), Mercer University Faculty, Ms. Naim Fatima Taufiq and others, I have been publishing ALIGAtlanta regularly every year. The magazine invariably is published at the time of annual international mushaira. However, this year it is published on the occasion of the 2019 Annual Convention of Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA) to be held here in Atlanta.

The 2019 edition is special many ways. It has a new cover design and is double in its content compared to previous editions. In addition to articles on personal memories, activities, academic collaborations, Sir Syed & Aligarh Movement, education, it also features the FAAA activities, projects, leadership and its inaugural documents. This is likely the first major collection of information on FAAA. Also, a special tribute is published in the memory of our dear colleague the late M. Abdul Qayum.

I sincerely thank Syed Waseem, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Hasan Kamal and Dr. Farzana Bharmal for helping me in the articles. I particularly acknowledge Nadeem Fatmi for putting together the FAAA database. I express my sincere gratitude to all the contributors, authors and sponsors for their timely submission and support. Needless to say, I gratefully acknowledge Professor Valeed Ahmad of Aligarh Muslim University for taking care of Urdu typing with meticulous and prompt proofreading. I would like to thank my wife, Shaista, and kids for their understanding and patience during preparation of the manuscript.

This yearly bulletin aims to publish information on Association activities, future projects and priorities, literary work, reminiscences, and Urdu poetry of local and guest poets, etc. The views and opinions expressed in these articles/ads are those of the authors/sponsors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of AAAA.

With kindest regards,
Rasheed Ahmad, Ph.D.
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His Holiness
Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin
CHANCELLOR
Aligarh Muslim University, ALIGARH

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Message from His Holiness Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin,
Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University

The Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations' continued dedication to 'carry forward the Aligarh movement' by promoting education befitting our times and supporting deserving students across the globe is a praiseworthy and noble cause, which truly reflects the ethos of Aligarh Muslim University. I pray their efforts endure for years to come and grow from strength to strength.

On the occasion of the Federation's 18th annual convention, I am pleased to share a few words with the Aligarh alumni community. In verse 11 of Sura Mujādila in the Holy Quran, Allah Taʿālā informs us that He raises those with faith and knowledge in stature and station.

يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍ

Knowledge is a means of ascension, both spiritual and material. If progress and growth are to soar in the heavens above, then knowledge and action combined are the wings upon which we take flight. The challenges we face today are numerous and they must be met with both knowledge and acting in accordance with it, for knowledge without action is futile. We must commit ourselves to acts of kindness and generosity if we are to truly bequeath an honourable legacy to future generations and illustrate the transformative power latent in education and learning. May Allah Subḥānahu give us strength to further the causes of knowledge and good deeds and may He guide you, the Aligarh alumni, in your continued service to mankind.

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin
May 23, 2019
Mumbai

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June 12, 2019

MESSAGE

1. It has given me immense pleasure to learn that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta is organizing XVIIIth Annual Convention of Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA) , scheduled to be held from 26th to 28th July, 2019, in Atlanta and on this occasion a special edition of the Magazine 'ALIGAtlanta' is being published.
2. Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta and Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA) are social hubs of intellectuals and philanthropists, who actively participate in the socio-economic development of the society. It is heartening to note that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta and FAAA have actively supported and promoted social causes, thereby encouraging and promoting aspirations of every segment, specially the weaker sections of the society. The numerous upliftment programmes and initiatives that have been undertaken are indeed an inspiration to all.
3. Over these past few years the University has undertaken sweeping infrastructural development initiatives, which have been supported by the alumni. Our rankings have constantly been improving. In order to ensure a modern, fully-equipped infrastructure for the benefit of our students, which will rival the best Universities in the world, many more developmental initiatives are being undertaken.
4. Alumni have always stood as a pillar of strength and have always extended their support towards the various developmental initiatives of the University, a fact which we in AMU deeply appreciate. The Alumni have played a pivotal role in not only providing constructive suggestions and guidance but also contributed generously for the creation and strengthening of the infrastructure. The University requires substantial amount of funds, to realize the planned initiatives of infrastructural development and we are confident that as they have in the past, our Alumni will extend their support and actively participate in the initiatives undertaken for the purpose of expansion and growth of the University. Your invaluable contribution will go a long way in our endevour to establish AMU as a world class institution.
5. My compliments to the office bearers of the Associations for the excellent job which they are doing.

Tariq Mansoor 12/6/19.

Prof. Tariq Mansoor

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May 1, 2019

Dear Dr. Ahmad:

Salam alaikum.

I am honored to accept your invitation to attend the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations 18th Annual Convention in Atlanta in July.

As is usually the case, I was busy with family and career in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and did not get opportunities to remain connected with AMU. As an Aligarh Alumni (1972) it will be a pleasure to reconnect with the AMU community after this 47 year hiatus.

My participation in your convention will change that and I eagerly look forward to meeting you and others and learning how our Alma Mater has changed over the years.

And hear the AMU "tarana" again!

Looking forward to our meeting in July.

Warm Regards

Abbas Akhil
NM State Representative

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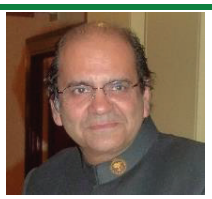
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AAAA provides educational assistance to the needy students, helps our Alma Mater/other institutions to modernize, facilitates faculty student exchange and collaboration with institutions of higher learning, promotes Urdu language and its art forms.

AAAA is a non-profit organization with a tax-exempt status, 501(c) (3)



President's Message
"REFLECTIONS"

The Federation Convention is approaching like a bullet train. As I sat in the planning committee meeting, a shower of memories started descending on me. Four years ago, which now seems like yesterday, I was elected to lead the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA). I promised both myself and my mother, (a very senior Aligarian 1945) that we must do something very unique in education which will be perpetual and involve Americans, the citizens of the country in which we reside.

A novel approach was taken which resulted in creating a "Peace Garden" at Mercer University with the support of Aziz Dhanani, Hasan Kamal, and late Qayum Sahib. Overtures were made Between AMU and Mercer University. General Zameeruddin Shah visited Atlanta and invited Mercer faculty to visit Aligarh Muslim University to which Mercer Faculty obliged. Along the way, the members of AAAA managed to give a few Smart Classrooms at AMU.

While the romance between Mercer and AMU was still in its infancy, the members of AAAA once again pushed for a faculty exchange. Finally, a true reality came to fruition when Professor Lloyd Allen visited AMU for one month and Dr. Tauqeer Alam, faculty of Islamic Theology from AMU, came and lectured to the Christian Theology School. Of course I can see the smile on Sir Syed's face as he is telling Zain ul Abideen sahib to tell members of AAAA "well done".

The train did not stop there. During the summer of 2018, twelve American theology students along with two faculty members paid their own way to visit Aligarh which was coordinated by AAAA members. They taught music at the Blind School, collected medical data, and soaked in all the hospitality of Aligarh Tehzeeb. In the follow-up dinner at Atlanta, the amazing stories were shared by the students. Now we have twelve goodwill American ambassadors who will take Sir Syed Khan"s message to the world which is quite a unique achievement and will remain in perpetuity.

I see Yasir Nomani conducting our annual mushiara, Sultan Khan's emotional appeals for keeping the organization strong, Shahid Ali taking on projects that seem impossible to achieve, Rasheed Ahmad sahib quietly producing the best ever magazine, Dr. Shoeb volunteering without even asking, Tanzeem Bhai and his book of business creating accountability in the organization, Waseem bhai and Rukhsana Baji supporting me regardless of what anybody thinks, Dr. Shahid Rafique promoting me among other organizations and telling me that I have rhythm even though I cannot sing a single note, and Dr. Farzana always willing to go with me to the sponsors and making Aligarh's case for education.

The best thing that ever happened during my watch is the attainment of 501c, tax exempt status for AAAA, and a written constitution serving as a guide to run AAAA as a professional organization. Hats off to Umar Farooq Sahib. I recollect Yasir nudging me stating "Dr. Sahib meeting is over", creating a smile on my face. These REFLECTIONS renewed my faith more than ever in AMU and Sir Syed Ahmed Khans' Mission.

Sincerely,
Khadim e Ala
Asif Taufiq DDS., MBA
President , AAAA
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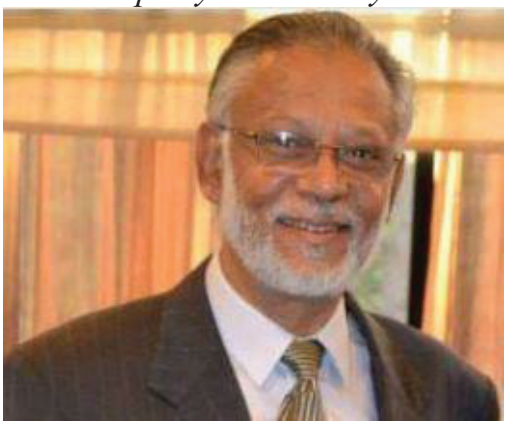
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In Memoriam

M. Abdul Qayum 1947-2019

An Exemplary Community Leader



Remembrance by Dr. Gulshan Harjee, Prominent Atlanta Community Leader & Board Member of UNICEF's Campaign USA and Rehan Sayeed, Son of Late MA Qayum

Mohammed A Qayum exhibited exceptional leadership qualities in various fields in his life. The starting point was SINE International which was established by him in Karachi, Pakistan 1973, as his business endeavors grew at a steady pace and he was able to expand. Besides being a fulltime businessman, he always wanted to contribute to his community. He set up a small health clinic in Orange Town which is a very poor area in Karachi, over the years this clinic has progressed into a Women's Clinic.

In 1982, when he was approached with the idea of starting a nonprofit hospital in one of the poorest sections of Karachi, he immediately jumped in. Indus Hospital, formerly known as Islamic Mission Hospital (IMHT), was his most prized accomplishment. For the past 30 years, this hospital has provided free treatment to all patients. Another organization with which he was involved in 2005 was Khidmuat e Insanayet.

It is also important to remember his commitment to the betterment of Islamic Community is his involvement and assistance in the growth of Al-Huda International. He assisted Dr. Farhat Hashmi with Accounting, Finances, and Operational Strategy. Al- Huda has grown rapidly and is a great source for both males and females to learn about Islam all over the world. In 1990, he decided to take over management of the American based company called Vision International based in Atlanta, GA.

He was able to unite the community and acted as a catalyst for the progression of Muslims in Georgia by exhibiting his leadership skills - by becoming the President of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) and the Pakistani Society of Atlanta (PSA) between the years 1990-1994. In 1996, he also showed his ability to act as a representative of the Pakistani Muslim Community in GA by being a member and part of the Core-Committee of the Gandhi Foundation of Atlanta. Another organization that he was involved with was The Glitter of Hope Foundation which also helps the less fortunate. They are a non-profit that is devoted to addressing the basic needs of orphan children rescued from refugee camps in Africa and Asia and brought into the US as refugees. He refused to let anyone think of him as prideful and arrogant thus he always tried to act humble and with humility. That's why he also got his hands dirty and did volunteer work that was more hands-on labor. A couple of Muslim Organizations that Mr. Qayum volunteered with in Georgia included Al-Madina food Pantry during Ramadan, and Al- Madina Masjid. Another example of his positive vision and promotion of goodwill can be seen in his efforts in promoting interfaith events like the one with Southern Baptist at Mercer University.

He played an active role in getting Muslims involved and to increase awareness and participation of Muslims in Politics in the US Government. He was involved with a few campaigns as well as personally inviting a Georgia House of Rep and a Senior Gwinnett Judge to an event to increase awareness and participation in voting process amongst the Muslim community. He also increased the awareness amongst local politicians by inviting a female District Attorney to the Lawrenceville Mosque, she was running for a Supreme Court Judge Position. At the Federal level he has been involved with Cynthia McKinney's campaign, she contacted the Muslim Leaders in the Georgia and proved herself to have a positive outlook about Islam as well as a strong moral code.

Many have quoted him as "A man liked by everybody', "A smiling face wrapped up in the joy of others". " An irreplaceable loss for Atlanta" –

Remembrance by Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, Founding President of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta

Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. A leader possesses the combination of personality and skills that make others want to follow the direction. Our departed friend, Marhoom Abdul Qayum Sb. Past President (AAAA) Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (1993-95) fit the mold well. AAAA was established in Atlanta during 1984. Unlike being an association of former students of AMU only, its founders, in their infinite wisdom decided it to be more inclusive and welcomed all who believed in Sir Syed's TAHREEK-Development of Muslim Ummah through educational advancements. Qayum Bhai came to the rescue of AAAA when it started losing its effective role in early nineties. MA Qayum played highly effective role in solving community bickering through gentle persuasion. He helped various local community factions to join the activities of AAAA and was influential in providing a cohesive force by convincing them to live in harmony. During his tenure programs and Mushairas started to draw larger audiences who were well behaved and congenial to each other. His love and devotion for AMU was evident when he took the holy trip to Sir Syed's Mazaar at AMU mosque and visited the University campus. He was thrilled with fond memories of his journey. He cherished his pilgrimage to the holy soil of AMU. For me personally, our visit to his bedside few weeks before he passed away is worth cherishing. My wife and I visited him and found MAQ in good spirits. He held my hand when I profusely thanked him for resurrecting AAAA. With humility, he smiled and with eyes laden with tears expressed his loving satisfaction. MAY ALLAH PROVIDE HIM A PLACE IN JANNATUL-FIRDOS.

Let us help you start the New Year with a brighter smile!

Mark T. Gobbel, DMD

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Dr. Mark Gobbel is a 1978 graduate of the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry. He is an Atlanta native and an alumnus of Georgia Tech. He has practiced Family and Cosmetic Dentistry in the Decatur area since 1980. Dr. Gobbel is very pleased to be practicing dentistry in Dacula as of 2018. He is a member of the ADA, GDA, Northern District Dental Association, Hinman Dental Society and the DeKalb Dental Study Club.

Dr. Gobbel and his wife Kacie have three grown sons and a grandson. They reside in the ever-growing Gwinnett County. They enjoy travel, tennis, music, reading and spending time with their family.



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Remembrance by Dr. Jalal Zuberi, Former President of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta

Mohammed Qayum, the past president of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) during the early 90's left us for his final abode recently. He also left us without a most devoted friend and sincere human being to have graced the Atlanta Muslim community in decades. Qayum Saheb was extremely modest when he presented himself to others. His sincerity and everlasting desire to help others reflected in his unique persona. I was blessed to know him the same year he migrated to Atlanta from Pakistan to start his garment business. His innate desire to serve community brought him to AAAA very soon, where he made a strong impression, soon to be drafted to serve as its first president of Pakistani origin! Not only Mr Qayum serve AAAA with utmost devotion during his two-year term, but took it upon himself to go to India and visit Aligarh Muslim University, meet its VC and other officials to learn AMU traditions firsthand to reflect those principles as he served AMU Alumni.

Qayum Saheb was liked by many who came to know him and claimed him to join their respective groups. He served as president of Pakistani Association as well as the Gandhi Foundation. He was instrumental in establishment of Muslim Houses of worships in Northeast Atlanta suburbs, where he resided. He was instrumental in patching differences between squabbling community leaders during some difficult times. He offered his office and home as meeting places to resolve conflicts which was greatly appreciated by all members.

Mr. Qayum involved himself in numerous charity projects, including Indus Hospital in Karachi with which he was involved as a board of trustee member and founder of its Friends of Indus Foundation, from its inception. This tertiary care hospital, now offering state of the art medical care to the neediest, stands as a testament to the service of selfless leaders like Mohammed Qayum devoting many years and utmost efforts in its fundraising. It was befitting that the hospital got completed just a few years before Qayum Saheb's passing.

Qayum Saheb was a pious human being throughout his life. Due to illness in last several years, his movement was limited but his spirit remained high and his love for others wasn't lost on any soul that came in his path. The Muslim community and AAAA will always be indebted to Mr Qayum. May he rest in peace, Amen.

Editor's Note: *MA Qayum was the president of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) from 1993-95. During his tenure, he reinvigorated the organization and reached out to everyone. He spent his own money to visit Aligarh and met the AMU vice-chancellor. Qayum sb also served as AAAA treasurer in 2014 term and later member of the Board of Trustees. He took special interest during the writing of the AAAA constitution and its formal registration with IRS. Before his passing away, he represented Atlanta as councilor in Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA) council. He also traveled to Washington DC to resolve the membership issue.*

With Best Compliments From

Nizam Khaja, MD and Nehad Khaja

Kennesaw, GA

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Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) and AMUAA-Greater Chicago Honor Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi

A function was held, 3-6 p.m., at IQRA Educational Foundation's headquarters in Skokie, Illinois on Saturday April 13, 2019 to celebrate the lifetime contributions and achievements of two senior most Aligarians, Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi.

Dr. Ahmadullah Siddiqi was the Emcee of the program which started with recitation of Quran by Qari Sami Sagheer. Dr. Ahmadullah Siddiqi presented a detailed account of the life time contributions made by both Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi, who were students of Aligarh Muslim University during 1954-1962. Dr. Abidullah Ghazi was elected to serve the Honorary General Secretary of the Aligarh Muslim University Student's Union and later elected unopposed as its President. Both are eminent educationists and have produced more than 140 books for children from grade K to 12th standard on Islamic teachings, history, Quran and the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These books are prescribed in various schools in more than forty countries of the world. Dr. Abidullah Ghazi is also a poet and renowned literary personality who has published many books including a collection of his Urdu poems and a three-part autobiography. Both Ghazis have also been active in community building and have been the founders of numerous local, regional, national and international organizations.

Mr. Hasan Kamal of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) then made a short speech in which he highlighted the background and purpose of Haneef Akhgar award. He presented a plaque and a $1,000.00 check to Dr. Abidullah Ghazi followed by Dr. Zafeer Ahmad, President of AMUAA-GC who presented a plaque to Dr. Tasneema Ghazi. Afterwards many of his friends and admirers including his daughter, Dr. Seemi Ghazi and two sons made brief remarks about the Ghazis. Last but not the least, Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi also made short remarks thanking the AAAA and AMUAA, greater Chicago for honoring them with the awards.

The meeting ended with prayers by Hafiz Ikhlas Ansari and later refreshments were served.

Haneef Akhgar award was instituted in 2009 at the Silver-Jubilee celebration (1984-2009) of AAAA founding during Dr. Rasheed Ahmad's tenure. The award's original idea came from Mr. M. Inamullah, past AAAA president and senior board member. The purpose of this award is to recognize the individual who has contributed in the promotion of Urdu language in North America. This award carries a plaque and a monetary amount. The award is given every 3 to 4 years. The recipients are:

2009 Nayyer Jahan (Los Angeles)
2011 Dr. Abdullah (Washington DC)
2014 Dr. Zaki Kakorvi (Atlanta)
2018 Dr. Abidullah Ghazi (Chicago), formally delivered in 2019



L to R (above): Dr. Zafeer Ahmad, Mr. Hasan Kamal, Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi. **Below:** Group Photo

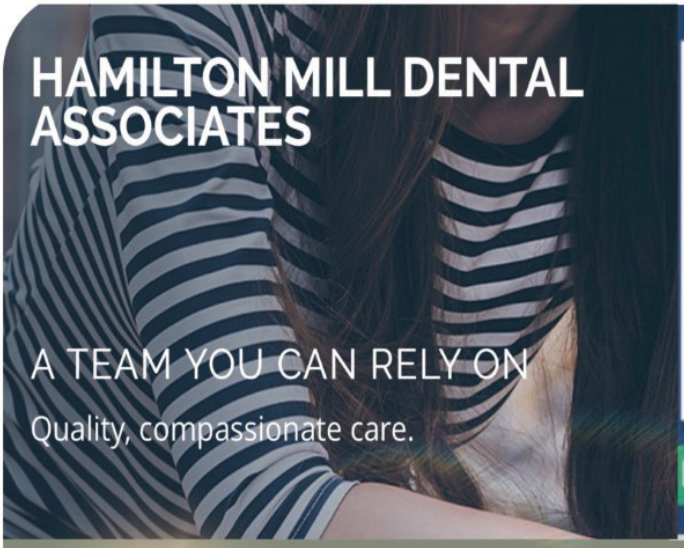


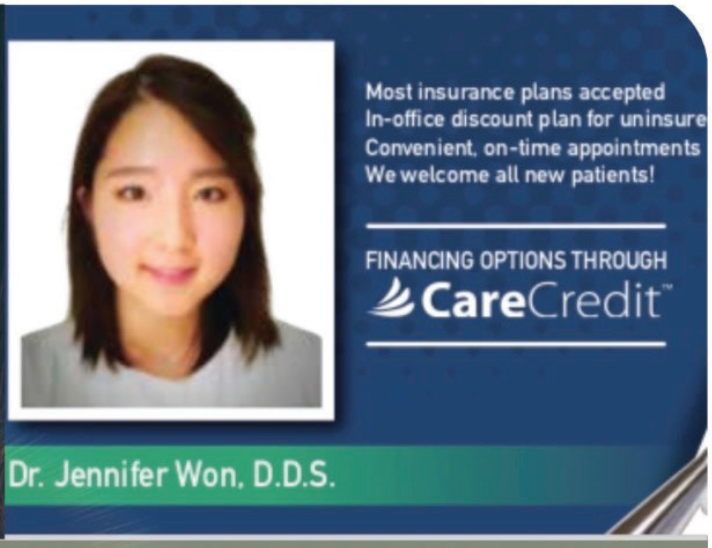
L to R (above): Dr. Abidullah Ghazi and Dr. Tasneema Ghazi
Below: Event Attendees





This event report is a modified version of original write-up provided by AMUAA-GC.





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Reflections of Mercer University Students on AMU Tenure

Wesley Barker, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Mercer University

In May of 2018, our group of two professors and 12 students from Mercer University travelled to Aligarh, India for a month-long, service-learning experience. While in India, our students engaged in service-related activities that were facilitated by staff, faculty, and administrators at Aligarh Muslim University. Our primary service involved mentoring children at the Ahmadi School for the Visually Impaired, teaching them crafts, music, and conversational English. Other service-learning activities included both working with doctors and medical students caring for patients in the villages and the rural clinics as well as engaging faculty and students from the AMU School of Social Work, who were providing schools for children in urban slums.

Our tenure at AMU was relatively brief, but the experiences we had in India left an indelible mark on us all. To commemorate the one-year anniversary of our trip, the AMU alumni newsletter editors have graciously provided us with this forum for Mercer students to offer personal reflections on their trip. In their own words below, students attest to the ways that their experiences in Aligarh continue to shape their lives today.

"My trip to India was filled with exciting experiences. My visit with visually impaired children at the Ahmadi School for the Visually Impaired was a great revelation because the students, faculty, and staff, all embraced the virtue of love without considering racial, religious and gender differences. Also, the doctors that treat and visit the people in the villages are incredible because they understand their moral obligation to take care of the people without discrimination. It was a wonderful trip with many experiences that taught our group the virtue of love. It is my wish that all people in the world will cooperate and live harmoniously with each other." **-Steven Askew**

"The hospitality I received from the community of Aligarh Muslim University was extraordinary. Coming from a nation where Christians and Muslims sometimes struggle to find common ground, I was blown away by my reception in Aligarh, being received as a Christian woman into the loving arms of this Muslim community who did everything in their power to make me comfortable and cared for. I received a superb education in different schools within AMU as well as education in the religious and cultural contexts both within Aligarh and the greater context of India. I came back to my home with a better appreciation and understanding of the great diversity which our human race contains." **CJ Childs**

"Our trip to India taught me a great deal about embracing new cultures and ideas. I felt that my experience worked to broaden my perspective of the world. The kindness and generosity of our hosts made it comfortable to take part in enlightening inter-religious dialogue. I now feel more equipped to enter into similar conversations with people of various different cultural and religious backgrounds." **-Griffin Lamb**

"I believe the experience in India was a wonderful time of learning from the culture, the students/professors at AMU, and especially the children at the Ahmadi School for the Blind. The children taught me how different religions could live in unity. Also, their determination to learn from our group without hesitation was amazing. The children had the ability to love without many of them seeing our skin color or knowing our religion. I wish our world could unite in the same manner. I am learning to have the children's vision to see all people even the more, regardless of race, religion, skin color, sexual orientation, or gender. I have not been the same since our trip and I pray to continue evolving to become the best possible citizen for our world." **-Joseph Smith**

"Everyone told me how different India was going to be from America. Stepping off the plane, it took only a few seconds to realize that there are no human differences at all. My three weeks there confirmed this notion. We are all living, breathing people with deep, powerful emotions, thoughts, and beliefs. At the core, we all feel the same sadness, happiness, fear, hope, and faith. While our verbal languages are vastly different from each other, our emotional and spiritual languages are not. I felt at home from the moment AMU students picked us up from the airport until the moment they dropped us off, and I often think about the next experience I will have on AMU's beautiful campus with it's beautiful people." **-Destiny Winters**

The above student reflections demonstrate the capacity of cross-cultural service-learning opportunities to transform lives beyond the borders of race, class, gender, religion, ethnicity and nationhood. It is therefore with great gratitude that we want to thank AMU and its alumni for all the work they do to serve others by building partnerships across the globe, and especially for making Mercer one of those partners.

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Dr. Justin Sol

2018 International Mushaira Photographs















L to R: Participating Poets in 2018 International Mushaira—Khushbir Singh Shad (India), Irfan Murtaza (California), Rahman Faris (Pakistan), Yasir Nomani (Nazim-e-Mushaira), Saud Usmani (Pakistan), Dr. Nikhat Iftikhar (UK), Dr. A. Abdullah (Washington DC)

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2006 FAAA Convention Photographs







L to R (First Row) : Mr. Umar Farooq, Honorable Justice Ahmadi (Chief Guest) and Dr. Manzoor Ghori; Mr. M. Inamullah at the podium; Honorable Justice Ahmadi and Dr. Rasheed Ahmad. **Second Row:** Delegates participating in reciting AMU Tarana













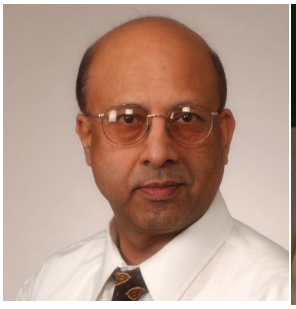
Third Row (L to R): Mr. Hasan Kamal, Mr. Umar Farooq, Late Muzaffar Habib, Dr. A.S. Nakadar; H.E. Mr. Ishrat Aziz at the podium; Honorable Justice Ahmadi and Mariam Khan

Fourth Row (L to R): Ghazal Singer Alamgir; Dr. Aftab Ansari, Dr. Hashima Hasan, Mrs. Shakila Raza, Dr. Rahat Khan

Chairman - FAAA Board of Trustees



Mr. Ahmad Raza
2002–2004



Dr. Aftab Ansari
2004–2005



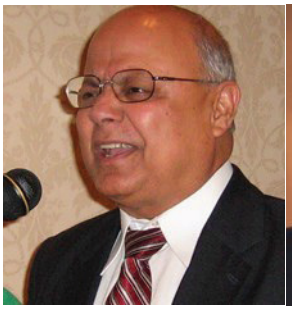
Dr. Abidullah Ghazi
2005–2006



Mr. Ashfaq Qureshi
2006–2007, 2007-2008



Dr. Abdullah
2008-2009



Mr. Muzaffar Habib
2008-2009, 2009-2011



Mr. Umar Farooq
2011-2012



Mr. Perwaiz Jafri
2012-2013



Mr. Ahsan Fazli
2013-2014



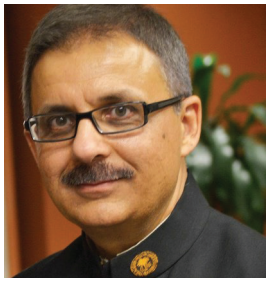
Dr. Habib Zuberi
2014-2015



Mr. Ali Rizvi
2015-2016



Dr. Wasi Siddiqui
2016-2017



Dr. Shaheer Khan
2017-2018



Dr. Tariq Haqqi
2018-2019

(Primary Source: www.aligs.org)

Current FAAA Member Associations

	FAAA Member Associations	No. of Councilors
1	Arizona - Arizona Aligarh Alumni Association	2
2	Atlanta - Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta	4
3	Birmingham - Aligarh Association at Birmingham	2
4	California - AMU Alumni Association of Northern California	3
5	Chicago - Aligarh Muslim University Alumni Association of Greater Chicago	4
6	Cleveland - Aligarh Alumni Association of Ohio	3
7	Dallas - Aligarh Alumni Association of Dallas Forth Worth (AAADFW)	4
8	Houston - Aligarh Alumni Association of Texas	4
9	Maryland, Aligarh Muslim University Alumni Association Of Maryland	4
10	Michigan - Aligarh Muslim University Alumni Association of Michigan (AMUAAMI)	3
11	New England - Aligarh Alumni Association of New England (AAANE)	4
12	New York - Aligarh Alumni Association of New York (AAANY)	4
13	Upstate New York - Aligarh Alumni Association of Upstate New York (AAAUNY), Albany	2
14	Virginia - Aligarh Alumni Association of Virginia	2
15	Washington DC, Aligarh Alumni Association Washington DC	4
	FAAA Associate Members	
1	Aligarh Education Endowment Fund (AEEF)	N/A
2	Z.H. Engineering College Association	N/A

Inaugural Welcome Speech at 2001 Convention in Washington DC

Dear Friends: ASAK

On behalf the Aligarh Alumni Association of Washington DC and the National Organizing Committee, I welcome you to Washington - the Birth Place of Aligarh Movement in North America.

This is one of the happiest day of my life as my dream is closer to become reality. In order to plan our future course it is important that I present to you a summary of our struggle that has brought us to this point.

It was summer of 1968, I was a newly arrived graduate student at SUNY Buffalo, sitting on the steps of the student's Union building I was watching a protest against Vietnam war and for the first time in my life I felt the power of collective voice. Coincidently during that period there was bill in the Indian parliament to change the name of AMU. Suddenly a thought came to my mind that if we have a chain of Aligarh Associations across the major cities of the world, then thru our collective efforts we can do a lot for AMU and its student body. We were only 5 from Aligarh (including Masood Haider Sahib of NJ) in Buffalo. The idea had to wait until I moved to Washington. I shared my dream with Hasan Kamal when he moved to Washington in January of 1975. Hasan got equally excited with the idea. We searched Aligs in Washington area and Hasan Kamal arranged a meeting at Syed Tufail Ahmad's House on May 24, 1975(exactly one hundred years after the establishment of Madarsatul Uloom by Sir Syed in Aligarh on May 24, 1875). The meeting was attended by 25 Aligs and The Aligarh Alumni Association, Washington DC was formed thru a resolution.

Luckily we had a very talented and enthusiastic group. We established some meaningful program to cater to needs of a vibrant South Asian Community here and students need at AMU (Mushaira, literary events, children program, seniors program, Scholarship at Aligarh, Visiting Lectures at AMU, News Letter and Library). In a very short period AAA-DC earned a recognition in this town as serious and sophisticated organization. Also AAA-DC became known to AMU and Aligs around the world. This inspired formation of Associations in Middle East and Australia.

This success encouraged us to expand the association to National level. In 1979 I persuaded Umar Farooq Sahib, who was living in Harrisburg, Pa, little over 100 miles away from us, to assume the presidency. Umar Farooq, Hasan Kamal and I worked with others to organize a national convention in 1979. In that convention we resolved to form a national organization. The organization was registered in Washington DC in the name 'The Aligarh Muslim University Alumni Association of North America' also known as Aligarh Alumni Association of Washington DC. The concept was that Washington Association will serve as central organization and other new association will serve as chapter of this central association. Mr. Razaul Haq from Windsor, Canada was chosen as Secretary General to coordinate between the associations. Two new Associations Atlanta and Chicago were formed, only Atlanta joined as subchapter of Washington. Due to lack of communication mechanism the idea did not have much success.

Over the years the Washington Mushaira with collaboration of Urdu Markaz International of LA expanded to other cities and provided a cultural link. It helped formation of new Aligarh Alumni Associations in few cities. Also, creation of AMUNET (managed by Dr Shaheer Khan) provides a communication link and tool, and Summer University program at AMU initiated by Dr Asad Ahmad has established a link with AMU. Encouraged by these developments, on the insistence of Shaheer Khan and Muzaffar Habib, I formed a committee of 8 people to help organize this convention.

So we are here. Let us start in good Aligarh sprit, reminisce Aligarh days, renew old friendship, make new friends and achieve our objective.

Our objective is to take advantage of the new situation and learning from the past experience for a Federation Of Aligarh Muslim University Alumni Associations of North America with a view to expand it as International Federation.

Thanks for your patience.

Abdullah

Chair, Organizing Committee

May 25, 2001

Montgomery County Executive Office Building

Rockville, Maryland

Interesting Date Coincidence!

May 24, 1875: Sir Syed Founded Madrasatul Uloom in Aligarh

May 24, 1975: The Aligarh Alumni Association Washington DC was founded

May 25/26, 2001: The Convention was held in Washington to form FAAA.



Why Alumni Associations?

Nausha Asrar*, Ph.D., Houston, Texas

I landed Houston in December 2001, and had the opportunity to meet many Alig friends, who helped me and my family in settling down our nest. I had a similar experience back in 1993, when I landed in Al-Jubail, a city in Saudi Arabia. I had seven wonderful years in Saudi and am now in my nineteenth year of a great stay in Houston. During these years I was closely associated with AMU Alumni Associations, and had the opportunity to experience the sweet and sour moments that these associations generated. It is very interesting and important that I had similar experiences in both places of great coherence among AMU alumni, love for the alma mater, and occasional conflicts within their associations. So when I got distracted during my yoga meditation and started thinking about the question, "why have an alumni association?" the answer I got was this: there is enough water in the glass to quench the thirst of AMU students and its many alma mater organizations.

Alumni associations give students the opportunity to get in touch with the professionals, who were once student in their shoes. The alumni mentors provide career guidance, encouragement during the academic program, advice on important course and field work, and opportunities to make professional contacts. Students are not the only ones to benefit from alumni/student mentoring programs. Such programs give alumni an important opportunity to reconnect with their alma mater and get involved in activities that further promote and serve the university. The alma mater itself reaps the rewards of establishing this chain and the alma mater is able to strengthen ties to its alumni. Engaging alumni leads to future financial investments in the university. Formation of Department of Alumni Affairs in our university campus, introduction of modern educational centers, construction of residential complexes, state of the art class rooms, scholarships and several other financial and educational support to the students and the university are the outcome of alumni associations.

As I mentioned above, it is great that our alma mater has a committee and an office to establish a bridge between the students, university and the alumni. To achieve the best results from this office, current students and alumni could be given specific opportunities to suggest what they would like to give and get from these relationships. What help would students most like to receive and in what ways are alumni willing to volunteer their precious time?

Imagine if our university could harness the total population of alumni behind a mission and not just one at a time – how powerful and inspiring that would be. This all presupposes that they've had a positive and useful experience, throughout their degree course and in their career seeking – and therein lies the challenge for current and incoming adviser.

We need to reframe and re-energize the 'mission' of alumni in a way that makes previous graduates feel useful and valuable as opposed to acting as a piggy bank attending occasional talks. The cultural shifts in institutions require intense governance and transformations. It is simply a call to arms to involve our valuable alumni through their associations, more innovatively in helping our current tranche of despondent and often directionless undergraduates become more employable and create more meaningful career paths.

Thus, the alumni's role is crucial for the development of the university and their respective associations play a pivotal role in bringing the force together and giving a meaningful direction. All alumni associations can provide support in various aspects that are beneficial to the students, universities and the society. The alumni's opinion in developing the university and proposing solutions to the challenges faced by the university could be highly valuable for the university in achieving its vision and mission. Finally, in the framework to strengthen the development of the university, successful alumni can be the social model for unity of society and a factor for economic growth and development.

--

** Nausha Asrar is the current President of the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA)*

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM

M. Umar Farooq and Talat Farooq, Atlanta

For a Safe and Successful 18th FAAA Annual Convention

Profile of FAAA Presidents

Compiled by Dr. Rasheed Ahmad and Nadeem Fatmi, Atlanta



Dr. A. Abdullah **Washington DC**

Term: 2002-2004

Education: Ph.D. in Statistics, George Washington University, Washington, DC

AMU Stay: 1957 to 1967

Organized the first convention of AAAs of N. America in Washington DC in 2001 to form the FAAA. Nominated as the first President of the FAAA. Worked with Ahmad Raza and Aftab Ansari to write its constitution and Bylaws, which was approved in the second convention held in San Francisco in 2002. Traveled to many cities in the Mushaira network, motivated and helped them to join the FAAA.



Muzaffar Habib (Deceased in 2013) **New York City, NY**

Term: 2004-2005

Education: B.Sc., AMU, Aligarh

AMU Stay: 1962 to 65

Muzaffar Habib was the driving force behind the revival and re-establishment of the Aligarh Alumni Association of New York. He was the past President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Federation of the Aligarh Alumni Associations, and a steadfast supporter of Aligarh traditions. Organized 2004 FAAA convention in New York —*Editor*.



Umar Farooq **Harrisburg, PA/Atlanta, GA**

Term: 2005-2006

Education: B.Sc. (Engg) in Civil Engineering

AMU Stay: 1952 to 64

Applied & obtained IRS non-profit status [(501©3)] for the FAAA. Initiated Internet Project for Girls' Hostels in AMU and raised majority of funds. Established several awards (meritorious, sportsman) for the children of the members of an AMU Alumni Assoc. in U.S & a separate one for community service in India. Organized National Mushairas under FAAA for the first time and set Guidelines for inviting poets & financing the Mushairas.



Syed Hasan Kamal **Atlanta, GA**

Term: 2006-2007

Education: MS in Engineering Administration and also in Healthcare Administration, USA

AMU Stay: 1958 to 60

Organized (1) Khalid Mahmood Concert in various cities; (2) Mushairas in various cities; (3) funded through APPNA - 10 polio camps in various cities in U.P.; (4) & (5) Installations of LANs for internet with 5 work-stations and a server with a printer, in a/c rooms; each in Indira Gandhi Girls Hostel and Sarojini Naidu Girls Hostel; (6) Purchased and paid 36 medical books from UK for Maulana Azad Library.



Qamar R Khan **Cleveland, OH**

Term: 2007-2008

Education: MS in Industrial Engineering, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio, USA

AMU Stay: 1960 to 66

1. Organized two convention 2007 and 2008 in Cleveland due to unusual circumstances of resignation of the President Elect., 2. Resolved election dispute involving election to BOD of a member from AAA Houston. 3. Inducted one new association to FAAA



Dr. Masarrat Ali (Deceased in 2017) **San Antonio, TX**

Term: 2008-2009

Education: Ph.D. in Biochemistry, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow

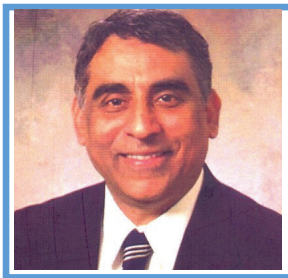
AMU Stay: 1971 to 77

Completion of digitizing material belonging to Sir Syed , his associates and the Aligarh Movement which spreads over several thousand pages and made it freely available on the website: www.SirSyedToday.Org. Unique & largest digitization work ever completed on Sir Syed Khan. Launched on web-site www.SirSyedToday.Org (*Source: Arif Ali, San Antonio)*

Profile of FAAA Presidents (cont'd)



Syed Ali Rizvi **Boston, MA**
Term: 2009-2010
Education: MS in Management, AMU, Aligarh
AMU Stay: 1977 to 1984
Mentor. Entrepreneur. Philanthropist. Speaker. Venture Capitalist. Passionate of the Aligarh Tehreek. His contributions in non-profit initiatives beyond boundaries of Aligarh, Boston or Lucknow. Focus on Education and Healthcare effecting humanity globally via FAAA, www.visionaid.org and Sir Syed Global Scholar Award. He has exhibited leadership skills of connecting people, process & technologies.



Dr. Shahid Siddiqui **Chicago, IL**
Term: 2010-2011
Education: Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay
AMU Stay: 1969 to 71
Virginia became member of the FAAA. FAAA convention in Chicago in 2010 had an Indian Union Cabinet Minister as the Chief Guest of the Convention. FAAA Constitution was annotated and meetings of the BOD & BOT were held regularly. Mentorship Program started and FAAA Mushairas became double fun!



Dr. Fazal Khan **Washington DC**
Term: 2011-2012
Education: Ph.D. in Biochemistry, AMU, Aligarh
AMU Stay: 1966 to 1977
It's perhaps the first time that election was held in FAAA creating politically charged environment. I worked behind the scene to bring harmony among member organizations. In addition, I helped pass a resolution finalizing the status of endowment fund, which had created controversy among members about its right place.



Dr. Tariq M. Haqqi **Cleveland, OH**
Term: 2012-2013
Education: Ph.D. in Zoology (Cytogenetics), AMU, Aligarh
AMU Stay: 1967 to 79
Hosted 2012 FAAA convention in Cleveland. Was involved in offering Summer University courses at AMU. Have led retooling efforts which resulted in winning project grants at AMU. Initiated conversation on revamping the FAAA. Invited Lt. Gen Zamir Uddin Shah VC AMU to be the Chief Guest at the Houston Convention.



Dr. Tahir Hussain **Houston, TX**
Term: 2013-2014
Education: Ph.D. in Biochemistry, AMU, Aligarh. Worked for Ph.D. at Industrial Toxicology Research Center (Lucknow)

AMU Stay: 1976 to 87

Served as President of the local alumni association and the Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA). Smart classroom project at AMU was executed during his tenure as the Federation President.



Dr. Saif Sheikh **Chicago, IL**
Term: 2014-2015
Education: Ph.D. in Biochemistry, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
AMU Stay: 1984 to 88
FAAA continued to raise funds for smart classrooms with the help of AMU Alumni Associations reaching $150,000 donation. Foundation was laid at Meghalaya University of Science and Technology for a guest house named as FAAA guest house. FAAA donated funds for Kashmir flood relief benefiting 250 students with stationery kits.

Profile* of FAAA Presidents (cont'd)



Syed Perwaiz Haider Jafri **Houston, TX**
Term: 2015-2016
Education: BA Honors in Political Science from AMU and LLB from Lucknow University
AMU Stay: 1971 to 77
Hosted 2015 FAAA annual convention in Houston and was involved in coordinating 2013 & 2018 conventions. Have been serving as FAAA mushaira coordinator for last several years. Have been involved in FAAA activities since its inception.



Faisal Saleem **Phoenix, AZ**
Term: 2016-2017
Education: MS in Civil Engineering (Transportation), KFUPM, Saudi Arabia
AMU Stay: 1976 to 81
Extremely grateful for the collaboration from all FAAA members leading to the tenure highlights below: 1) Launch of Education for Girls and Orphans initiative; 2) Revival of Aligarh Summer University now called Aligarh Academic Achievement Program; 3) Partnerships with Arizona universities; 4) First FAAA Grand Canyon tour and Convention Website



Amtul Suhail **San Francisco, CA**
Term: 2017-2018
Education: MS in Political Science/ Mass Communications, AMU,/Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
AMU Stay: 1971 to 1982
I have also been involved with FAAA since its inception. In 2016 I was chosen as President-Elect in Phoenix . I am the first female President of FAAA. I hosted a successful convention in San Francisco. I have been the strong supporter of EGO Project and currently serving as Co-Chairperson.



Dr. Nausha Asrar **Houston, TX**
Term: 2018-2019
Education: Ph.D. in Material Science, AMU and The Moscow State University, USSR
AMU Stay: 1973 to 1983
1 - Resolution of long pending FAAA membership issue of two AMU Alumni Associations of Washington DC area.; 2 - FAAA donated $ 9500.00 for promotion of education and literature.; 3 - Committee formed for review and modification of FAAA By-laws.



Dr. Rasheed Ahmad **Atlanta, GA**
Term: 2019-2020
Education: Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta
AMU Stay: 1980 to 85
Attended the first FAAA meeting in Washington DC in 2001. Served in BOT in 2004 and hosted the 2006 FAAA Convention in Atlanta. In Summer University, gave full-day workshops on environmental engineering to AMU engineering and polytechnic students. Currently, serving the coordinator of 2019 FAAA Convention in Atlanta.

**All the profiles are based on responses received from FAAA presidents to a set of questionnaires sent out in May, 2019. For late Muzaffar Habib and late Dr. Masarrat Ali, the sources are noted in the profile.*

FEDERATION OF ALIGARH ALUMNI ASSOCAITION-ANNUAL REPORT 2004

Presented by Dr. Abdullah, Founding President of FAAA at its 2004 Annual Convention in New York

Dear Friends;

Welcome to the third annual convention of Aligarh Alumni Association. Your presence here from far away place on a short notice, is a testimony of your commitment to Aligarh cause. Since it is the first occasion that we are presenting an annual report of the Federation; therefore I shall briefly cover the background, accomplishments and recommendations to make improvements.

BACKGROUND FOR THE MAKING OF THE FEDERATION:

Since the mid-seventies, we have been proposing the idea of forming a federation (or national organization) of Aligarh Alumni Associations. In fact, in the late seventies and early eighties, such determined efforts were made twice. However, these efforts did not materialize. These efforts suffered from 2 major handicaps. First, the Associations were small in number. Only three Associations were in existence (Washington, Atlanta, and Chicago). Secondly, there was a lack of means of communication among these organizations.

In the late eighties, the Aligarh Alumni Association – Washington started organizing Mushairas on National level. With the cooperation of Urdu Markaz International, they were able to stage Mushairas in various cities across the United States. Through this process, more Aligarh Alumni Associations were formed. By mid nineties, we had Aligarh Alumni Associations in 7 cities.

In late nineties, Dr. Shaheer Khan (from San Francisco) initiated AMU Network, a forum in which information and new ideas could be exchanged about AMU, and its Alumni. This new medium also helped, Dr. Asad Ahmad (from Edmonton, Canada) to make the Summer University project a success.

With the increasing number of Associations, the availability of AMU network, and the success of the Summer University, a renewed interest in the rejuvenation of Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations was born. The first convention of the Aligarh Alumni Association was held in Washington, on May 26-27, 2001. This was accomplished due to the diligence and dedication of Shaheer Khan, Muzaffar Habib, Ahmad Raza, Hasan Kamal and A. Abdullah and the much-needed support of Asad Ahmad, Aftab Ansari, Masood Khan, Shakila Raza, Rahat Khan and Aisha Khan.

In this convention, after extensive surveys and lengthy deliberations, the aims, objectives and the structure of the proposed Federation were decided. It was also resolved to form a National Federation as opposed to International Federation. A working committee was nominated to draft the constitution. This committee included Shaheer Khan, Asad Ahmad, Hasan Kamal, Ahmad Raza, Perwaiz Jafri, Muzaffar Habib, Ashfaq Qureshi, Hashima Hasan and myself.

The second convention was held in San Francisco on May 26-27, 2002. In this convention, the draft constitution was adopted with some minor changes. The following members were elected in various offices on ad hoc basis:

- Abdullah (President)
- Shaheer Khan (Secretary)
- Muzaffar Habib, Perwaiz Jafri, Hasan Kamal and Zille Khan (Directors)
- Ahmad Raza, Amtul Suhail, Habib Zuberi, Nihal Khan, Wasi Siddiqui (Board of Trustees)
- Aftab Ansari (Advisor to Board &Trustees.)

During this convention, much discussion revolved around the decision to establish The Aligarh Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund got a big boost when Dr. Hasan Kamil, in his valedictory address announced a donation of $100,000 as the working capital for the fund. A detailed report will be presented later in the program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Five new Aligarh Alumni Associations have joined the Federation. At present, we have 11 Associations in USA and 2 in Canada. They are Washington DC (1975), Chicago (1980), Atlanta (1985), San Francisco (1996), New York (1998) Birmingham (1999), Houston (2001), Detroit (2001), Boston (2002), Phoenix (2002), Cleveland (2004). Two Associations in Toronto and Montreal have not yet joined the Federation.
- The constitution was written and adopted with thanks to Ahmad Raza, for drafting the constitution and Habib Zuberi, Aftab Ansari, Shaheer Khan and A. Abdullah for critical review.
- The Federation has been registered with thanks to Aftab Ansari and Shaheer Khan.
- The website of the Federation was developed and installed. (www.aligs.org)

- The Summer University and the AMU network, the major motivational factors in forming the Federation continue to serve the Aligarh cause. Our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Shaheer Khan and Prof. Asad Ahmed.

- The Annual Sir Syed Day Mushaira which was managed by Washington DC chapter is now being organized under the auspices of the Federation in collaboration of Urdu Markaz.

- The annual souvenir magazine, which used to be published by the New York Chapter, is now being published under the banner of the Federation. We appreciate the dedicated work of Masood Haider and Shaheer Khan.

- Initial work towards the Endowment Fund has been completed, with dedicated efforts of Hasan Kamil, Talat Hasan, Shaheer Khan, Aftab Ansari, Ahmad Raza, Nihal Khan, and A.Abdullah.

- In response to our request, a number of projects have been received from AMU. These projects need financial support. Thanks to Aftab Ansari for his initiative and follow through.

I am fully conscious that our progress has been slow. We need more volunteers to expedite our work. It is needless to say that the Federation is not an independent organization. It is an Organization of Organizations. It is simply a coordinating and advisory body. The Federation will be stronger and energized if and only if the member Organizations take initiative. I share Dr. Shaheer Khan's frustration that many member Associations do not respond to any correspondence. This shows a lack of motivation in the member Organizations. In this regard, I regret not being able to devote the needed time to motivate other Associations to increase their participation in the Federation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Implement strictly the membership requirements.

- Hold regular monthly conference call meetings of elected representatives.

- Increase pool of volunteers from the pool of retired people; include those who are not 'Aligs' but 'Aligarian' in spirit.

- Modify the format of the convention to include families, especially the younger generation.

- Involve member associations by assigning specific projects.

- Organize fund raising activities (e.g. entertainment programs) and share the proceeds with the participating chapters.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND THANKS:

Before I end, I would like to thank a number of people to whom I feel personally indebted, who share my dream and helped to make it a reality.

- First and foremost: Hasan Kamal, who worked hand in hand to establish AAA Washington in 1975 and continues to work to strengthen the Aligarh bond.

- Jamil Ahmad: for his help in planting the seeds of the Mushaira tradition and Salaam Qureshi sahib for financial support in the early days.

- Nayyar Apa: for her continued efforts organize Mushairas in various cities.

- Umar Farooq: for his work as the fourth President of AAA Washington, and his support of the first attempt for the formation of the National Association.

- Muzaffar Habib and Shaheer Khan: for renewing the idea for the formation of Federation.

- Raza Bhai and Aftab Ansari: for their diligent support in preparing necessary documents.

- Last but not the least- Shaheer Khan: Like a younger brother, he put in extra effort to compensate my shortcomings. I do not have words for expressing my appreciation "*kaha ju kuch to tera husn ho gaya mahdood*."

Today, let us find ways to mobilize member Associations. Only through active involvement of member Associations, the Federation will become vibrant. Let us find ways to improve our communication and coordination of our activities. Together, Inshallah we will succeed in achieving our goals. We have come a long way, yet we have a long distance to go. In the words of Tagor, "The song I came to sing has remained unsung." I believe my song is now everyone's song. Soon we will be singing it in choruses, which will be heard all over the world. "*Jo Abr Yaheen Se Uthe ga woh Sare Jahan Par Barse ga; Yeh Abr Hamesha Barsa Hey, Yeh Abr Hamesha Barsay Ga*." Thanks for your patience

ALIGARH ZINDABAD

FAAA Conventions At A Glance

Compiled by Dr. Rasheed Ahmad, Atlanta

Year	Host City	Chief Guest	Theme of the Convention
2001	Washington DC		TO FORM A NATIONAL FEDERATION AND APPOINT A COMMITTEE TO COME UP WITH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND BYLAWS
2002	San Francisco	Dr. Hasan Kamil and Ms. Talat Hasan, San Francisco, California	TO APPROVE THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
2004	New York	H.E. Mr. Ishrat Aziz, Former Indian Diplomat	MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS
2005	Chicago	Mr. M. A. A. Fatmi, Minister of State, Ministry of Human Resource Development	MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS
2006	Atlanta	Justice A. M. Ahmadi, AMU Chancellor and Former Chief Justice of India	ALIGARH MOVEMENT IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM
2007	Cleveland	Mr. Ram Jethmalani, Former Union Law Minister and Chairman of the Bar Council of India	EDUCATION FOR THE UNDER-PRIVILEGED IN INDIA
2008	Cleveland	Dr. P. K. Abdul Azis, Vice-Chancellor AMU	PARTNERSHIP OF FEDERATION AND AMU FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
2009	Boston	Dr. D.P. Agarwal, Chairman, Union Public Service Commission	DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR FAAA IN ADVANCING EDUCATION
2010	Chicago	Mr. Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs	NEW TRENDS IN EDUCATION: BALANCING TRADITIONAL VALUES & PROGRESS
2011	Washington DC	Dr. Islam Siddiqui, Assistant Secretary for Trade in Clinton Administration	EDUCATION TO SERVE AT GRASS ROOT LEVEL FOR AMU AND OTHER COMMUNITIES
2012	Cleveland	Mr. Jawed Akhtar, MP (Rajya Sabha)	HOW TO REVAMP THE FEDERATION
2013	Houston	Lt. Gen. Zameeruddin Shah (Retd.), Vice Chancellor AMU	NEW GENERATION ALUMNI & ALIGARH MOVEMENT
2014	Chicago	Mr. Nadeem Tarin, Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, Saudi Arabia	ROLE OF ALUMNI IN ADVANCEMENT OF ALMA MATER
2015	Houston	Brig. (Retd.) Syed Ahmad Ali, Pro-Vice Chancellor AMU	ADVANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN
2016	Phoenix	Lt. Gen. Zameeruddin Shah (Retd.), Vice Chancellor AMU Spoke by Skype	CONNECT AND ADVANCE SYNERGIES BETWEEN AMU AND FAAA'
2017	San Francisco	Professor Tariq Mansoor Vice Chancellor AMU	ENHANCING COORDINATION BETWEEN AMU AND THE FAAA
2018	Houston	Dr. Shahid Jameel CEO of The Wellcome Trust/ DBT India Alliance	ROLE OF AMU ALUMNI IN NATION BUILDING
2019	Atlanta	Mr. Ravish Kumar, Journalist and TV Anchor, NDTV, India	SIR SYED'S VISION AND THE 21ST CENTURY



A Glimpse of Current and Past Initiatives of FAAA

Dr. Saif Sheikh, Chicago, IL

Current Initiatives/Programs

1.0 Advancing Educational Opportunities for Girls and Orphan (EGO) - Career & Guidance Center Initiative

FAAA Members Initiatives taken toward Girls Education and Empowerment

It is a well-known fact that development of any community, society and Country depends on the literacy of women. Most developing countries including the India, the rate of literacy in women is dismal especially in the rural area that results in low self-esteem, child malnutrition and economic growth.

There are several member organizations involved in various education programs for upliftment of women in India. Aligarh Alumni Association of Chicago (AMUAA-GC) has undertaken over 20 projects including building of classrooms, toilets and establishment of computer facilities in various parts of India. AMUAA-GC also provided funds for renovation of reading rooms at Abdullah Hall. Aligarh Alumni Associations of California, Michigan and Washington DC offer scholarships to AMU students including Girls to support them financially. Aligarh Alumni Association of Arizona has provided book bank services at the Girls College.

Coaching and Guidance center was inaugurated at Abdullah College in 2017 and since then tutoring of girl students needing help with their subjects have been initiated. A total amount of $4000 was collected from individuals and Arizona Alumni Association. Additional, $5000 was sent by FAAA earlier this year to support the Coaching and guidance center.



2.0 FAAA financial supports

1. Summer internship (To Mr. Rishabh, Student of ZHCET): $2000 for medical insurance and accommodation during his stay in USA (Rishabh received research internship in the field of composite materials at State University of New York at Buffalo under the supervision of Prof. Deborah D. L. Chung).
2. AMU Literary Club for Lit. Fest. 2019 (To Mr. Ansab Amir Khan): $1600.0
3. Shaikh Abdullah (Papa Mian) Award to High School a Boy and Girl (Merit based): $800 ($400 each)

3.0 Aligs' Academic Enrichment Program (AAEP)

Summer University was started by Professor Asad Ahmed at AMU that was supported by several other Professors and eminent scientist to benefit students at Aligarh Muslim University. After his demise it continued as Aligarh Open University (AOU) that was launched by FAAA on February 14, 2017. The mission was to share the knowledge with current students of Aligarh Muslim University and enhance the classroom learning experience through AMU alumni settled across the globe. AOU also helped AMU alumni to collaborate with the faculty of the university. Now this program is called Aligs' Academic Enrichment Program (AAEP) which is run by Prof Syed Ziaur Rahman (Coordinator, AAEP).

4.0 Mushaira Programs

Every year FAAA coordinates Mushaira at member associations location where renowned Poets from India and Pakistan are invited. This tradition is continuing since the inception of FAAA and it is one of the key recurring activity where funds are generated to be used for educational and charitable purposes.

5.0 FAAA Annual Conventions

Annual conventions are a great platform where all the member associations get an opportunity to share updates, ideas and projects that helps them to learn from each other and get more accomplished together. It also gives an opportunity to the attendees to meet with University administration, faculty and staff who travel to US. Several Vice Chancellors also attended the events in the past including Professor Abdul Azis, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Zameeruddin Shah and current Vice Chancellor Professor Tariq Mansoor.



Past Projects

Following is a summary of the FAAA projects completed.

1. In 2005-6, FAAA raised funds to establish computer facility at a Girls Hostel in AMU. This enabled the Girls to have access to the computers
2. Digitization of the Sir Syed books and Journals. Over 100,000 pages were digitized of the books and Journals written by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. For more information visit http://aligs.org/new-projects/
3. Maulana Azad library was provided 78 new books

4. FAAA donated over $10,000 towards Polio Eradication program. It benefitted thousands of children from poor families
5. FAAA responded to Vice Chancellors call to build smart classrooms at AMU campus. It coordinated to raise over $150,000 from AMU alumni and associations.
6. FAAA participated in various meetings and helped AMU in opening of the other AMU campuses in India
7. FAAA enabled several Memorandum of Understanding with various universities in the United States



Summary

Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations serves as a platform to serve alma mater in various ways by collaborating with member associations, alumni and well-wishers. Several programs have been undertaken including capital projects to support the university. There are other initiatives that are currently in progress. The key objectives of FAAA are to promote following.

a) Closer cooperation and better understanding among member-organizations
b) Closer social and cultural cohesiveness among, student body, alumni, and well-wishers of the University, as also the community
c) Interest of the University, its student body, alumni and well - wishers from the community
d) Promote education among the under-privileged communities in India

Aligarh Education Endowment Fund (AEEF)

A Fund to Educate the Underprivileged Communities in India

A Non-Profit 501 © (3) Educational & Charitable Organization

Tax ID No. 20-100034

www.aeef.us

PROJECTS FOR 2019-2020

- Scholarships for 100 meritorious and economically weak students across India (up to $300/year/student)
- Sponsor 200 students at feeder institutions ($120/year/student)
- Sponsor 5 students for mentorship program ($1000/student)
- Sponsor 5 students at premier institutions (IIT's, AIIMS, IIM's, TFIR, & IISc) of higher education in India (**$1,600/year/student)**
- Continue supporting the vocational training center in Aligarh ($3600/year)
- Mid-Day snacks at Hamara School 6 days/week for 350 students (~$16000/year)
- Scholarships for Teaching and Research Improvement at JMI ($5000)
- Development Grants - Supporting infrastructure improvement and back to school giveaway at schools in poor neighborhoods (Project cost for two schools $20,000)

AEEF's total distribution target for the academic year 2019-2020 is ~$112,000

Your support for these projects will be appreciated!



AMU & ME

David Dichter*, Ph.D., New Jersey

It all started with my saying to the Indian Embassy Educational Counselor in Washington that I wanted to study Asian Geography in his country. After some reflection, he recommended that Aligarh was where I should go! Six months later, I arrived on a P&O boat from UK amid all the turmoil and chaos of Ballard Pier near 'India Gate' in Bombay. Then it was the long overnight 'Inter-Class' train journey to Delhi and finally on to Aligarh and the bumpy tonga ride to the walled AMU quadrangle quietly set-apart some distance from the RR station and bustling, vibrant and noisy Aligarh city.

I was shocked, of course, to learn when I arrived, that the University authorities had no idea who I was, nor that I had come 'recommended' by anyone in particular….. they seemed both confused and amused by my unannounced presence, but nevertheless, were clearly glad to have me, and in fact soon knew what to do with me. I was assigned – at least on an interim basis – to MacDonald Hostel, which at the time served as some sort of collection point for all sorts of wayward foreigners like myself.

In fact, my first contacts there were with several government scholars from Tanzania (one subsequently became the Chief Justice of that new African Country) who not only immediately befriended me, but also *'showed me the ropes'* in getting myself organized so that I might learn how to cope with my new life at AMU. This included such basic necessities as getting my 'charpai' made; which included buying the cloth for the mattress, the raw cotton to stuff it with and cleaned, including having the seeds removed, and also finding the people in a certain part of the Aligarh City bazzar who would do the necessary 'stitching' for me.

My short introductory stay at Mac Donald Hostel, had the advantage of being only a short walk to the all-purpose Shamshad District market place, which I soon learned was a great place to visit and shop if you wanted to buy fresh fruit, get a haircut (for 5 annas), have clothes made, including my one and only 'Sherwani + Kamiz' and even enjoy having a cup of tea with your friends at one of a number of outdoor stalls and enjoy the local snack favorite…*'namek para.'*

But, shortly thereafter, my Aligarh City-made 'charpai' and I were assigned to 77 SS West Hostel, and it was there that my formal life at AMU really got started. That included my introduction to AMU's unique 'hand-operated' toilet system, sleeping outside in the courtyard under mosquito-netting with my trusty flashlight, and getting to know my 4 other room mates; one of whom was from Trichur in South India, who I came to learn he and his other Mallayallam-speaking friends were taking advantage of AMU's special "Two Degree" program.

I also took the opportunity to join AMU's basketball team, ended-up landing in AMU's hospital for a stint with stomach problems and also started to learn how to become a part and parcel of daily student life, although I found it hard to convince many of my Aligarhian colleagues why I, an American, would wish to study at AMU, whereas so many of them were anxious to take up an academic program in the USA. The fact that 77 SS West was just next to the Mosque was slightly problematic, however, especially when you were sleeping outside and a tempting target for certain students who were on their way to early-morning prayers!

Fortunately, Prof. Mohammed Habib, took an interest in me and I also had a bevy of other great lecturers such as Prof. Mohd. Ali in the Department of Geography and the brilliant lecturer Matin Uzzaman in the Political Science Department, to keep me focused and well prepared for my final exams. In fact, I have always regarded Prof. Matin Uzzaman as one of the best teachers I had in my entire academic career. And, whereas my fellow students were quite 'respectful' of such distinguished lecturers, many were also quite merciless, insulting and ill-tempered when it came to those mild-mannered teachers who taught us subjects like English literature and poetry!

Being a good class 'note-taker, I soon found out how that this turned out to be a decided advantage for me at Aligarh, especially when I came to learn that there were few if any reference books available to the students, even though many could be seen – but not to be removed for distribution and use - from behind glass cases in the University library.

Describing some of my experiences at AMU would not be complete, however, if I did not also mention here about the train journeys I made during the University holiday periods – traveling 3rd Class, because that was all I could afford - from Assam to Cape Comorin and from Bombay to Kashmir. And, when I say *learning how to travel long distances 3rd Class* , that means jumping into a rail car as it was moving from the assembly yards to the station, and then quickly deciding whether you wanted to put your bed roll in the baggage rack (and lay prostrate for the entire journey) or else stake out a seat for yourself and sit up-right for the entire trip. And, after the train started moving, it also meant joining forces with the other people in your compartment to try and make sure no other people were able (including potential *dacoits)* from gaining access to your car. It also involved eating food from vendors on the station platform who shoved watery curry dishes and chapatis at you through the iron bars in your 'bogie.'

However, what I really came to appreciate from these trips was when my train arrived at a station in India at dinner time, which was a scene I will never forget, especially when I found myself limited – like everyone else around me – in selecting only those dishes which I could afford at the time. I think it was only then that I was truly able to appreciate the fact that I had by now effectively 'bonded' myself with the people, sounds, smells and seeming chaos of India, and that included being able to deal with the monkeys who were bent on stealing whatever food they could from me! But, fortunately by the time my train reached Aligarh, I still had enough change in my pocket so that I could arrange to get a rickshaw back to my quiet, secure AMU hostel.

It must be said, however, that at one time or another there was some kind of student 'manifestation' going on at AMU – either directly or indirectly sponsored by the AMU Student Union, and more often than not it had to do with student fees and tuition matters, but one incident in particular which fully galvanized student interest at the time, and which I must admit, I failed to comprehend, and much less appreciate, was the stand taken by the bulk of the student body who called for the expulsion of a certain male and female student from AMU, for the sole reason ….that they had merely been seen together on their own in Agra!

AMU also gave me the opportunity to live in Amin Hostel for a period of time with many Hindu students, under the leadership of that very special Warden Kidwai Sahib. Although only a short distance from the main campus, I found that experience was also very fulfilling especially when you consider that the person living next to me was a devout Jain who would only take his meals during daylight hours in

order to avoid coming into contact with insects who might accidentally fall into his food and be devoured by him.

So, these are some of the wonderful things I remember from my student days at AMU. It was great having friends like Mohd Shafi Quereshi, who headed the Student Union and later became the Federal Minister of Railways as well as my devout Bengali pal Mohd Elias Razi and also those remarkable students from South India. However, this account of "Me and AMU" would not be complete without my mentioning my new and close U.S.-based Aligarh friend Syed Rizvi who has done so much to help 're-introduce' me to my former *alma maeter* and all the great and positive things that have come to mean in my life as a consequence.

Finally, I feel it is worth mentioning here that on completing my studies at AMU in May 1954, I went to Delhi and arranged to buy an old re-conditioned ex-British Army WWII motorcycle Delhi and during the next 4 months traveled back to UK via Pakistan, Afghanistan. Iran, Turkey and Greece etc. in order to learn as much as I could about that unique part of the world. In fact, it was my travels through Pashto-speaking Pakistan and the Khyber Pass region that I first came into contact with the Pathan tribal people and the enduring impression which they had on me; so much so that later I wrote my MA thesis at the Clark University Graduate School of Geography in Worcester, Mass. about Khan Abdul Gaffer Khan and "Pakhtunistan," and some 5 years after that carried out my post-graduate studies on the Pathans in NWFP for Birkbeck College, London University.

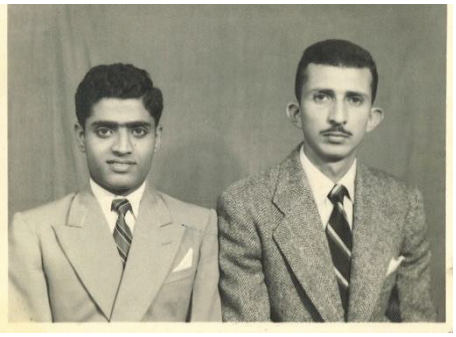
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**David Dichter is a 1954 BA graduate of AMU. He lives in Linwood, New Jersey. Dr. Dichter may be among very few US citizens who studied at AMU in that period.*

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Left to Right: Photo#1. Author (front right), Mohd Eliaz Razi (back left), **Photo#2**: Author (middle), Mohd Elias Razi (immediate right to author) in front of Strachey Hall, **Photo#3**: Author (right) with Sir Syed Hall roommate, Abraham "Avarachim"

With Best Compliments From

Absar A. Mirza, MD

Alpharetta, GA

For a Successful and Safe 18th FAAA Annual Convention



Aligarh to Albuquerque: Journey of Milestones

Abbas Akhil*, House Representative, New Mexico Assembly

I came to Aligarh from Hyderabad to join the Engineering program and spent 5 wonderful years of my life as a student of AMU. The AMU period was a different phase of my life where I lived independently from the sheltered life of growing up with family at home. I was assigned Room 22, Agha Khan hostel, Sulaiman Hall. Eventually moving to Kuwait House in a single room which was regarded the height of luxury in the hierarchy of hostel life. I finished my Mechanical Engineering degree and left AMU in 1971. I participated in activities outside of the engineering curriculum - debating and as the assistant editor for the University newspaper - the Aligarian. Nasiruddin Shah was also in AMU at that time and was honing his acting skills. He staged a few plays and I managed the sound and effects for his plays that were staged in Kennedy Hall.

In 1972 I came to the US to pursue an MS in Industrial Engineering at New Mexico State University which I completed in 1974/1975. After graduation my wife Habiba and I stayed on in New Mexico and made Albuquerque our home. My family also grew and our three children were born and grew up in Albuquerque. Over the years the Muslim population grew. We built our own masjid and I served on the governing board several times. As soon as 9/11 happened, it was obvious that we needed strong relationships with other faith communities and to better integrate into the larger community. I became active in interfaith work and built up a large network of friends in the community. Years later this network was paid off during my election campaign as many of the volunteers who phone banked and knocked on doors came from this network of friends.

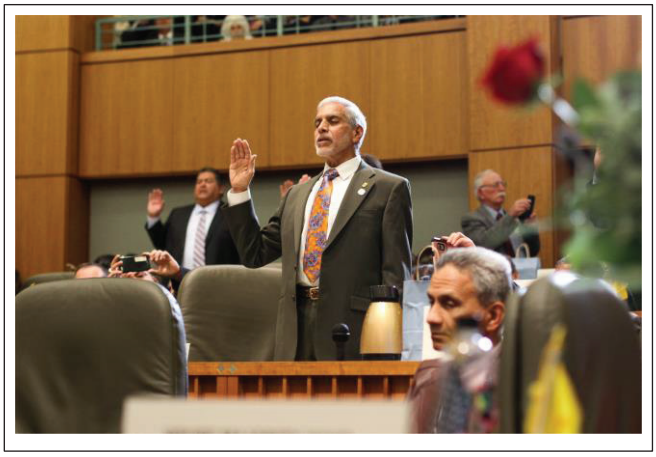
The Democratic Party leadership approached me in 2018 to run for office. My initial reaction was negative because engineers are generally not good politicians. But they persisted and I started to rethink my position. First, President Trump's constant put down of immigrants was unacceptable and getting elected to a state office would refute his narrative that immigrants are second class citizens and a burden on the national economy. Second, my technical expertise in renewable energy would be very useful in the legislature because New Mexico was poised to shift from coal-based electricity to deeply renewable sources. If elected I would be able to use that expertise to pass laws that would make this transition sooner and smoother. Under more pressure from the Democratic Party I accepted their proposition to run for the Representative seat which was coming up for election that same year. One question remained: my wife, as wives always do, raised the red flag of money - how much would the campaign cost and where would that money come from? The race will likely cost a hundred thousand dollars and that money would have to be raised from party supporters, family and friends.

My district is the entire southeast segment of Albuquerque with a high ratio of Republicans who have not elected a Democrat in two decades. My opponent would be a two-term incumbent Republican who was well entrenched with his base of affluent middle class voters. He also happens to live on the same street that I live on. As soon as I accepted the race was on and I had a campaign manager, a field operations director and a back room operations manager in very short order. As the campaign kicked off I was the unknown entity and polls showed me trailing my opponent by 16 points. That would have been enough to stop the campaign in its tracks. But my campaign manager was undeterred: she relishes running and winning difficult campaigns and this campaign would be no different for her. Over the next five months I knocked on over 3,000 doors, mostly Republican and independents. My job was to meet these voters at their door and persuade them to support me. My volunteer force worked with the Democratic base to secure their votes. There was a parallel mail campaign - 70,000 mailers sent to almost every household in the district. On voting night my race was watched closely: I had an initial lead of only 50 votes and the lead grew to 115 by the time all 11,800 ballots were counted. The victory was exhilarating and every dollar spent and door knocked paid off.

I was sworn in on January 15, 2019 and I became the first Asian American and Muslim to be elected to the legislature. In the first session of my term, I sponsored 30 pieces of legislation and 6 of my bills were signed into law by the Governor.

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**Abbas Akhil is the first Muslim elected to the New Mexico House of Representatives. He and his wife have made New Mexico their home for the last 47 years and raised their family there. He earned his degree in Mechanical Engineering from AMU in 1971*





Abbas Akhil at the Oath-Taking Ceremony as House Rep of the New Mexico Assembly in 2019

PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESS SHAPE WHO WE ARE



Zainul Kidwai*, Atlanta, GA

We as American citizens are proud that the political landscape of the United States is changing dramatically. It is changing in a way that will bring equal representation to all of us. Just recently we as educated voters elected into office some remarkable people. Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib were the FIRST MUSLIM WOMEN elected to congress. Abbas Akhil an Aligarian was first Muslim elected to New Mexico State Senate. Not only were they recent immigrant, but they were Muslim. Furthermore, Tlaib was a Palestinian immigrant. Omar was a Somalian immigrant and Akhil was Indian immigrant. This was an amazing achievement. How did they succeed in doing so? Their political involvement, social interactions, community work and education of the voter were some of the things that made this possible.

Aligarh Muslim University Alumni should be front and center in the political arena. There should be more involvement of the alumni in political process, voting, community work and making a difference. We need to be represented and our voices heard. No one should understand the political and democratic system better than Aligarians. This includes what changes it can bring to our communities.

We are no strangers to politics. Aligarh had and still has a well defined system to involve students in democratic process. The Aligarh Muslim University Students Union is the representative body for students. It is based loosely on the structure of the Cambridge University in the UK. The AMUSU was a group who established student government through debates on students community issues on campus. Held elections in a stringent manner. We canvassed our ideas to the voters. We held speeches and debates among candidates. That was 50 years ago and is still alive and well today. I was in VM Hall (group of hostels) which has very strong student union taking care of students need and issues at Hall level. We had strong opinions that our students should have a voice through student government. Then there were other series of responsibilities such as Senior hall, Proctor monitor, Food monitor, Secretary, literary club, sports club, common room and many other bodies given to students to make student life easier at the same time training students to prepare and lead in future for practical life. It was responsibility to all office bearers to honor their commitments. The students were not disappointed. They helped promote better student life throughout the year. The aim was to know what our students wanted and provide it to them.

Today we would like to see the same kind of zeal and enthusiasm for where we live today. Just as students, we were actively involved in making informed decisions on our candidates. The candidates who would look after our interests and wellbeing. The same as we did all those years ago. Now we have a responsibilities to our family and communities to bring in those who can make a difference. We must be actively involved in some way. It may be canvassing for our candidates. Or it may be helping to raise awareness for their agendas. It may be helping with the election process itself and fund raising. It may be by attending speeches and debates. It may be by asking questions. Simply… it may be done by casting a vote. Exercising our rights to cast a vote. No longer can we sit casually and see others take center stage. While our issues and concerns are left behind. While we were making a difference to our fellow students so many years ago. It is time to make a difference in the society we live in today. Aligarh University not only bestowed upon us its quest of teaching knowledge, but also its adoration of the political and democratic process. Its our turn now to make Aligarh proud.

**Zainul Kidwai is an AMU alumnus (1959-1965). Worked as Geologist/Project Manager for Department of Defense (DoD) and for energy and engineering companies. Retired in 2013 and now resides in Atlanta.*

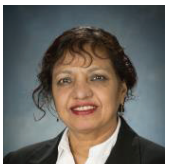
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For a Successful 18th FAAA Annual Convention (July 26-28, 2019)



Indo-US AMU-OSU STEM Education and Research Center



Dr. Anil Pradhan* and Dr. Sultana N. Nahar*, Ohio State University (OSU)

For the past seven years the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) has had an extensive collaboration with the Ohio State University (OSU). In 2013 the OSU-AMU partnership won the highly competitive award under the Indo-US 21st Century Knowledge Initiative for "***Training STEM Faculty at Higher Education Institutions in India"***, sponsored by the US-India Education Foundation (USIEF). This 4-year (2013-2017) award trained two batches of eight AMU PhD students at OSU, the first batch for nearly two years with two semesters at OSU, and the other for nearly one year with one semester at OSU. Under this project, OSU has developed a unique and novel two-year dual degree PhD-MA (STEM) program that trains students to: I) acquire world-class teaching skills as professors, and II) carry out cutting edge research with OSU advisors in their own STEM discipline as part of their doctoral research, with long-term collaborations to lead projects in India. The eight senior PhD students hailed from the departments of physics, chemistry, biochemistry, biotechnology, nanotechnology, mathematics, and zoology at AMU. They have gone on to secure faculty positions in India and postdoctoral positions abroad, and win national and international honors. The over-arching goal is to meet India's need to train at least 300,000 faculty members for existing and planned institutions of higher education for over 150 million students. The USIEF financial support was matched several times over by OSU, with local support from AMU faculty and administrative officials at all levels.

The USIEF-OSU-AMU project culminated in the establishment of the Indo-US Center of Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education and Research (STEM-ER) at AMU. The STEM-ER center is operational and has been named after the preeminent Indian scientist APJ Abdul Kalam, also former President of India. In April 2017, AMU allocated the space and provided basic infrastructure for the APJAK Center. The Center was formalized with organizational structure to: (i) fundraising activities, (ii) continue STEM faculty training program for postgraduate students, and extend it nationally to enroll students from other Indian institutions, and (iii) conduct outreach STEM activities for underprivileged school students. The APJAK STEM Center is now located in the Zakir Hussain Applied Physics building, and has a smart classroom with computerized audio-visual facilities, computer laboratory, office and laboratory space. We have funding to set-up a computer lab at the Center for lectures and hands-on learning, such as for underprivileged students, and on-line digital courses. The Center co-directors are: Profs. Tauheed Ahmad and Farukh Arjmand from AMU and Profs. Sultana Nahar and Anil Pradhan from OSU.

In 2014 and 2016 AMU and OSU partnered to organize joint Nanotechnology conferences, Aligarh Nano IV and V respectively, as well as the first international conference on STEM-ER in India in 2016. Also, an Indo-US consortium of universities has been formed to foster collaboration in STEM fields between Indian and US universities. Recently, The Center sponsored 24 undergraduate research projects across AMU in various STEM disciplines.

Among other notable collaborations is the recently completed year-long competitive project supported by a US Mission in India award to OSU for **"Women in STEM Roadshows**", to instruct and encourage female college students from minority and disadvantaged groups for further studies in STEM fields in the US and India. The project team, led by US Coordinators Sultana Nahar (Principal Investigator), Karen Irving, and Nasreen Haque, and many Indian counterparts, conducted 9 workshops across India during an intensive 3-week period in February 2018 in six cities, Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, Hyderabad, Kurnool and Aligarh. There were approximately 400 participants from a number of colleges in the designated cities. The workshops were inaugurated by several dignitaries, including Dr. Najma Heptullah, currently Governor of Manipur and former Speaker of the Parliament. The program was based at and concluded at AMU with the last workshop organized by the APJAK STEM Center, which also monitored follow-up activities of participants. An extensive report is available at the website: http://www.astronomy.ohio-state.edu/~nahar/womenstemroadshow.html.

The most recent exemplar of the burgeoning AMU-OSU collaboration is the highly prestigious **"Leadership for Academicians Programme"** (LEAP) sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD) of the Government of India. The program entails partnerships between the foremost Indian educational institutions and foreign universities with global ranking within the top 100. Each partnership involves up to 30 LEAP participants who are senior professors selected from central universities across India for training as academic leaders through leadership workshops in India and abroad. The week-long OSU LEAP workshop is co-sponsored by the Indo-US APJAK Center and will be held in September 2019.

**Dr. Pradhan and Dr. Nahar are Professors in the Dept. of Astronomy, OSU, Columbus, OH*



Dr. Ellen Carpenter from the US National Science Foundation visited the Center in November 2017 and met the VC Dr. Tariq Mansoor with Center Co-Director Prof. Farukh Arjmand



"Women in STEM Roadshow" Coordinators and staff at the Indo-US APJAK STEM Center

THE SEEDS HE SOWED ARE BEARING FRUITS: ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY IS A VIBRANT VENTURE FOR MODERN INDIA



Syed M. Naseem*, Maryland

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a Social Reformer, Activist, Educationalist, and Politician. After the defeat at the First War of Independence in 1857, Sir Syed became the leading founder of the Muslim Reform Movement, which eventually came to known as Aligarh Movement. The message of the movement was simple; that in spite of hardship, the struggle must continue. What occurred in the past must not hinder the efforts of today, but instead, should be used as a tool to strive for a better future. The movement effectively demonstrated and integrated many issues pertinent to Muslim intellectual, cultural, religious aspirations and that Islamic teachings and traditions were a great asset and provided enormous strength to Indian Muslims through their struggles to be successful in life.

Sir Syed Ahmad khan envisioned Aligarh as Oxford of the Muslim world by producing a highly progressive and sophisticated Muslim sorority with a blend of both East and West, through social and religious liberal ideas and communal unity was valued. The Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), therefore, is not merely a seat of learning but the nerve center of the Aligarh Movement, which Sir Syed Ahmad Khan launched to give direction, purpose, self-reliance, and self-respect to the Muslim of India, then and in the future as well. Directly or indirectly at one stage or the other, the Aligarh Movement touched the lives of all Muslims in the subcontinent.

It is crystal-clear that national progress depends on education and training. In a globalized world, a strong higher education system is essential for healthy competition, and the universities have the duty to serve its un-advantage groups, society, and community in scholarly work. We should recognize the level of excellence in the modern era of competition and approach, this issue with a fresh outlook and new ideas to ensure that AMU stays competitive. Aligarh Muslim University continues on the right path to fulfill Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's dream of the 19th century and India's mission for an educational revolution of the 21st century.

AMU became the focal point and modernizer for all economic, social, cultural, educational, political and religious motivation for the Muslims, and rightly became a great institution of higher edification and a great seat of learning in whole Asia. Aligarh was an extremely progressive, forward-thinking and pioneering institution. The university was the visible icon of the successful of sanity and advancement of Muslims in their daily life, throughout the Reform Movement that was initiated and accomplished in Aligarh.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, communities all over India have been moving towards progressive educational, political and cultural practices. In such a time of globalization, it is discomforting to see that many of India's 200 million Muslims are lagging behind their counterparts due to stagnant attitudes, the practice of conforming, especially in orthodoxical religious belief, and resistance to forward-looking change. New world economic policies, which stress the increase of privatization, liberalization, and globalization, demand a high quality of education. Such excellence in academia is the utmost prerequisite to lifting the Muslim community from its current position of backwardness.

The Aligarh Muslim University has served the Indian nation extremely well for more than a century. It has given its students the skills and confidence to venture out and make a mark in every corner of the globe. Today many of us AMU alumni are what we are because of our University. It is the binding force which defines an important aspect of our identity as Indian Muslims, and that is why we are concerned.

Aligarh Muslim University is the only institution in the whole Muslim world to salvage the scientific education with the Quran in one hand and science in the other along with the religious rational thinking as a pioneer modern institution, Aligarh has a responsibility to serve as hope and guiding light to spread education among the Muslim masses in the East.

Dr. Tayyaba Qidwi, a prominent Aligarian once wrote that Muslims in the world including India is passing through a deep troubling phase in the present century and are vulnerable to hate and suspicion propaganda. To prevail over, we must emulate Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who repetitively stressed a cordial rapport between other communities with open-mindedness and forward-looking approach.

There are several challenges we must face in the coming years. It is time for introspection to live up the expectation of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and ask ourselves whether and how we lost touch with the mission of the Aligarh Movement. If we fail to do this, we may have mixed feeling of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, of anxiety and hope. The satisfaction that we are Aligs with disappointment at having failed to do all that we expected to do for our alma mater, anxiety about what would happen to the future of AMU and hope that Allah (S.T.), the Merciful and Compassionate, will forgive us for the shortcoming due to our limitations and shortsightedness.

The question of whether AMU or its alumni are still following the spirit of the Aligarh Movement? We must define, redefine and pay attention to the essence of Reform Movement and Sir Syed Message for the Indian Muslims. AMU alumni are ineffective to provide any kind of articulated vision or leadership to re-adjust in a fast-changing world and in modern India. The alumni remained secluded from AMU tribulations or involved in revamping the destiny of Indian Muslims. Similarly, we failed to plant Sir Syed saplings in India where poverty and illiteracy so stubbornly endemic amongst Muslims, so that the Muslims, ultimately, regain the same glorious status of founders and promoters of Science and Technology as they did during the ascendance of their civilization.

Aligarh is going through a very perturbing period with anxious, concern, and anxiety caused by a relentless attempt to deprive its minority status by the current government and by its own fraternity conduct and performance. Aligarh Tahzeeb, known to be its legacy, tradition, culture, elegance, and its mission and the hope is fast fading away. Let us devote ourselves to the welfare of AMU, its legacy, tradition, its mission and the expectation that it represents the Muslims of the subcontinent. Let us pray AMU alumni to find a vision that goes beyond its tassel. In this regard, Dr. Sherwani Mustafa message is significant which is:

You must be indebted to the soul of Sir Syed

Who has left a place for you to make your nest?

Sir Syed speaks to you:

Do not show the face of Islam to others; instead, show your face as the follower of true Islam representing the character, knowledge, tolerance, and piety.

**The author is a Ph.D. from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU student from 1952-1970), also academic, educated, and trained at College of Physician and Surgeon, Columbia University, (New York), Harvard Medical School (Boston), and Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (Baltimore). Worked for 22 years as Senior Scientist on Biological Warfare Program of the United States Army, Fort Detrick, Maryland*

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My AMU DAYS: FOND MEMORIES

Syed R. Qasim*, Arlington, Texas

I completed my high School education from U.P. Education Board in 1952. It has been a tradition of our family to pursue college and higher education at Aligarh Muslim University. My father, uncle, brothers and cousins had studied at AMU. From our childhood we had heard stories about life and culture of AMU. In a way it ran in our blood. In early July 1952, I and three of my cousins followed the old family tradition and left from Allahabad to enroll in AMU. At that time my elder brother lived in Marris Hostel of V.M. Hall. So, all four of us stayed in Marris Hostel for a few days until the admission formalities were completed. We moved to Jubilee Hostel, V.M. Hall in a four-seated room. This room was adjacent to the V.M. Hall entrance gate on the right. Dr. Zakir Husain was the Vice Chancellor at that time, Dr. Noorul Hasan was the provost of V.M. Hall, and Dr. Wahiduddin Malik was the Warden of Jubilee Hotel.

We had heard from our elders the dreaded hazing/ragging stories of the introduction night and were very apprehensive about it. Finally, the introduction night came, and we were rounded up in groups. We had to comply with the wishes of the seniors. The hazing was severe; singing, acting and dialogues, telling a life incidence, reason for studying at AMU and future plans, were some of the intriguing questions asked. It was a fun filled night and we walked away with valuable advice from seniors about AMU traditions, values, ethics, respect for others, dress code and many more. We felt that the introduction night and the interaction with seniors was very valuable and served well during our stay and education at AMU, and later in life.

Our dining hall was in Nasrullah hostel of V.M. Hall. The food was always the same: daal, do roti (Dunlop) and do boti. Often, we sneaked an extra plate or roti; curtesy of our senior food monitor and dining hall staff. A kakab hawker was always handy in the verandah in front of the dining hall. A desert delight called "variety" for some reason was always served with Friday dinner. Once a month and on special occasions we had a special dinner served with biryani and some desert which included shahi tukre, rusmalai, gulab jamun or kheer. We always looked forward to these dinners.

Since high school, I was very active in athletics and in many other games. I had competed against AMU athletes at the U.P. Olympic Games before joining AMU and had represented the U.P. State Athletics team in the All India National Games. At AMU, I continued to play several games and sports in the university and hall teams and won championships in track and field competitions. Life was very busy and hard because of classes, homework, and evening practice in several teams. One bright spot in our daily routine was the special diet that was served by the athletic club during the sports season. It was a glass of milk, one half-boiled egg, and two slices of bread smeared with butter.

I did well in the second year Intermediate Exam and decided to stay in Aligarh to join some coaching classes to prepare for the engineering entrance exam. I continued to live in Jubilee Hostel. There were no other students living in V.M. Hall that summer. Chawkidar and I were the only two residents. In the mornings, I rode a bicycle to Shamshad Market for breakfast, attended coaching classes, and had lunch, and dinner in between. The nights in V.M. Hall were scary. I could hear barking of dogs, howling of jackals, and screams of hyena all night behind the tall boundary wall. By the end of June, the result of engineering entrance exam was announced, and I received the acceptance letter for B. Sc. Engineering program. After enrolling in the program, I moved to Sir Sulaiman Engineering (SSE) Hall. I was assigned a single seated room in the South Block. This room was at the end. There was a back door at the corner of South Block and East Block that exited near the swimming pool and the gymnasium.

During 1955 – 1956 session, I was appointed General Sports Captain of AMU, and moved to Aftab Hostel where General Sports Captain's suite was located on the upper floor. It had three rooms and a balcony and was fully furnished. One of my cousins joined me as my roommate. I would spend most of the evenings after dinner at SSE Hall for group studies, homework and class projects. Being the general sports captain, I had the opportunity to lead the AMU athletics team to U.P. Olympic Games held in Lucknow. Our team did very well in the competition; we won several events, and I set up a new U. P. Olympic record in high jump and represented U. P. team in the National Games. Additionally, our athletic team participated in All India Inter-University Athletic Championship held in Bangalore. Our team also visited Brindavan Gardens and Krishna Raj Sagar Dam in Karanatika. Our volleyball team participated in All India Inter-University Volleyball Tournament in Amritsar. We also played an exhibition game with the India Border Patrol team, and in the evening saw the India/Pakistan Guard Changing Ceremony.

Besides studies, and games and sports, our favorite seasonal entertainments were All India Mushaira, annual Students' Union elections; playing contract bridge in the University tournaments; roaming till midnight in Numaish followed by the old tradition of eating kabab paratha and drinking a cup of hot tea to flush down the throat. In our time, Ishtiaq Mohammad Khan composed AMU "Tarana" written by poet Majaz.

There have been many memorable events during my stay at AMU. I would like to mention one event when the Shah of Iran visited AMU. Shamyana and red carpets were all over. University professors, officials and distinguished guests joined the Shah at one large table for dinner, while all university captains, distinguished players, elected members of students' union, Senior Hall Monitors, and distinguished seniors joined Queen Soraya at another large table.

After completing my one-year assignment as General Sports Captain, I moved back to South Block of SSE Hall to complete my final year of civil engineering degree. At that time one year of practical training with government or in private sector was a part of the degree program. I completed my practical training with U.P. Irrigation Department, Sarda Canal Division in Sultanpur. Finally, I attended the 1958 convocation to receive my B. Sc. Civil Engineering Degree. Sir Radhakrishnan, former President of India was the convocation speaker. It was a memorable event.

It has been a great privilege and honor for me to spend a few years of my life at AMU. The experience and training were valuable. They taught me that I can survive anything and anywhere. I learned about gratitude and humility from teachers who inspired us, and from seniors and juniors who taught us to value everyone's contribution and treat others with respect and dignity. I consider myself very fortunate to be an *Aligarian* and have been able to support the education of several students from my alma mater.

**The author is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). He has over 47 years of involvement as an educator, researcher, and practitioner in the related fields of civil and environmental engineering and has served nationally and internationally as a consultant with government and private concerns. He has published four books that have won awards and are widely used around the world. He has conducted short courses and training programs for professionals in many countries. He is a Life member and Fellow of American Society of Civil Engineers, and a Life member of Water Environment Federation. The University of Texas at Arlington has established the Syed Qasim Endowed Professorship in Environmental Engineering to honor his dedicated service, positive influence on UTA students as well as furthering environmental engineering program at UTA.*

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Sayed Aamir, MD, Snellville, GA

For a Successful 18th FAAA Annual Convention (July 26-28, 2019)

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Pursue Life, not a Career

Asad Farooqui*, Atlanta

When my father first asked me to pen something for the Aligarh magazine, I was quite hesitant. I wasn't a student at the university that paved the path for so many like him, nor have I lived in Aligarh for an extended period of time to recognize the importance of the institute for not just its students but also the various citizens nearby. All I remember are vague remnants of an Aligarh vacation when I was 12. In fact, if my spotty memory serves me right, I took an abridged tour of the university campus with my sisters. We couldn't have taken more than a couple of "just so you know, we were here" pictures before rushing back home to avoid the sweltering July sun. So, as you can probably fathom, I am in no position to speak about the school or even its active alumni group that helms events throughout the year to maintain and celebrate the university's role in their lives.

What I can speak to is the pursuit of my passion and, as I attempt to convert it in to a career, it would be disingenuous to not recognize the reason for me to even have the opportunity in the first place.

Most immigrant families trek to the United States for greater educational opportunities and greener pastures. Not us though. Ours was a necessity. My mother was battling for her life as her cancer was spreading exponentially and we didn't have a choice but to seek treatment elsewhere.

Unlike the 12 year old Asad who visited Aligarh, the eight year old Asad's memories are as fresh as the coffee his current version is about to brew. It's interesting how memories work; a collective of extremes. The more amazing a life event, the higher the probability of one remembering. The more horrid a life event—the probability of remembering is disturbingly higher.

I came to America as a measly third grader with paltry English skills and a shy demeanor, not the most resourceful characteristics for new beginnings. It truly was the start of a life of exclusion. I was as monolingual as can be, a born and bred Urdu speaker. Naturally, my greatest fear had been failing to communicate in English. However, enough ESL sessions with Mr. Hawkins expunged that concern. I may not have become Shakespeare, but I didn't have to lift my pinky finger to gain permission to use the bathroom anymore.

But how could I change the color of my skin? How could I change my parents? How could I not smell like a walking Pakistani restaurant? Several classmates would spew "Ew, ew, I'm not standing next to Asad", when we had to form a line. I would steal my older cousin's deodorant and swipe it across my hairless armpits to somehow, someway mitigate the Pakistani food stench from my body. When that wasn't enough, I would smear so much of my cousin's cologne that I would be sent to the principal's office because of the potent smell. I vividly recall International Food Day, where all the students in class brought a food dish from their own country. My severely ill mother stayed up all night to prepare *Chana lentil halwa* . As the various dishes were spread on an elongated table in the cafeteria, my *halwa* was the only one that remained untouched. I still remember the *halwa* sitting there all alone, brown, oily, and soft...like me. What made it worse was that all of the teachers refused to eat it as well.

But perhaps nothing was as bad as when my father and mother came for a PTA meeting. My father, a thin and balding man, who looked older than his age and my mother, overweight and reduced to a wheelchair. Some of the most obscene comments were hurled the next day. "Why is your mom so fat and your dad so thin?" "You're gonna lose all your hair by high school."

Why was I was treated the way I was? More importantly, why did I care about other children's opinions and acceptance so much? It's been over 20 years and I still come back to my childhood and questions of identity. Still painful and challenging, but that's just how memories operate. However, the silver lining in these anecdotes is that I can channel the sadness by sharing them with others or utilizing them in a screenplay or teleplay.

Far too often in the Muslim community we are expected to drape our feelings and erase our hurt and frustration by focusing on our careers, not realizing the finiteness of life. I'm no different. I toiled in corporate America for a few years and viewed the doors that kept opening as entry points. They were exits; reminders of the shortness of time and how I should probably leave and discover a greater calling.

I have had a few youngsters within the Muslim community reach out to me about pursuing their passion and the current drudgery they face studying medicine or working in Corporate America. According to them, they feel unfulfilled and question their existence. While I would never coerce anyone to leave a career or study something different, I would ask younger people within the community to take some time out for themselves and figure out what motivates them and makes them happy. When I questioned my purpose it allowed my feelings to breathe and for me to understand the fickle nature of life. And you know what, that's a good thing.

**. Asad Farooqui is a director, screenwriter, producer and actor. He has directed multiple short films and written various scripts about Pakistani and Muslim characters stuck in an America that refuses to accept them. Farooqui is the recipient of several fellowships and grants including the Columbia University School of the Arts Academic Fellowship, Columbia University Undergraduate Film Studies Program Teaching Fellowship, ISF Scholarship, American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute (AMCLI) Fellowship, and Columbia University Travel Research Grant. Farooqui's feature script, BIN, was a finalist for the Sundance Writer's Lab 2018 and a finalist for the Best Screenplay Competition at the Ivy Film Festival. BIN also won the prestigious Islamic Scholarship Fund National Film Grant. His short film Broke was an official selection for the 2018 Atlanta Film Festival and has played at several film festivals around the world. Most recently, his feature script, The Immigration Game, won first place at the Atlanta Film Festival Screenplay Contest. Farooqui is a graduate of Business Management and Religion from Emory University. He is currently pursuing an MFA at Columbia University where he is also a Teaching Fellow for the Undergraduate Film Studies Program.*

As Society Move Towards New Paradigms Of Education And Literacy (or) Imagining Empowered Women Through Digital Lenses



Osama Manzar*, New Delhi, India

An exponentially increasing penetration of smartphones in India and affordable data plans have ensured that it reaches even the most backward sections. For a large part of their lives, communities that had little or no access to information are now empowered and are narrating their own stories through digital mediums. Digital adoration is not just about literacy but it is about adapting to a whole new way of integration in our life and the poorest of the poor, marginalised and uneducated need it more than anyone else. In fact, knowledge is no longer limited to only those who can read and write and can now no longer be determined by the level of one's functional literacy.

During our 16 years of extensive work on the field, especially in the marginalised sections with women in focus, we have seen several lives transform. But nothing like touching the lives of rural and tribal women in India, who were and largely are on the lowest level of information pyramid. I can very well say that access to the Internet and merely giving smartphones in the hands of women is setting them free, empowering them.

From being desolate and dependent, women have turned the tables with their technical know- hows. Devika from a remote village in Northern Bihar had never imagined that she would be an independent woman and support her family financially. She was the first woman in the family to reach the matriculation level before dropping out of education because "what would women do by getting degrees?" With our programmes and facilitating digital interventions, we are challenging this notion.

An Internet Saathi (Internet Friend) now, Devika not only acts as an agent of change—inspiring and educating other women around her—but also is breaking social barriers. Women who were asked to stay indoors and had no decision-making capacity in the household are now taking care of their own finances and are free to make choices. A Dalit woman from Jharkhand's tribal village narrated to us how livelihood generated by her digital knowledge gained her respect in the society; an upper-caste woman recounted how she drank water from a "Dalit's well" and found no difference in taste which was earlier out of bounds for her. This wave of societal change is a result of setting women free, empowering them.

We still live in a country where several young girls drop out of school after they hit puberty due to lack of proper toilets; many are married off before they could graduate. For them, skill development and digital training is a beacon of hope for better life. Internet and digital literacy, I believe, is the way forward for generating livelihood opportunities for women in rural India who either are not allowed or cannot afford traditional education.

At Digital Empowerment Foundation, we envision a three-fold approach for empowerment. Firstly, we believe in breaking societal barriers through digital skill development: breaking stereotypes and bridging information gap. Secondly, we use these skills for livelihood generation because self-sustenance builds the confidence to move ahead in life. Then, most importantly, we strive towards enhancing leadership capacities in them.

Bridging the gender gap in mobile ownership and digital literacy is important if we want to increase the agency of women and help dismantle social norms that have been holding them back for decades, especially when Indian digital economy is expected to multiply five times by 2023. And not just in India, the world is witnessing a trend where women's lives are changing in developing or underdeveloped nations with a little digital nudge.

Data shows that women using Internet worldwide is 12 per cent lower than that of men. A 2015 report by GSMA, a trade body which represents mobile communications industry worldwide, Connected Women, had highlighted that women in low and middle-income countries are 14 per cent less likely to own a mobile phone as compared to men. It is, thus, of utmost importance to understand that: in order to address inequality—from rural to urban India—we need to first bridge digital literacy divide amongst the gender.

In her article "If every woman has a smartphone imagine all the empowered people" for The Economist magazine, Melinda Gates argued how smartphones are going to empower world's women in terms of financial inclusion, livelihood generation and hence a better society. "Suppose every woman in the world had a smartphone. That could help shatter their isolation and unleash their powers like never before," she wrote.

Creating digital jobs

Also, I would like to divert attention to the need of realising the importance of skill-based jobs, especially in a developing nation like ours. Economist and former prime minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh, in an interaction with media, once stated that India needs to create 10 to 12 million jobs annually. Call it its strength or weakness, India has a vast population that can be and should be skilled in digital tools and technology — even if at a basic level — to meet today and tomorrow's need so that our young population is prepared to serve India and the rest of the world — which has a high demand for India's skilled labour.

Integrating skills with technology can help in creation of hundreds and thousands of livelihood opportunities for India's underserved population. For instance, India is home to about 2,000 traditional skill-based clusters. Each cluster, the size of which can vary from 50 households to 5,000 or even more, has the potential to create a minimum of five jobs. These jobs can look into creating self-help groups online, managing and curating social media channels as well as websites as direct linkages to end-consumers, and also looking up information about upcoming trade fairs or exhibitions, new government schemes, understanding supply chains and finding out market prices and trends. That means a minimum of 10,000 jobs are waiting to be taken up in the area.

And, if that happens in every sector—health, farming, arts, etc.—rural India, especially, the women are going to benefit the most. Our government and policy makers must pause and realise that we will have to cater to the youth from rural India by creating quality jobs for them in rural India itself.

Osama Manzar is an alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University who founded Digital Empowerment Foundation (defindia.org) in 2002 to eradicate information poverty and use digital as an integral tool for holistic development. He is British Chevening scholar and IVLP fellow and recognised social entrepreneur. He can be reached at osama@defindia.net.

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Envisioning a Human Future: Sir Syed's Approach

Dr. Yasmin Saikia*, Arizona State University, AZ

Annually, for nearly 100 years, the alumni of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) have convened to celebrate Founder's Day in memory of Sir Syed. AMU, the outcome of Sir Syed's dream and tireless efforts, is today an internationally recognized institution of higher learning. Sir Syed envisioned a future for Muslims and non-Muslims alike in colonial India that was built on the foundation of modern Western education, scientific knowledge, rational thinking, religious pluralism, political accommodation, and participatory community associations for improved and tolerant human relationship. Understanding and reengaging with this broad and expansive vision for improving the human condition worldwide and in India, in particular, is an urgent call today.

In India today, religion has become the site for divisive violent politics. In Sir Syed's time too, in the nineteenth century, the British used religion for dividing the Hindus and Muslims. In the face of the dehumanization of Indians, Sir Syed reasserted the primacy of an inclusive Hindustani identity, which was beyond religion. He was one of the earliest advocates of Indian cosmopolitanism fashioned by the *ganga–jamuni tahzeeb*, a fusion of Muslim and Hindu cultural sensibilities that is uniquely of India. He spoke and wrote extensively that Hindus and Muslims were from the same cultural world; they were one *qaum*, and their cultural and social wellbeing was a primary concern to him. Using religion for political gain was bigotry and against Indian pluralism, he tried to reason with the British. In his new educational institution, the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College, founded in 1877, Sir Syed implemented the values of ethics and civility for an actual outcome. At MOA, students and teachers from varied backgrounds lived together in a residential setting, which he believed would foster community feelings and friendships emerging from this association would better and further dignify the Indian community. The MAO College was not a mere educational institution, it opened windows of social and cultural opportunities to its students humanizing and dignifying them as contributors to the modern world.

Initially, the MAO College was an institution that served upper class and upper-caste men. However, we must understand that even Oxford University and Cambridge University, on which Sir Syed modelled MAO, were completely elitist in this era. Nevertheless, MAO did become more open, diverse, and inclusive with time. With the expansion of the student body, the MAO College transformed itself into a plural community, wherein all were imparted education in the liberal arts and sciences. At the time of Sir Syed's death in 1898, the college had 285 Muslim and 64 Hindu students. The first graduate of MAO College, Ishwari Prasad, was a Hindu, who became an eminent historian. The MAO College became AMU after an act passed by the Government of India in 1921. AMU today serves as a catalyst or model facilitating the meaning of secular education for others to emulate. Sir Syed imagined and actualized this possibility. It is not a Muslim or non-Muslim pathway, rather AMU stands as a trailblazing effort aimed at enabling a radical imagination of human freedom, as a possible future. Our contemporary world needs to rethink this value of education for similar developments across South Asia and the wider world.

Beyond the actual lived world of multiple communities of students at MAO who enhanced and enriched one another through association, Sir Syed encouraged the formation of voluntary associations, scientific societies, and educational bodies because he believed these organizations were the best avenues not only for shaping policy but also for learning to work with others (even those who have conflicting opinions). He was convinced that Muslims, in particular, needed to equip themselves with knowledge and training for addressing the real problems affecting them. This approach motivated him to engage the British rulers in discussion urging them to acknowledge and fulfil their responsibilities toward their Indian subjects. On his part, he embraced the British in Hindustan, who he did not see as foreigners, but as representatives of another cultural system with much potential to contribute to India's advancement.

During Sir Syed's lifetime, there was an uproar regarding the moral decay and degeneration of the Muslim society, similar to that seen currently. Addressing these issues openly and rationally, through the *Scientific Society Magazine* and *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* (*Mohammedan Social Reformer*), he began discussing the problems that the rapidly changing Muslim community was encountering, such as polygamy, religious fanaticism, and hypocrisy – all of which he condemned. He urged people to emulate culturally advanced nations and select the good, but reject the undesirable. Through *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, he sought total Muslim reformation – by not only imparting lessons on table manners and public behaviour but also advocating balanced religion and human progress.

His passion for scientificity and a rational understanding of the biological world coupled with his abiding conviction that tolerance and friendliness toward different others were essential values of Islam inspired him to write on the compatibility of religion with science calling for mutual respect and sharing between the two realms of knowledge. Further, he was motivated to engage in interfaith dialogue. He produced voluminous writing on religion – Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. In his *Tabyin-ul-Kalam* (Commentary on the Bible), he attempted a comparative study of religions; by contrast, in *Tafsir-ul-Quran*, he offered new interpretations of the Quran considering the contemporary changes and realities. The orthodox elements of the Muslim community resented all these publications. Those who disagreed with him called him an 'atheist', 'agnostic', *kafir*, and even *dajjal* ('false messiah' or 'the antichrist' in Islamic eschatology). Despite these assaults, Sir Syed remained steadfast and resolute, while continuing his work for what he believed to be in his people's best interest. Explaining and summarizing his deeds, speeches, and writings in which he articulated his ideals, dreams, and vision in this limited space is difficult.

Without a doubt, Sir Syed's approach and work on Muslim social reform, empowerment through education, his skills of astute diplomacy and tolerant outlook toward others, and his large hearted religious thinking, transformed the fate of the millions of Indians. His MAO College served as a movement opening vistas for Indians; it improved their understanding of their role in the modern world through English education and, more practically, improved the socioeconomic condition of his community. From its inception as the MAO College to its current form as AMU, Sir Syed's educational mission emerged as a beacon of hope for the disempowered and vulnerable. In nineteenth century India, Muslim men were the most marginalized. Today, women, religious and caste minorities, and many other less privileged groups are under threat. Sir Syed's approach to reasoned mediation for finding a balance between the different communities and British rulers served as a useful tool in the colonial era; even now, in the postcolonial nation-state of India, his concept of pluralism, rationality, ethical and just governance can serve India very positively.

The *Musalman-e-Hind* or 'Indian Muslim' community that Sir Syed imagined and gave shape to straddles Indianness and Muslimness without paradox, just as Sir Syed donned the black Western suit, sported a long, white flowing beard, and put on a *fez* cap – this imagery can alleviate the current environment of suspicion and hatred. For Sir Syed, the prognosis of the Indian Muslim is of someone who is aware of the surrounding, takes ownership, maintains dignity, and is part of the plural society and evolves with changing times. His ideology and work that transformed Muslims from their state of despair in 1857 into agents of hope and progress are far more relevant in the twenty-first century than ever before. Sir Syed's vision of human progress provides a space for a future possibility for all Indians, particularly Muslims, to regain their civilizational dignity. This is Sir Syed's lasting and continuous legacy that we have been bequeathed and charged to take forward as *Aligs*.

Dr. Yasmin Saikia, an AMU alumna, is the Hardt-Nickachos Chair in Peace Studies and is a Professor of History at Arizona State University.

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS FROM

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AMU Stay: 1960-1965

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For a Successful 18th FAAA Annual Convention (July 26-28, 2019) in Atlanta

… For more than twenty years I have dreamed the dream of a federation, grander, nobler and infinitely more spiritual than the United States of America, and today when many a political Cassandra prophesies a return to the bad old days of Hindu-Muslim dissensions I still dream that old dream of 'United Faiths of India.” — ***Mohammad Ali Jauhar; from the Presidential Address, I.N.C. Session, 1923, Cocanada (now Kakinada), India***

Wishing AAAA All the Best

for Hosting

The 18th Annual FAAA Convention

M. Nasir Farooqui, Atlanta

“Life is immense, comprehensive and dynamic. It includes spirit and matter and idealism and pragmatism and rotates around the axis of the noble and the ignoble. Life strives for higher ends. It is a mission, a service, and finally worship.” - ***Dr. Zakir Hussain, President of India (1967-69)***

Welcome to Atlanta and to FAAA Annual Meetings

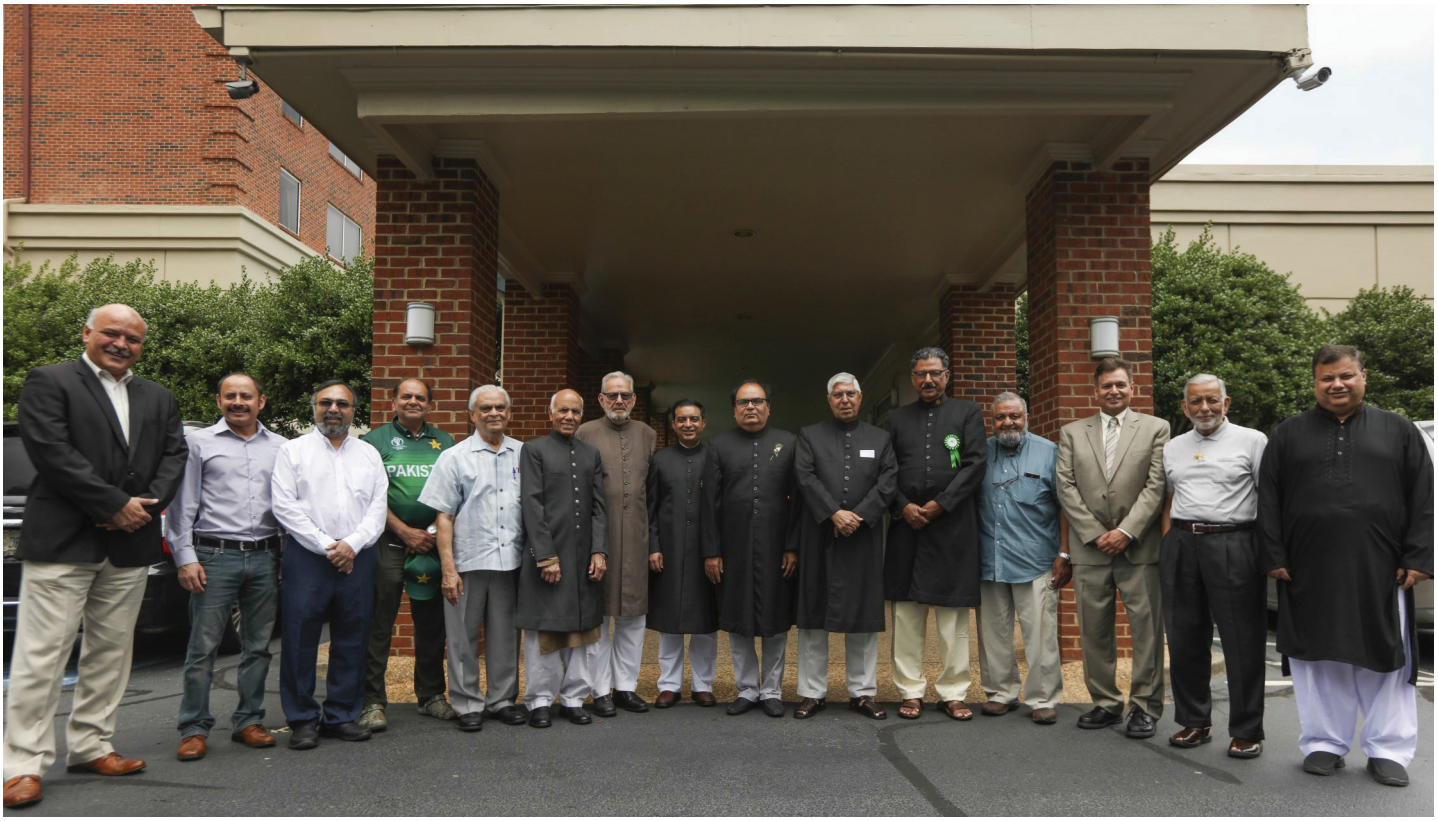
Greetings & Best Wishes

From

Naushad Mohammad Khan Ghilzai and Family

Atlanta

2019 Atlanta Convention Organizing Committee



L to R: Dr. Naushad Ghilzai, Meraj Beg, Dr. Farooq Khan, Dr. Asif Taufiq, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, Nasir Farooqui, SMA Naqvi, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Uzair Shams, Umar Farooq, Syed Waseem, Siraj Karatela, Dr. Rasheed Ahmad, S. Hasan Kamal, S. Nawaid Tanzeem



Not in Photo-graph: Maroof Shah, Imran Athar, Shadab Anwar, Mahfooz Khan

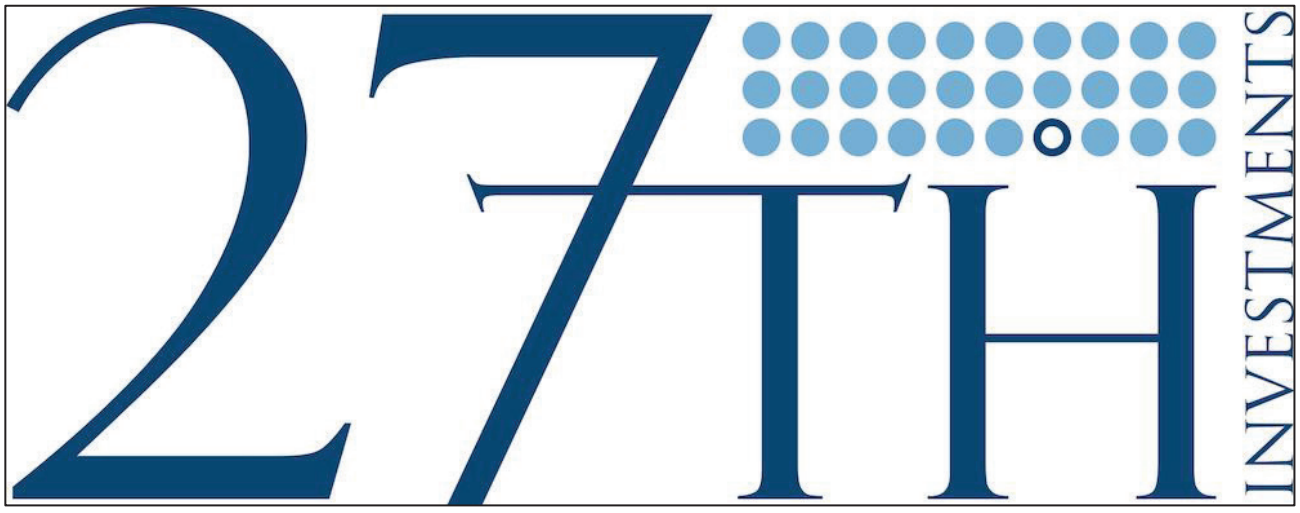
Row 1 (L to R): Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Dr. Shahid Rafique, Yasir Nomani, Nadeem Fatmi, Sultan Khan

Row 2 (L to R): Enayat Khan, Shahid Ali, M. Inamullah, Mohd Arif, Dr. Ghulam Nadri

Row 3 (L to R): Suhail Waris, Irshad Ahmad, Abdul Moyeed, Dr. Jalal Zuberi, Dr. Rashid Naim

Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)– Presidents

Term	Name
1984	Dr. Wasi Siddiqui
1985	S. Hasan Kamal
1986	Khursheed Ahmad
1987	Sarwat Weston
1988	Mushir Siddiqui
1989	Rukhsana Waseem
1990	Dr. Fazlur Rahman
1991-92	Afzar Haque
1993-95	M. Abdul Qayum
1996-97	Dr. Jalal Zuberi
1998-01	Siraj Karatela
2002-03	M. Inamullah
2004-06	Dr. Farzana Bharmal
2007-09	Dr. Rasheed Ahmad
2010-11	Sadaf Farooqui
2011-2013	Yasir Nomani
2014-2019	Dr. Asif Taufiq
2019-	Dr. Shoeb Ahmad (Incoming)



Wishing AAAA All the Best

for Hosting

18th Annual FAAA Convention

Zubair & Huma Asmi, UK

"Sons of MAO college shall go forth throughout the length and breadth of the land to preach the message of free inquiry, of large-hearted toleration and of pure morality"

-Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

With Best Compliments From

S. Hasan Kamal, Atlanta

For a Successful and Productive 18th Annual Meeting of FAAA

Welcome to Atlanta and to the 18th Annual Convention of FAAA

Best Wishes From



Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Atlanta

خوش کن یادیں

نعیم فاطمہ توفیق

زندگی میں ہوش سنبھالنے کے بعد بہت کچھ دنیا دیکھی کہیں ضرورتاً رہنا پڑا۔ کہیں مجبوراً جانا پڑا کبھی صرف سیر وتفریح بہانہ بنا۔ سب جگہوں اور علاقوں کے اثرات دل ودماغ پر اثر انداز ہوئے۔ لیکن ہندوستان کے صوبہ یوپی کے شہر علی گڑھ میں جو وقت گزرا وہ ناقابل فراموش ہے۔

عمر کا بہترین وقت تھا اور تعلیم حاصل کرنا زندگی کا اول مقصد تھا۔ شہر علی گڑھ تعلیم کا گہوارہ ہے۔ علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی کا نام اور مقام اپنی جگہ مستند ہے۔ اسی علم پرور شہر میں ہندوستان کی مسلمان لڑکیوں کے لیے بھی اعلیٰ تعلیم حاصل کرنے کو ایک بہترین تعلیمی ادارہ ''ویمنس کالج'' موجود ہے۔ علی گڑھ کے ان دونوں تعلیمی اداروں کا چولی دامن کا ساتھ ہے۔ ہندوستان کے مختلف صوبوں اور شہروں سے بے شمار لڑکیاں علی گڑھ آکر تعلیم سے مستفید ہوئیں۔

حصول علم کی خاطر علی گڑھ آنے والی لڑکیوں کی رہائش کے لیے خصوصی طور پر دو عدد ہوسٹل کا انتظام تھا۔ جو اصل ضرورت پورا کرنے کے بعد انسانیت اور بھائی چارہ عملی طور پر سکھاتے تھے۔ یہ ہوسٹل وحیدیہ اور سلطانیہ کے ناموں سے موسوم تھے۔ تعلیمی جماعت کے لحاظ سے لڑکیاں ان میں رہتی تھی۔ رضیہ برلاس اور زینت آپا ان دونوں ہاسٹل کی انفرادی طور پر انچارج تھیں اور بہترین منتظم تھیں۔ کھانے کے لیے دونوں بورڈنگ ہاؤس کا انتظام ایک ہی جگہ یا ہال میں تھا۔ وہاں کھانے کے اوقات پر بھی ایک خوش آئند منظر ہوتا تھا۔

''علی گڑھ مسلم گرلس کالج ایک معزز شخصیت شیخ عبداللہ صاحب کا قائم کردہ تھا۔ ممتاز آپا (بیگم ممتاز حیدر) اس وقت پرنسپل تھیں سنجیدہ اعلیٰ تعلیم یافتہ بردبار ذمہ دار اور ہمہ تن کالج کی بہتری وکامیابی کے لیے کوشاں رہنے والی خاتون تھیں۔ دیگر اسٹاف بھی ناقابل فراموش ہے ریاضی آپا (بلگرامی) سلمہ آپا (شان الحق حقی) سس ڈے وغیرہ انگلش، اردو اور اکنومکس کی اساتذہ تھیں صفیہ آپا اور بسم اللہ آپا وغیرہ بھی اسٹاف میں شامل تھیں (یہ اسٹاف ممبران کے چند نام ہیں۔ اس وقت اساتذہ کے ناموں کے ساتھ آپا استعمال کرنے کا رواج تھا) عموماً جو بہترین خصوصیات سب ہی اساتذہ میں پائی جاتی تھیں۔ وہ سادگی خلوص، انسانیت اور اپنائیت کا جذبہ تھا۔ اپنی ذمہ داریوں میں مخلص تھیں وہ علم اور تعلیم کے ساتھ مذہبی واخلاقی قدروں کی تعلیم اپنے طور طریقوں اور کردار سے دیتی تھیں۔ کالج میں تعلیم کے علاوہ کھیلوں کا معقول انتظام تھا۔ گاہے گاہے کھیلوں کا مقابلہ ہوتا بہترین تفریح کا سامان تھا۔ مقامی طالب علم لڑکیاں مقررہ تعلیمی اوقات میں کالج آتیں۔ یکساں مضمون ایک ساتھ پڑھتے۔ دوستی کا دائرہ بڑھتا بھائی چارہ کا سبق ملتا۔

اہم خوش آئند یادیں ہاسٹل میں سوشل ورک کی ہیں جس پر پابندی سے عمل کیا جاتا ایک سینیر طالبہ کے زیر نگراں آٹھ آٹھ لڑکیوں کے کئی گروپ بنتے یہ طالبات مقررہ دن اور اوقات میں قریبی کچی بستی میں جاکر امدادی کام کرتیں مثلاً عورتوں کو گھر صاف رکھنے کی ضرورت اور طریقے بتاتیں اور سکھاتیں۔ روزمرہ کی غذا پینے کے پانی اور ان کے استعمال کے برتنوں کی صحیح دیکھ بھال کرنا سکھاتیں۔ بچوں کی صحت کی اہمیت اور اس کو بہتر بنانے کے اصول اور اقدامات بتاتیں۔ دانت، کان، آنکھیں، بال اور جسم کو صاف وصحت مند رکھنے کے عملی طریقے سکھاتیں جو بچے اسکول جانے سے محروم تھے ان کو ابتدائی تعلیم گھر پر دینا اور اسکول میں داخلے کرانا ابتدائی مذہبی تعلیم دینا۔ غرض مختلف مفید مقاصد کے تحت کام ہوتے تھے یہ انسانیت کی بہترین خدمت تھی۔

علی گڑھ میں آخری وقت بہت ہنگامہ خیز گزرا۔ ملک کے سیاسی حالات حد درجہ بدتر ہو چکے تھے۔ ہندو فسادات عروج پر تھے۔ جو بہت خطرناک تھے۔ روز ہاسٹل پر حملہ ہونے کا خطرہ محسوس ہوتا۔ حالات سے مقابلے کے لیے لڑکیوں کو ہر ممکن طریقوں سے تیار کیا گیا۔ لاٹھی چلانا اور اپنا بچاؤ کرنا سکھایا گیا۔ لال مرچ پسی ہوئی پڑیاں بنا کر رکھی گئی تاکہ اگر ضرورت پڑے تو دشمن کی آنکھوں میں پھینک کر بچاؤ کیا جائے۔ ان افسوس ناک حالات میں والد کے ہمراہ علی گڑھ چھوڑا وہ بھی اس حلیہ میں کوئی پہچان نہ سکے کہ ہم مسلمان ہیں۔ یہ وہ وقت تھا جب کہ صرف علی گڑھ ہی نہیں چھوڑا بلکہ ہندوستان ہی چھوٹ گیا۔ ہم پاکستان صرف وہاں کی یادیں لے کر آگئے۔

خیالات اور طرزِ عمل میں انقلاب برپا کر دیا۔ تہذیب الاخلاق میں وہ خود بھی لکھتے تھے اور اس دور کے دوسرے عالموں اور ادیبوں جیسے مولانا حالی، علامہ شبلی نعمانی، مولوی نذیر احمد، مولانا محمد حسین آزاد اور محسن الملک وغیرہ سے بھی لکھواتے تھے۔ غالب اردو خطوط میں آسان اور عام فہم زبان لکھنے کی ابتدا کر چکے تھے، سرسید کا کارنامہ جسے اکثر نظر انداز کر دیا جاتا ہے وہ ہے اردو زبان کو اس لائق بنانا کہ اس میں ادبی، اخلاقی، تنقیدی، تحقیقی، صحافتی اور معلوماتی مضامین بہ آسانی لکھے جا سکیں۔ سرسید اور ان کے رفقاء نے اردو نثر و نظم کی مختلف اصناف کے معیار کو اتنا بلند کر دیا کہ وہ عصری تقاضوں سے ہم آہنگ ہو سکیں۔ علامہ شبلی نعمانی ان کے اس کارنامے کے بارے میں لکھتے ہیں " اردو زبان سرسید کی بدولت اس قابل ہوئی کہ عشق و عاشقی کے دائرے سے نکل کر، سیاسی، اخلاقی، تاریخی ہر قسم کے مضامین اس زور و اثر، وسعت و جامعیت، سادگی اور صفائی سے ادا کر سکتی ہے کہ خود اسکی استاد فارسی زبان کو آج تک یہ بات نصیب نہیں ہوئی " حقیقت بھی یہی ہے کہ اردو زبان و ادب پر سرسید کا یہ بہت بڑا احسان ہے۔ انہوں نے اردو نثر میں مدعا نگاری کی بنیاد رکھی۔ انہوں نے اپنی بات مدلل طریقے سے واضح الفاظ میں کہنا سکھایا۔ اردو کو لفّاظی اور بے ضرورت عبارت آرائی سے نجات دلائی۔ انہوں نے خود بھی بہت کچھ لکھا اور ساتھ ہی لکھنے والوں کی ایک بڑی جماعت تیار کر دی۔ کسی نے سچ کہا ہے کہ " کچھ لوگوں نے تو براہ راست ان کے دامن تربیت میں پرورش پائی اور کچھ نے دور سے فیض اٹھایا" یہ سچ ہے کہ آج جو زبان ہم بولتے اور لکھتے ہیں یا اصنافِ نظم و نثر کے زبان و بیان اور مضامین میں جو تنوّع نظر آتا ہے اسکا خمیر سرسید اور ان کے مشن سے وابستہ ادیبوں اور شاعروں ہی نے تیّار کیا تھا۔ ان کے رفیق مولانا حالی اور مولانا محمد حسین آزاد نے اپنے قیامِ لاہور کے دوران طرحی مشاعروں کے بجائے موضوعاتی مشاعروں کی بنیاد رکھی۔ اس طرح اردو کی صنفِ نظم کو فروغ دے کر سرسید کے کام کو آگے بڑھایا۔

سرسید پر کچھ لوگ دو قومی نظریہ کی وکالت کرنے کا الزام لگاتے ہوئے انہیں ہندوؤں کا مخالف بتاتے ہیں جبکہ یہ حقیقت نہیں ہے۔ انڈین نیشنل کانگریس کی تاریخ جلد اوّل میں لکھا ہے" سرسید پر یہ بہتان ہے کہ وہ ہندو اور مسلمانوں کو دو الگ الگ قومیں مانتے تھے حقیقت یہ ہے کہ سرسید ہندوؤں اور مسلمانوں میں اتحاد کے زبردست حامی تھے" خود ان کا یہ قول بہت مشہور ہے کہ " ہندوستان ایک دلہن کی مانند ہے، ہندو اور مسلمان اس کی دو آنکھیں ہیں ان میں سے ایک آنکھ بھی خراب ہو گی تو دلہن کی خوبصورتی غارت ہو جائے گی"۔ وہ ہندو اور مسلمان دونوں کو ایک قوم تصور کرتے تھے، بارہا اپنے خطابات میں انہوں نے دونوں کو اسی طرح مخاطب بھی کیا ہے۔ سرسید پر کسی بھی قسم کے تعصّب یا جانب داری کا الزام لگانا صحیح نہیں ہے۔ خلوص و نیک نیتی سے لگایا ہوا ان کا ایک پودا آج ایک سایہ دار درخت بن کر علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی کی صورت میں قومی یکجہتی اور مذہبی رواداری کی نمایاں مثال ہے جہاں مسلم اور غیر مسلم طلبہ و اساتذہ یکساں طور پر ملک و قوم کی ترقّی میں بھرپور حصّہ لے رہے ہیں۔ سرسید کا خواب شرمندہ تعبیر ہو رہا ہے اور ان کی دور اندیشی ملک و قوم کے کام آ رہی ہے۔۔ میر تقی میرؔ کا یہ مشہور شعر سرسید کی شخصیت پر پوری طرح صادق آتا ہے۔

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کے بعد انہوں نے ایک رسالے " لائل محمڈنز آف انڈیا" کے تین پرچے نکالے، جن کی مدد سے انگریز سرکار کو یہ باور کرانے کی کوشش کی کہ مسلمان انگریزوں کے بدخواہ نہیں ہیں۔ دراصل انگریز اور مسلمان مختلف وجوہات کی بنا پر ایک دوسرے سے بدظن تھے، جسکا شدید نقصان مسلمانوں کو ہو رہا تھا۔ انگریزوں کی اعلیٰ حکومت نے سرسید کی سفارشات کو سراہا اور انہیں بروئے کار لانے کی طرف قدم اٹھائے۔ ان کا انگریزوں کی حمایت کرنا مسلمانوں کے حق میں بہتر ثابت ہوا اور انگریزوں کے رویّہ میں خاطر خواہ تبدیلی دکھائی دینے لگی۔ اس طرح صدر امین کی حیثیت سے جب سرسید مراد آباد پہنچے تو وہاں بے گناہ مسلمانوں کی جانیں بچانے اور ان کی جائدادیں ضبطی سے نکالنے کا اہم کام کر سکے۔ مراد آباد میں انہوں نے ایک شفاخانہ اور ایک یتیم خانہ بھی قائم کیا اور ہندو اور مسلمانوں کی یکساں طور پر مدد کی۔

سرسید کا خیال تھا کہ مسلمانوں کی ایک بڑی تعداد انگریزی زبان سے نابلد ہونے کی بنا پر جدید سائنسی معلومات سے دور ہے۔ اس لئے غازی پور کے دورانِ قیام انہوں نے سائنٹفک سوسائٹی قائم کر کے بہت سی کتابوں اور مضامین کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ کرایا۔ سائنسی موضوعات پر تقاریر کا سلسلہ شروع کیا اور ایک اخبار "سائنٹفک گزٹ" کے نام سے نکال کر مسلمانوں کو نئے علوم کی طرف نہ صرف متوجہ کیا بلکہ انہیں تیزی سے بدلتے ہوئے زمانے کے ساتھ ہم رکاب و ہم آہنگ کرنے کی کوشش بھی کی۔ سرسید کی ان کاوشوں سے صرف مسلمان ہی نہیں بلکہ خاصی تعداد میں وہ غیر مسلم افراد بھی مستفید ہوئے جو اردو زبان سے واقف تھے۔

سرسید کی کارکردگیوں کو داد و تحسین کی نگاہوں سے بھی دیکھا گیا اور ساتھ ہی ان کے کچھ مذہبی نظریات پر اُس وقت کے مسلم دانشوروں نے سخت نکتہ چینی بھی کی اور آج بھی کچھ مسلمان ان کے مذہبی خیالات سے پوری طرح اتفاق نہیں رکھتے۔ ان کے اہم معاصرین اور رفقاء حالی، شبلی، نذیر احمد اور وقار الملک وغیرہ نے انکے اصلاحی کاموں میں تو خوب بڑھ چڑھ کر حصہ لیا مگر مذہبی معاملات میں انکی عقلیت پسندی سے اختلاف کیا۔ کچھ لوگوں نے تو انہیں کافر اور ملحد تک قرار دے دیا۔ اس بحث سے صرفِ نظر کرتے ہوئے کہ وہ کافر تھے یا مومن اور ان کے مذہبی افکار و خیالات کیا تھے ہم یہ دیکھنا چاہتے ہیں کیا اس وقت یا آج بھی کتنے مسلمان ہیں جو مذہب کی حمایت میں اپنی ساری پونجی اور کثیر وقت صرف کر سکتے ہیں، جو سرسید نے کیا۔ جب ایک متعصب انگریز مصنف ولیم میور کی کتاب " لائف آف محمد" ان کی نظر سے گزری جس میں سرورِ کائنات [ص] کی ذاتِ اقدس اور اسلام پر سخت حملے کئے گئے تھے تو وہ بے چین ہو گئے۔ انہوں نے اپنے گھر کا تمام سامان فروخت کیا، مکان رہن رکھ دیا، احباب سے قرض لیا اور انگلینڈ جا کر وہاں کے کتب خانوں میں ایک طویل مدت تک مطالعہ کر کے اس کتاب کا ایسا سنجیدہ اور مدلل جواب لکھا کہ خود ولیم میور بھی قائل ہو گیا۔ ان کی یہ تصنیف پہلے انگریزی میں اور پھر اردو زبان میں " خطباتِ احمدیہ" کے نام سے شائع ہوئی۔

انگلینڈ میں سرسید وہاں کے نظامِ تعلیم اور تعلیمی اداروں سے اس حد تک متاثر ہوئے کہ جب وہ ہندوستان واپس آئے تو انہوں نے علی گڑھ میں " محمڈن اینگلو اورینٹل کالج " قائم کیا جو آج علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی کے نام سے صرف ہندوستان ہی میں نہیں دنیا بھر میں مشہور ہے۔ علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی اپنے تعلیمی اور ثقافتی معیار کے لئے آج ہندوستان کی چند بہترین یونیورسٹیوں میں شمار کی جاتی ہے۔ اس درسگاہ کے مختلف شعبوں سے فارغ طلبہ قومی اور بین الاقوامی سطح پر اپنی پیشہ ورانہ صلاحیتوں اور بہترین کارکردگی کے لئے جانے جاتے اور عزّت کی نگاہ سے دیکھے جاتے ہیں۔ دنیا کے بہت کم ممالک ہیں جہاں علیگ برادری کے لوگ موجود نہ ہوں اور دل و جان سے انسانی خدمت انجام نہ دے رہے ہوں۔

مسلمانوں کی فلاح کے لئے جدید تعلیم کا خیال سرسید کے ذہن میں دراصل اس وقت آیا تھا جب غدر کے بعد انگریزوں نے تعلیمی نظام میں اصلاح کے لئے کلکتہ، بمبئی اور بنارس میں مشن اسکول کھولے۔ عام مسلمان پہلے ہی انگریزوں سے ناراض تھے اس لئے انہوں نے جدید مغربی تعلیم کو شک کی نگاہ سے دیکھا اور اس کی شدید مخالفت کی۔ اسکے برعکس غیر مسلم خصوصاً ہندو نئے نظامِ تعلیم سے فیضیاب ہونے لگے۔ غالباً اسی بنا پر سرسید نے محسوس کیا کہ مسلمانوں کی جدید تعلیم کا بندوبست خود مسلمان ہی کریں تاکہ نہ صرف ان کی مغربی تعلیم کے بارے میں غلط فہمیاں بھی دور ہو جائیں اور وہ مشن اسکولوں کی نظریاتی یلغار سے بھی محفوظ رہیں۔ سرسید کے اس دور اندیشانہ اور دانشمندانہ قدم نے دوسرے ہندوستانیوں کی طرح مسلمانوں کے لئے بھی مغربی علوم حاصل کرنے کے مواقع فراہم کر دئے۔ ان کے اسی کارنامے کو سراہتے ہوئے پنڈت جواہر لال نہرو نے ایک جگہ لکھا تھا "سیاست سے علیحدہ رہ کر تعلیم پر توجہ مرکوز کرنا سرسید کے فکر کی صحیح انقلابی سمت کو ظاہر کرتا ہے"۔

انگلینڈ کے قیام کے دوران سرسید کو وہاں کے رسالے بھی بہت پسند آئے تھے۔ واپس آ کر انہوں نے ان رسالوں کی طرز پر "تہذیب الاخلاق" کے نام سے ایک رسالہ جاری کیا تاکہ اس کی مدد سے مسلمانوں کے کردار و اخلاق اور رسم و رواج کی درستی کا کام لیا جا سکے۔ اس رسالے نے مسلمانوں کے افکار و

درویشِ دور اندیش

سید محمد احمد نقوی

سرسید احمد خاں ہندوستان کے ایسے سپوت تھے جن کے بارے میں مختصراً کچھ لکھتے وقت یہ دشواری پیش آتی ہے کہ انکی کونسی خوبی اور کس کارنامے پر زیادہ توجہ دی جائے اور کس پر کم۔ان کا ظاہر تو سب کے سامنے تھا مگر ان کی شخصیت کے بارے میں پڑھ کر یہ اندازہ کرنا مشکل نہیں ہے کہ ان کے باطن میں ایک ایسا درویش موجود تھا جو مستقبل میں جھانک کر آنے والے وقت کے دھارے کا رخ موڑ سکنے کی غیر معمولی صلاحیت رکھتا تھا۔ وہ ایک ایسی ہمہ گیر شخصیت کے مالک تھے جس میں متعدد صلاحیتیں یکجا ہو گئی تھیں۔ان کی شخصیت اور قوم کے لئے انکی خدمات کا مکمل جائزہ لینے کے لئے مولانا الطاف حسین حالی جیسا عالم اور حیاتِ جاوید جیسی کتاب درکار ہے۔ سرسید ایک ایسے عظیم رہنما تھے جن کی کاوشیں عوامی زندگی کے کسی ایک شعبے تک محدود نہیں تھیں، انکا میدانِ عمل بہت وسیع تھا۔انہوں نے ہندستان کے لوگوں خصوصی طور پر مسلمانوں کی زندگی کے مختلف عناصر کی خامیوں اور خوبیوں کو غیر معمولی تدبر کے ساتھ سمجھنے اور ان سے دور رس نتائج اخذ کرنے کی نہ صرف کوشش کی بلکہ عملی طور پر بھی وہ خامیوں کو دور کرنے اور خوبیوں کو بہتر طور پر استعمال کرنے میں مصروف رہے۔ان چند سطور میں سرسید جیسے عالمِ باعمل کی شخصیت کے صرف کچھ ہی رنگوں کی ایک ہلکی سی جھلک پیش کی جاسکتی ہے۔

سرسید احمد خاں ۱۸۱۷ء میں دہلی کے ایک باعزت اور باوقار خاندان میں پیدا ہوئے۔ان کے اجداد مغل دربار کے مقربین میں شمار کئے جاتے تھے۔ سرسید کی تعلیم و تربیت کے ابتدائی مراحل ان کی والدہ کی نگرانی میں طے ہوئے، وہ ایک نہایت پڑھی لکھی خاتون تھیں۔ ہوش سنبھالنے کے بعد خاندانی روش کے مطابق انہوں نے بھی قلعے میں آنا جانا شروع کیا۔اس طرح انہیں دن بہ دن خستگی اور زوال کی طرف تیزی سے بڑھتی ہوئی مغل حکومت کی کمزوریوں کا بخوبی اندازہ ہو گیا۔ انہیں پرانی تہذیب ایڑیاں رگڑتی ہوئی اور نئی تہذیب تیزی سے اپنے قدم جماتی ہوئی صاف دکھائی دے رہی تھی۔ان جیسے زیرک و ذہین لوگ ہوا کا رُخ اور رفتار دیکھ کر آنے والے طوفان کی شدّت اور اس سے ہونے والے نقصانات کا اندازہ کر لیتے ہیں۔ یہاں تو انہیں مسلمانوں کا مستقبل صاف نظر آرہا تھا۔ مسلمانوں کی مجموعی حالت یوں بھی اچھی نہ تھی، آنے والا وقت ان کے لئے زیادہ تباہی و بربادی لا سکتا تھا۔انگریزوں کی بڑھتی ہوئی طاقت اور مغلیہ سلطنت کی بگڑتی ہوئی حالت کے پیشِ نظر سرسید نے فیصلہ کیا کہ وہ انگریزوں کی ملازمت اختیار کریں گے۔اس دور میں ایک مسلمان نوجوان کے لئے ایسا سوچنا بھی آسان نہیں تھا۔ دراصل وہ محسوس کر رہے تھے کہ مغل دربار سے وابستگی نہ خود انکا بھلا کر سکتی تھی اور نہ برادرانِ ملت کی فلاح و بہبود کے لئے کچھ کر سکنا انکے لئے ممکن ہوتا۔اسی لئے انہوں نے انگریز کمپنی کی ملازمت سررشتہ داری کے عہدے سے شروع کی اور بعد میں مختلف عہدوں پر فائز رہتے ہوئے صدر امین کے عہدے تک پہنچے۔ ملازمت کے دوران اور اس کے بعد بھی وہ مسلمانوں کی زبوں حالی پر دل برداشتہ ہونے اور آنسو بہانے کے بجائے ان کے حالات بہتر بنانے کے لئے عملی طور پر کوشاں رہے۔ سرسید احمد خاں کی سرشت میں زبردست رہبرانہ صلاحیت موجود تھی، اللہ نے انہیں حساس طبیعت اور ایک دردمند دل بھی عطا کیا تھا شاید یہی وجہ تھی کہ وہ خود کو کسی ایک میدان عمل تک محدود نہ رکھ سکے۔انہیں جہاں بھی کوتاہیاں اور خامیاں نظر آئیں وہ رہنمائی اور دستگیری کے لئے بے دریغ آگے آئے۔ شاعر مشرق علامہ اقبال کا یہ شعر سرسید کی شخصیت کا آئینہ دار ہے:

نگہ بلند، سخن دلنواز، جاں پُرسوز

یہی ہے رختِ سفر میرِ کارواں کے لئے

اس میرِ کارواں نے خداداد صلاحیت و ذہانت، ذاتی لیاقت اور فہم و فراست کو بروئے کار لا کر ملک و قوم کی قیادت کے جداگانہ نمونے پیش کئے۔ دہلی کی ملازمت کے دوران جب وہ شہر کی اہم شخصیات اور تاریخی عمارتوں کے بارے میں اپنی پہلی تصنیف " آثار الصنادید " لکھ رہے تھے، اپنی جان ہتھیلی پر رکھ کر وہ اُونچی اُونچی عمارتوں کے کتبات کو پڑھنے کے لئے جھولے کا استعمال کرتے تھے تاکہ صحیح عبارت نقل کی جاسکے۔ان کا یہ فعل آج کے نوجوانوں کے لئے بھی ایک سبق ہے کہ کوئی بھی کام سنجیدگی، محنت، لگن اور تحقیق کے بغیر نہیں کرنا چاہئے۔

۱۸۵۷ء کے غدر یا جنگِ آزادی کے دوران وہ بجنور میں تعینات تھے، سارا ہنگامہ انہوں نے اپنی آنکھوں سے دیکھا اور اس میں انگریزوں کی حمایت کی، اسکا حال انہوں نے " تاریخِ سرکشیِ ضلع بجنور " میں لکھا ہے۔اس کے بعد انہوں نے ایک مختصر رسالہ " اسبابِ بغاوتِ ہند " لکھ کر ثابت کیا کہ بغاوت کی ذمہ داری ہندوستانیوں پر نہیں بلکہ انگریزوں کی غلطیوں پر تھی۔ یہ بڑی جرأت کا کام تھا مگر وہ اپنی بات بے خوفی اور بیباکی سے کہنا جانتے تھے۔۔اس

رواداری اور کارکردگی کی ایک قابل قدر روایت قائم کر دی تھی۔ اچھی روایت کے بغیر کسی ادارے کی ساکھ نہیں قائم ہوتی، افسوس کے ساتھ کہنا پڑتا ہے کہ یہ نقشہ تا دیر قائم نہ رہ سکا۔ وجوہ سے بحث نہیں۔

وزارت تعلیم سے سلسلہ منقطع کرنے کے بعد انھوں نے امریکہ کے بعض موقر علمی و تعلیمی اداروں میں مدعو پروفیسر کی حیثیت سے تعلیم کے مختلف مسائل پر خطبے دئے۔ ان دنوں یہ سلسلہ جزائر ہوائی میں جاری ہے۔ سیدین صاحب کے تعلیمی خطبات تحریر و تقریر اور ان کی تصانیف عالمانہ، سلجھی ہوئی اور حشو و زوائد سے پاک ہوتی ہیں۔ سال کی بہترین تصنیف ہونے کے اعتبار سے ان کے اردو مجموعۂ مضامین ''آندھی میں چراغ'' پر ساہتیہ اکیڈمی نے اپنا سب سے بڑا انعام دیا ہے۔ منتخب شرفائے ادب اور ارباب فضل و ہنر کی محفل میں بحث و بصیرت کے اعتبار سے سیدین ہمیشہ اہل محفل کے ہمدوش و ہم عناں رہے۔ وہ موجودہ زمانے کے نو بہ نو تقاضوں سے پورے طور پر آشنا ہیں۔ یہ سبھی جانتے ہیں کہ ان میں سے اکثر ہماری مانی ہوئی قدروں سے ہم آہنگ نہیں ہیں لیکن ان تقاضوں کے ناسازگار ہونے کو ناگزیر یا ناقابل تسخیر نہیں سمجھتے اور ان کی آڑ میں خوب کو زِشت کا رنگ دینے کی کوشش نہیں کرتے جیسا کہ آج کل کے کم سواد مدعیان فکر و فن کرتے ہیں۔

سیدین صاحب کا تعلق تمام عمر اعلیٰ علمی و تعلیمی سرگرمیوں سے رہا۔ یہ ان کے رجحان طبع، خاندانی روایات، ممتاز علمی و تہذیبی شخصیتوں کی رفاقت اور اس پاکیزہ اور صحت مند ماحول کا نتیجہ ہے جو اول سے آخر تک ان کو میسر رہا اور اب تک ہے۔ اگر کوئی پوچھے کہ سیدین صاحب کی شخصیت کا سب سے نمایاں وصف کیا ہے تو وثوق سے کہا جا سکتا ہے کہ اقدار اعلیٰ کی ہمہ وقت، ہمہ جہت تبلیغ! غالباً ان کی سب سے پہلی مستقل تصنیف Iqbal's Philosophy of Education ہے جو آج سے کم و بیش پچیس سال پہلے شائع ہوئی جس میں انہوں نے اقبال کے کلام سے ان کے تعلیمی نقطہ نظر کی تعبیر و توضیح کی ہے۔ ۱۹۶۳ء میں ان کی ایک اور کتاب Man in the New World شائع ہوئی جو شعبہ جنرل ایجوکیشن علی گڑھ یونیورسٹی کی فرمائش پر لکھی گئی۔ دونوں کی تصنیف و اشاعت میں کافی بُعدِ زمانی ہے لیکن مصنف کے فکر و نظر کی محنت و اساس میں کوئی تبدیلی نظر نہ آئے گی۔ حالانکہ سیدین صاحب نہ کبھی آئین نو سے ڈرے نہ طرز کہن پر اڑے۔

اقدار اعلیٰ کا سرچشمہ مذہب و اخلاق ہے۔ انسانیت کا صالح تصور مذہب و اخلاق کی دین ہے۔ جب انسانیت ہر طرف سے راندہ و درماندہ ہوتی ہے تو مذہب و اخلاق ہی کی روشنی و رہنمائی میں خیر کثیر سے ہمکنار ہوتی ہے۔ سیدین صاحب اقدار اعلیٰ کے حامی ہیں، اس کی وجہ سے میرے دل میں ان کی بڑی وقعت ہے۔ اقدار اعلیٰ کیا ہیں اور کیا نہیں اس سے یہاں بحث نہیں۔ اتنا جانتا ہوں کہ اقدار اگر اعلیٰ ہیں تو وہ اقدار مطلق بھی ہیں، سیدین صاحب کی تحریر و تقریر میں زندگی اور معاشرے کا انسانی تصور ملتا ہے۔ وہ جانتے ہیں کہ علم خواہ کسی نوعیت کا ہو، کتنا ہی ترقی کر چکا ہو یا کرنے والا ہو، اس کو لازمی طور پر انسان و انسانیت کی چاکری میں رہنا پڑے گا، نہ یہ کہ انسان علم کا غلام بن جائے۔ آج ہم طرح طرح کی جن آفتوں میں مبتلا ہیں اس میں غریب علم ملزم یا مجرم نہیں صرف مستغیث اور دادخواہ ہے اور 'شدم زصحبت آدمیاں خراب' کا مصداق! علم، تعلیم اور معلم میں اخلاقی رشتہ ہے نہ کہ میکانکی یا حیاتیاتی۔ سیدین صاحب نے ہمیشہ اسی کی تائید کی ہے، اس لئے وہ ہماری تہنیت و تشکر کے مستحق ہیں۔

سیدین صاحب کو اسلاف سے، اپنے خاندان سے، اپنی درسگاہ سے، اپنے ساتھیوں سے، اپنے مطالعہ اور تجربے سے ایسا انداز فکر و عمل ملا ہے، کہ ناسازگار حالتوں میں خاص طور پر وہ زندگی کے اعلیٰ معیار پر قائم رہنے کو اپنا سب سے بڑا اور اہم فریضہ سمجھتے ہیں۔ ان کے بارے میں اور بہت سی اچھی باتیں کہنے سے رہی جاتی ہیں، مجلّے کی گنجائش محدود ہے، یہ بھی گوارا نہیں کہ اچھی باتیں روا روی میں کہہ ڈالی جائیں۔ البتہ اس کا اطمینان ہے کہ اچھی باتوں نے اپنے اظہار و اعلان کے لئے سیدین صاحب کا انتخاب کیا، اور سیدین صاحب کا انتخاب ان سب نے، جن کے نام آپ کو اس خوبصورت اور یادگار کتاب کے اوراق میں ملیں گے۔

☆☆☆

"We believe that the righteous and pious people, to whatever religion or community they might belong, deserve our respect in the same way as the righteous people of our own religion"

-Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

With Best Wishes From

Mohd Arif, Alpharetta, GA

سیاست میں وہ توازن یا توافق نہ آسکا، جس کی کمی اب تک محسوس کی جارہی ہے۔

آج بھی جبکہ ہرطرف آزادی و بیداری کے آثار نظر آرہے ہیں عامۃ الناس کے افکار واعمال کی اصلاح اوران کی عام زبوں حالی کو بہتر بنانے کے بجائے ہم ان کو اپنے مشتبہ مقاصد یا مفاسد کا آلہ کار بنانے کی طرف مایل ہیں، ہمارے اس خیال کو اب عوام سمجھ چکے ہیں، چنانچہ انہوں نے ہم کو اپنے مقاصد کا آلہ کار بنانا شروع کر دیا ہے۔عوام اور لیڈر دونوں ان دنوں ایک چکر میں اسیر بے تحاشا ایک دوسرے کا تعاقب کررہے ہیں۔

یہاں یہ گفتگو بظاہر دوراز کار معلوم ہوتی ہے۔لیکن اس کو سمجھے بغیر خواجہ غلام الثقلین کی خدمات کی قدر و قیمت کا صحیح اندازہ نہیں ہوسکتا۔سیدین صاحب نے تعلیم وتربیت کے مسئلہ ومہم کو اپنا کر جوان کی صلاحیتوں کے عین مطابق تھا اپنے والد محترم کے مشن کو آگے بڑھایا۔

خواجہ غلام الثقلین حالی کے نواسے اوران کے بڑے بیٹے خواجہ اخلاق حسین کے داماد تھے۔خیال ہوتا ہے کہ سرسید کو حالی نہ ملے ہوتے تو ان کے کارناموں میں وسعت نہیں تو وہ برکت بھی آتی یا نہیں جس نے علی گڑھ تحریک کو ایک طور پر Renaissance (نشأۃ الثانیہ) اور Reformation (تحریک اصلاح مذہب) کی حیثیت دے دی۔سرسید کے کاموں کو حالی سے براہ راست یا بالواسطہ قریب یا دور کا جو فائدہ پہنچا اس کے مرتب ومنظم مطالعہ کی طرف اب تک ہماری توجہ کم گئی ہے۔سرسید کی بے بہا اور بے مثل خدمات میں جس مخصوص ضمیر کی روشنی ملتی ہے اس میں حالی کا تصرف نمایاں ہے۔

سیدین صاحب، خواجہ غلام الثقلین کے فرزند اور حالی کے پڑپوتے اور پڑنواسے ہیں، وہ ان دونوں کی اعلی ذہنی علمی اور اخلاقی صلاحیتوں سے بہرہ مند ہیں۔حالی کی خدمت میں باریاب ہونے کا شرف مجھے کبھی نہیں حاصل ہوا،لیکن ان کے فرزند خواجہ سجاد حسین صاحب سے ہوا ہے، جب وہ بہت ضعیف اور تقریبا گوشہ گزیں ہو چکے تھے۔خواجہ صاحب کی شفقت و شرافت کو دیکھتے ہوئے اندازہ کرسکتا ہوں کہ حالی کی بلندی و بزرگی کا کیا عالم رہا ہوگا۔اسی طرح خواجہ غلام الثقلین صاحب کو دیکھنے کا اتفاق نہیں ہوا لیکن ان کے فرزند کے شریفانہ اخلاق و عادات نیز اکتسابات علمیہ وذہن کو دیکھتے ہوئے قیاس کیا جاسکتا ہے کہ خواجہ غلام الثقلین مرحوم کی شخصیت کس پائے کی رہی ہوگی۔

سیدین صاحب نے علی گڑھ میں طالب علمی کا پورا زمانہ بورڈنگ ہاؤس میں گزارا، عام طور پر کسی کو علی گڑھ کا مکمل تعلیم یافتہ نہیں سمجھا جاتا تاوقتیکہ اس نے اپنی تعلیم وتربیت کا کافی زمانہ یہاں کے ہوسٹل میں بسر نہ کیا ہو۔اس عہد کا دستور تھا کہ جو طالب علم علم وفن کی کسی شاخ میں ممتاز ہوتا اس کے اردگرد ہم خیالوں کا حلقہ قائم ہوجاتا جسے آج کل کی اصطلاح میں اسٹڈی سرکل یا کلچرل گروپ کہتے ہیں۔آج یہ بات غیر معمولی نہیں معلوم ہوتی۔اس لئے کہ ملک میں شعروادب نیز دوسری کلچرل سرگرمیوں کو ترقی دینے کے لئے طرح طرح کے ادارے قائم ہیں، اور ہوتے جارہے ہیں،لیکن اب سے پچاس ساٹھ سال پہلے اقامتی زندگی کا بڑا جامع اور نتائج کے اعتبار سے نہایت صحت مند، کثیر المقاصد پروگرام علی گڑھ میں بطور خود نافذ تھا، جس کی مثال سارے ملک میں نہ تھی۔

اس عہد میں اس طرح کے علمی وادبی حلقے طلبا میں اتحاد خیال واتحاد جذبات، علم وفن سے شغف، پاس مراتب، وسیع المشربی اور خیر منشی کی استعداد پیدا کرنے میں بہت معین ہوتے تھے۔علی گڑھ کے طلبا میں ایک دوسرے کا جو غیر معمولی پاس ولحاظ ملتا ہے، اور خود علی گڑھ سے تازندگی ان کو جو شیفتگی رہتی ہے وہ بہت بڑی حد تک اسی طرح کے حلقہ ارباب صفا کا فیضان ہے، ایسے متعدد ومتنوع حلقوں سے کسی نہ کسی سے تقریبا ہر طالب علم اپنے مذاق واستعداد کے اعتبار سے وابستہ ہوتا۔اس کا نتیجہ یہ تھا کہ ہم میں ہر شخص سب سے بڑے حلقہ یعنی علی گڑھ کا حلقہ بگوش ہوجاتا۔یہاں ایک شعر یاد آتا ہے۔اور جس طرح یاد آیا ہے، اس سے یقین ہوتا ہے کہ اچھا اور برمحل ہوگا:

اس	نے	اپنا	بنا کے	چھوڑ	دیا
کیا	اسیری	ہے	کیا	رہائی	ہے

سیدین صاحب جس گھرانے کے چشم و چراغ ہیں اور جن روایتوں سے انہوں نے پیمان وفا باندھا تھا وہ علی گڑھ میں اور زیادہ منقح ومستحکم ہوگئیں، اس لئے کہ یہاں کے آب وگل کا خمیر اسی طرح کی روایتوں سے اٹھا تھا۔ان کی تخلیق وتزئین میں اس عہد کے بزرگوں کا بڑا قیمتی حصہ تھا۔ایسے ہی ایک حلقہ علم وادب کے گل سرسبد سیدین صاحب تھے۔اس حلقے کے اراکین آج بھی اپنے فکر ونظر کے اعتبار سے معروف وممتاز ہیں۔اس طرح علم وفن کا احترام سیدین صاحب کی زندگی کا ایک جز بن گیا، چنانچہ کالج سے نکلنے کے بعد وہ جس منصب پر فائز ہوئے اور ذوق وذہن کے اعتبار سے کیسی ہی ''وادی غیر ذی زرع'' سے کیوں نہ سابقہ رہا ہو، ذوق وذہن کی شمع روشن کرتے رہے۔

سیدین صاحب نے اپنی تعلیم علی گڑھ میں مکمل کی۔پھر ولایت گئے، وہاں سے ایم۔ایڈ ہوکر آئے اور مادر درسگاہ کے شعبہ تعلیمات سے منسلک ہوگئے، یہیں پروفیسر ہوئے۔پرنسپل کے منصب پر فائز ہوئے۔اس کے بعد بمبئی، کشمیر، دہلی میں تعلیم کے اعلی صیغوں کے انچارج رہے، آزادی سے پہلے اور اس کے بعد نظام تعلیم کی اصلاح اور تشکیل نو کی جتنی تحریکیں بروئے کار آئیں کم وبیش سب میں کسی نہ کسی حیثیت سے ان کی غیر معمولی قابلیت اور تجربے سے فائدہ اٹھایا گیا جس کی تفصیل اس جلد کے اوراق میں نظر سے گزرے گی۔

اس وقت وہ زمانہ یاد آتا ہے جب مولانا ابوالکلام آزاد مرحوم مرکز میں وزیر تعلیم تھے اور کتنے اور کیسے کیسے جوہر قابل اپنے گرد اکٹھا کر لئے تھے: سیدین صاحب، سید اشفاق حسین، پروفیسر ہمایوں کبیر اور بعض دوسرے اصحاب۔مرکزی کابینہ کے دوسرے صیغوں کا نہ مجھے کوئی علم، نہ ان سے کوئی دلچسپی، وزارت تعلیم کے بارے میں البتہ کہہ سکتا ہوں کہ اس نے بالغ نظری،

رشید احمد صدیقی کا مضمون ''سید ین علی گڑھ میں''

پیشکش: پروفیسر اصغر عباس

ابھی تک جن فاضل محققین اور مرتبین نے رشید احمد صدیقی کی ساری تحریروں کو یکجا کر کے شائع کیا ہے ان میں رشید صاحب کا مضمون ''سید ین علی گڑھ میں'' شامل نہیں ہے۔
مذکورہ مضمون مجھے رام پور رضا لائبریری کے فرض شناس ڈائریکٹر پروفیسر سید حسن عباس کے توسط سے حاصل ہوا ہے، میں ان کا صمیم قلب سے شکر گزار ہوں۔ یہ مضمون ''ارمغان الفت'' سے اخذ کیا گیا ہے، جسے مجلس نذر سید ین کی جانب سے راشٹر پتی بھون کی ایک تقریب میں صدر جمہوریہ ہند ڈاکٹر رادھا کرشنن نے خواجہ غلام السید ین کو پیش کیا تھا، سید ین صاحب کا تعارف مجلس کے صدر اور نائب صدر جمہوریہ ڈاکٹر ذاکر حسین نے کرایا تھا۔
ارمغان الفت کو پیش کرنے والوں کی مجلس میں اس وقت کے اہم ترین اشخاص شامل تھے۔ ارمغان الفت کے دو حصے ہیں، ایک انگریزی مضمون لکھنے والوں کا، اور دوسرا اردو میں مضمون لکھنے والوں کا۔ ارمغان الفت کے مرتبین ڈاکٹر عابد حسین اور ڈاکٹر عبدالرشید ہیں۔ اردو میں ارمغان علمی کی روایت کا آغاز غالباً ارمغان الفت ہی سے ہوتا ہے۔
خواجہ غلام السید ین کا تعلق خانوادۂ حالی سے ہے، علی گڑھ کے ساختہ پرداختہ تھے، یہاں کے طالب علم ہونے کے علاوہ وہ ٹریننگ کالج علی گڑھ مسلم یونیورسٹی کے ۱۹۲۶ء سے ۱۹۳۸ء تک پرنسپل رہے تھے۔ اب، رشید صاحب کا وہ مضمون ملاحظہ ہو جو ہنوز کتابوں کی ایک گپھا میں چھپا بیٹھا تھا۔ (اصغر عباس)

O

جتنے زیادہ دن گزرے ہوں اتنے ہی ان کے کم ہونے کا احساس ہوتا ہے، معلوم نہیں یہ بڑھاپے کا خاصہ ہے یا بعض حالات و واقعات میں ایسی کوئی بات ہوتی ہے۔ یاد نہیں آتے تو نہیں آتے، ع مگر جب یاد آتے ہیں تو اکثر یاد آتے ہیں۔
یہ زمانہ سید ین صاحب کی طفولیت کا تھا جب وہ اپنے اسکول، اسلامیہ ہائی اسکول پانی پت، کی طرف سے تقریری مقابلہ میں شرکت کے لئے ایم۔اے۔او۔ کالج علی گڑھ آئے تھے۔ یہ تقریب آل انڈیا مسلم ایجوکیشنل کانفرنس کے سالانہ اجلاس کے موقع پر ۱۹۲۰ء میں علی گڑھ میں منعقد ہوئی تھی۔ اسٹریچی ہال میں تعلیم یافتہ ہندو مسلمان شرفا، اکابر اساتذہ اور طلبا کا شاندار اجتماع، اسکول کے ایک کمسن طالب علم کا اس موقع پر تقریر کرنے کے لئے اس اعتماد کے ساتھ مجمع کے سامنے آنا جیسے اسٹریچی ہال میں نہ صرف یہ کہ اس فن کا کوئی آشنا موجود نہ ہو بلکہ اپنے محلّہ اور مکتب کے ہم عمر ساتھی ہوں، وہ بھی بیشتر ایسے جو ذہنی اعتبار سے فروتر ہوں! لیکن یہ قصہ تو کہیں اور بیان کر آیا ہوں۔
جلسہ ختم ہو گیا لیکن تقریر اور مقرر کا چرچا کچھ دنوں کالج میں ہوتا رہا۔ اس عہد کے کالج کو دیکھتے ہوئے یہ کوئی معمولی بات نہ تھی۔ یاد نہیں آتا سید ین صاحب کس سال ہائی اسکول کا امتحان پاس کر کے پانی پت سے علی گڑھ آئے، شاید اسی سال یا کچھ آگے پیچھے جب ایم۔اے۔او۔ کالج مسلم یونیورسٹی میں منتقل ہوا، غیر معمولی امتیاز سے بی۔اے۔ پاس کیا۔ مجلس اتحاد (یونیورسٹی یونین کلب) میں تقریر کرنے کے جتنے چھوٹے بڑے انعامات تھے وہ سب حاصل کئے۔ حالانکہ اس زمانے میں کالج میں ایک سے ایک اچھی تقریر کرنے والے موجود تھے۔ ان کے مقابلے میں اپنی تقریر نیز تحریر کا لوہا منوانا معمولی بات نہ تھی۔
دوسری خوبیوں کے علاوہ تقریر و تحریر کی غیر معمولی استعداد سید ین صاحب کو ورثے میں ملی تھی۔ ان کے والد ماجد خواجہ غلام الثقلین اور عم محترم خواجہ غلام الحسنین اپنے عہد کے مشہور مقرر و مصلح تھے۔ خواجہ غلام الثقلین مرحوم کالج یونین کے ممتاز عہدہ دار اور اراکین میں سے تھے۔ ''جریدۂ عالم'' پر باپ بیٹے کا دوام ''ثبت'' ہو یا نہیں کالج اور یونین کے جریدے پر ثبت ہو چکا ہے۔
علی گڑھ تحریک کا ایک اہم پروگرام اصلاح رسوم و معاشرت کا تھا لیکن تعلیمی اور سیاسی مسائل کے نت نئے حالات و حوادث نے سرسید اور ان کے رفقاء کی توجہ کو اس حد تک اپنی طرف مائل رکھا کہ اصلاح کا پروگرام التوا میں پڑ گیا، اس فروگزاشت کی تلافی خواجہ غلام الثقلین مرحوم تمام عمر یکہ و تنہا مسلسل گراں بہا خدمات سے کرتے رہے۔ اصلاح کا کام دیر میں اور تھکا دینے والے انتظار کے بعد برگ و بار لاتا ہے، اس میں چمک دمک نہیں ہوتی۔ امتیاز و اقتدار سے کلیتہً بے نیاز رہ کر خلوص و تندہی سے کام نہ کرتا رہے تو مقصد برآری نہیں ہوتی۔ اسی لئے بہت کم لوگ اس وادی میں قدم رکھنے کی جرأت کرتے ہیں۔
یہ فریضہ اسی یکسوئی سے انجام پاتا جس سے علی گڑھ تحریک کے دوسرے کام، تو بہت سی وہ خرابیاں یا مشکلات از خود دور ہو جاتیں جن کے لئے سرسید، ان کے رفقائے کرام اور بعد کے آنے والے کارکنوں کو غیر معمولی دشواریاں پیش آئیں؛ کہیں کہیں رسوائیاں بھی۔ اصلاح رسوم و معاشرت کے پروگرام کو نظر انداز کر دینے یا ثانوی حیثیت دے دینے سے تعلیم، تربیت، مذہب،

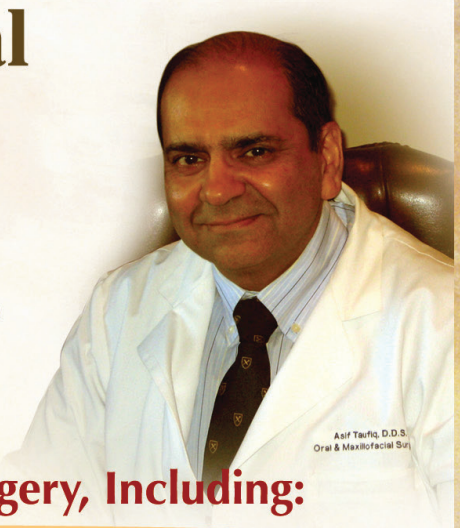


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