A Publication of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)

ALIGATLANTA

DEC 2020

Carrying Forward the **Aligarh Movement** for the Betterment of Our Communities













MAO to AMU

AAAA Story

Mushaira Experience

Pandemic & Aligarians

Corona Shairi

In Memoriam



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ALIG Atlanta
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From Editor's Desk

We fell asleep in one world, and woke up in another.
Suddenly Disney is out of magic,
Paris is no longer romantic,
New York doesn't stand up anymore,
The Chinese wall is no longer a fortress, and Mecca is empty.
Hugs & kisses suddenly become weapons, and not visiting parents & friends becomes an act of love.
Suddenly you realize that power, beauty & money are worthless, and can't get you the oxygen you're fighting for.
The world continues its life and it is beautiful. It only puts humans in cages. I think it's sending us a message:
"You are not necessary. The air, earth, water and sky without you are fine. When you come back, remember that you are my guests. Not my masters."

This poem exemplifies the state of our world during this COVID-19 pandemic. This year 2020 was like no other! When this COVID-19 pandemic started in March, no one expected the virus to cause such a high level of death and devastation to every country and community, even as the year comes to an end. Despite having only 4% of the world population, the US is experiencing 25% of total COVID19-related deaths. With the vaccine's approval last week, there is a hope this will start the process of controlling the spread of the virus and getting us back to our normal. However, distributing the vaccine to everyone will take time – even take till summer 2021. That means our normal lives will remain on hold till majority population is vaccinated.

For last 9 months, the world has felt very different for everybody. COVID-19 has altered every aspect of our lives. To flatten the curve and not to overwhelm our healthcare system, we have been following the health guidelines of washing hands, wearing masks, and social distancing. Many of us have had our homes turn into classrooms, offices, meeting rooms, forums, everything. We have become technologically savvy at using Zoom and other tools for connecting, attending, meeting, listening, grieving, praying, banking, entertaining, feasting, even for consulting physicians. Now, we are getting used to these new ways. Even though this pandemic has caused some mental, physical and emotional fatigue, it appears that some of those lifestyle changes will remain even after this pandemic.

Virtual education is one of them. The future of college is online, and it ought to be cheaper as students are demanding lower fees for not receiving full educational experience. The private and smaller institutions are facing consolidation and in some cases closures in pandemic. They are now adjusting to more online courses and devising job-ready short-term academic programs. The research focus has also begun to change. More emphasis will be given for work in pandemic control, vaccine development, online technologies, among others.

The ALIGAtlanta 2020 edition has tried to capture our lives under pandemic, even published Corona shairi. AMU (1920-2020) is celebrating its 100th year of attaining full-fledged university status. An in-depth article describes the journey of Mohammedan Oriental College (MAO) College to AMU. Jamia Millia Islamia, another premier Muslim institution, is commemorating centenary year of its founding. This volume covers its history along with its stirring university tarana. The Aligarh mushaira experience by a Westerner in pre-Partition India will provide a unique perspective to the readers. Additionally, there are stories about the AAAA, Federation Atlanta convention, spirit of Aligarh movement along with official messages. We also pay personal tributes to our two senior colleagues who left us late this year. You will notice our cover page redesign – used AAAA logo for the first time.

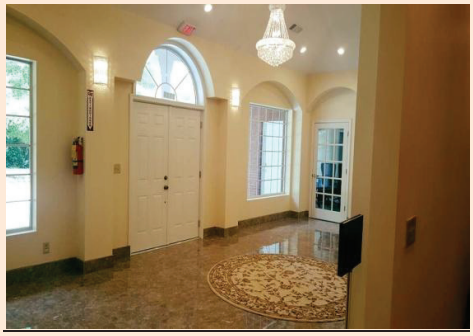
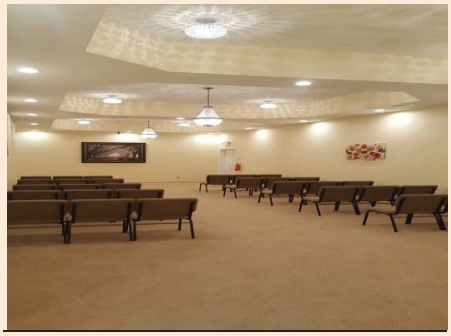
I sincerely thank Syed Waseem, Hasan Kamal, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Nadeem Fatmi and Kauser Usmani (FAAA) for helping me in the articles and photos. I express my sincere gratitude to all the contributors, authors and sponsors for their timely submission and support. Needless to say, I gratefully acknowledge Professor Valeed Ahmad of Aligarh Muslim University for taking care of Urdu typing and compiling Corona shairi. 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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29.11.2020

Dear Faculty Members, Staff, Students, Alumni, Well Wishers & Fellow Citizens,

December 1st, 2020 is a Historic day for us at AMU Aligarh as on this momentous day on December 1, 1920 the University came into existence after Gazette of India notification, though the formal inaugural ceremony of the University was held on December 17, 1920. On this auspicious occassion, I wish to congratulate all the citizens, particularly the Students, Teachers, Non-teaching staff, AMU Alumni and all other well-wishers of the University on the successful completion of 100 golden years of the establishment of the Institution. We fondly remember the legendary founder of the University, **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan** on this special day for his broad vision to extricate the Muslims from the meshes of medieval traditionalism, to inculcate and develop in them scientific temper and to equip them with modern education. This day is not only an occasion to celebrate but also to express our indebtedness and gratitude to the illustrious community leaders who strove hard to get MAO College upgraded into Aligarh Muslim University. On this day we also remember all those who contributed to the all-round development and growth of the University and making it an Institution of National and International repute.

As you are well aware, the Organising Committee of the AMU Centenary Celebrations had drawn a comprehensive programme for the year 2020, but due to Covid-19 Pandemic, the university had to drastically restrict and curtail the programs and forced to confine it only to the virtual programs. But I assure you that the celebration schedule would be extended to the next year and would be resumed on the appropriate scale once Covid-19 situation is under control. We also want to involve the world wide AMU Alumni Community and well-wishers in these celebrations. It is matter of satisfaction that inspite of the Pandemic many virtual programmes including by various departments and Alumni Association have been held and others are being planned in future.

It is a matter of great pride and self-containment that the University has been making a steady progress ever since its inception in 1920 and is at present included amongst the Top Ranked Indian Universities due to the concerted efforts of its faculty and focussed research of its scholars. On this occasion of the completion of 100th year of the establishment of the University, let us take a solemn pledge to rededicate ourselves to the service of the institution and resolve to take the University to new heights of excellence.

Tariq Mansoor 29/11/2020

Professor Tariq Mansoor

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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 year 2020 will go down as a historical year in the memory of AAAA. Not only that we celebrated the centennial year of establishment of AMU, but the world has completely changed since the Covid19 hit early this year and the ensuing lockdown. While we like change, and we usually drive changes in our institutions. But this period of change is accompanied by mourning, worry, illness, economic decline and a lot of day-to-day deprivation of the essentials of our modern life. It is a sad time, but the crisis also gave an opportunity to reinvent ourselves.

It was heartening to see the whole association coming together in solidarity against the Citizenship Amendment Act in February. It was the biggest protest organized in Atlanta where people from diverse backgrounds came together and it gave an opportunity to interact with other local organization including IAMC, IMRC, Equality Lab, USIPI and HfHR. Increased interactions led Dr. Naushad Ghilzai to take an official position in IAMC and we look forward to even greater cooperation.

Came March and the world changed forever, resulting in immediate efforts at that time put on hold and then dropped altogether. Among them was a plan to host Dr. Manmohan Singh in April for which significant time and efforts were invested. Another was to host a musical event by the Sukhan qawwali band planned to coincide with the Dr. Manmohan Singh visit. Focus then moved to providing relief to people affected due to Covid lockdown. All members stepped up to the task and provided generous support both collectively and individually. Most noted among them was supporting the IMRC fundraising drives to distribute food for people in India affected due to lock down without work and income and also to the victims of Delhi riots.

Several students were also affected in the lockdown and the AAAA helped a student in Jamia, couple of students in Canada and responded to the call for help from Mercer University President. It was really inspiring to see members returning the call for every fundraising effort undertaken which brings out the best among us and made me proud to be a part of such philanthropy. In addition to members, it was heartening to meet several community leaders especially Aziz Dhanani, Ishaq Jamal, Ikbal Maya sahiban and their friends who pooled a large sum to support the causes above.

While the social distancing prevented may of us meeting in person, but we remained connected through several virtual meetings and small group meetings. Thanks to all members of EC and BOT who were always available to meet, contribute and encourage every project undertaken. Hasan Kamal sahib worth special mentioning as the main motivator to initiate and propel things forward and Dr. Naushad Ghilzai for taking care of every operational detail. We fondly remember the contribution of Siraj Keratala sahib who will be sorely missed.

Although the year is ending, but the train we embarked upon is not stopping. Members of AAAA are able to demonstrate time and again what positive contribution we can make to the society we live in and bring repute to our Alma mater. Jo Abr Yahan Se Uthega Woh Sare Jahan Par Barsega.

Sincerely,
Shoeb Ahmad, Ph.D.
President, AAAA
www.aligarhassociation.org

A Mushaira Experience

Excerpts from Phillips Talbot's Book Titled "An American Witness to India's Partition"

Muslim University
Aligarh, India
January 20, 1940

AS A SOCIAL medium in the West poetry seems to have lost much of the sway it once held. It conquers no country; corrects no civilization. Persons who admit to reading fiction and biography, watching Tobacco Road* and seeing many a film have little time for poets. A hothouse plant, the verse is for the most part handled with care by a selected circle of writers, literature students and gentle-souled women.

Such is the case, at any rate, in the United States. In India the story is different. I knew that. Still, an invitation to a mushaira (an Urdu poets' conclave) brought anticipations of cloistered devotees joining muted chants perhaps of the Gardens of Shalimar, or of Kotri, by the River. The tradition of Omar is not dead.

So it was with a degree of amazement that, expecting an evening's dulcet quatrains, I found—a football rally! No less. Six hundred stamping, shouting, cheering students, half of the undergraduate population, over-packed the available hall and oozed out of doors and windows. These auditors shouted and laughed, they booed and whistled. They scraped their chairs on the floor. They gave the chairman a severe workout in keeping order even though he had the public address system in his favor. They almost—and sometimes completely—stole the show.

On the platform the evening's entertainment consisted of recitations of their own works by 20 or more poets. In turn they got up, intoned their writings into the microphone (modern development) and sat down. But it wasn't as simple as that. Everything depends on the first couplet. Since these poets don't just speak, but must sing their lines, voice quality has much to do with their success.

The first three words reveal whether a voice is rich, deep and mellow or is high and squeaky. Woe be to the performer with the latter blessing. He may have written the most arresting verse of the evening, but not even a full line of it is heard. When the student listeners have made up their minds, no delay ensues before the outbreak of catcalls and whistling. After that the unhappy artist may carry on for 15 minutes, but student honor would appear to demand that no more than two consecutive words shall be heard through the din. If a man's voice is liked, he has passed the first hurdle. The students will hear him respectfully to the end of the first couplet. If that's not good the sad fate of his predecessor mantles him and an outsider has another 10 minutes to stand in wonder at such a display. But when that poet comes who can carry the crowd, the one whose voice is good and whose couplets are exciting, he is rewarded by almost breathless attention unsullied by sophisticated detachment.

When he scores a touche a deep rumble originates in the back of the room and rolls majestically forward. "Vah, vah," the tribute greets him, "bahut khub, bahut khub", superb, superb. On feeling, more than hearing, the admiration expressed in these vibrations the pleased singer makes a sign of thanks, and moves forward into the next couplet.

On this night younger student poets recited first. They are amateurs who have found beauties in the Urdu language and who have attempted to do much with them. Hardly any, though, received a hearing. After them came some hands more adept at the craft, and then two or three poets—Jigar and Ravish Siddiqi—whose names are known across India. The minstrel Jigar, whose former propensity for drink has been tamed by tea and coffee, cuts an arresting figure with his hair dropping to curls at his shoulders and his loose, untidy dress. On the platform he gulped down four cups of tea during one recitation. It was such experts as he who kept the interest, until 1 A.M. of 600 students who rise and pray before sunup. It would be unfair not to add that such vigorous audience reaction to the widely respected institution of mushaira is as exclusively characteristic of student crowds as paddling is the trademark of university fraternities. Throughout India delighted congregations give full hearings to performers and judge them more on the quality of their couplets than on their tonal richness. The mushaira is not a contest. But one of its characteristics has long been that a subject and a meter are assigned some weeks in advance; then all participants conform to the standards. Naturally rivalry thrives. And the auditor goes home knowing he won't be able to put the throbbing rhythm out of his head for days. Sometimes, as on this night, freedom of subject is given. It is then that the all-encompassing scope of poetry in the East is revealed. Yes,

there were love poems, verses about pools in the Kashmir forest—lines that even in a skimpy whispered translation were beautiful. But there were metered political works, too: riproaring bloodthirsty poems crying for revolution and power; poems about economics: plaints over the wages of road workers; and on sociology: a gripping drama called "Death of a Laborer." This one had some of the brutal, galling style of di Donato's "Christ in Concrete." Urdu poetry as doctrinaire teaching developed its greatest exponent in Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, who died last year after attaining a rank with the leading poets of the Islamic era. In front of me is an article called "Iqbal's Message to Muslim Youth." In it the author quotes Iqbal on such a variety of themes as the future and the practice of Islam, Islamic history, the dangers of modern civilization ("it is the greatest enemy of Muslim culture and civilization"), human ego, the narrowness of nationalism, the weakness of non-violence (Gandhi's credo), the unsuitability of present-day education, the falsity of democracy, the necessity of violence in struggle, and the free will of man. In the Western world socialism, theology and economics would find other forms of expression. Indians enjoy using their language. As to the Arabs of the Prophet's day, so to them real pleasure has come from playing with words, shaping sentences, building metaphors, pyramiding synonyms, rumbling forth the 99 names of God. Perhaps that explains why poetry is deeply embedded in their lives; why engineering students prefer quatrains to novels for recreational reading. Or it may be the other way around. Songs from the tents of the lyrical Bedouins may have nurtured the love of language for its own sake. At any rate the mushaira, which is as popular among rustics when village poets compete for honors as it is among the studious, is an Oriental institution that one hopes modern society—that materialist machine age so detested by Iqbal—won't decide to do without.

In Memoriam

Kamla (Saira) Yahya Siddiqui 1939-2020



Kamla Yahya Siddiqui (Saira baji) was born in Bhadohi, India in 1939. She got married to Dr. Wasi Siddiqui in 1962 in Bijnore, India. She joined her husband with their infant son, Bobby in 1965 at Rutgers University, New Jersey. The family moved to Atlanta in 1980. Saira baji hosted the historic meeting of AAAA founding in 1984 at her residence in Douglasville, GA and prepared a sumptuous dinner for this auspicious occasion. In spite of the fact she never studied at Aligarh, she always followed Wasi bhai in every Aligarh meeting locally as well as traveled to several federation annual meetings in various cities. She loved her children and grandchildren with all of her heart as well as her family. She regularly hosted and housed Aligarh guests with great hospitality. She was a successful business woman that owned and operated several gift shops in Dallas, TX prior to coming to Atlanta. She managed the silver portion of the Siddiki Bros showroom in at the Atlanta Apparel Mart. She was a kind and generous person. Saira baji was always calm, respectful and polite. In Aligarh meetings, her presence had calming effect on deliberations. She met everyone with smile and affection. She is survived by her husband, three children and seven grandchildren. Her absence will be greatly missed. May Almighty forgive her and grant her jannalul-firdous (amen).

CORONA VARONA, ATLANTA, WAGAIRA WAGAIRA

Dr. Asif Taufiq, Atlanta

Fist bumps, elbow bumps and wearing masks with, invisible smiles behind them, echoes “Kya haal chaal hai”! Monthly meetings with lunch buffet turning into virtual zoom meetings, with us older folks getting technology lessons, is turning this century into a techno century.

We at Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, (as with the whole world) were not ready for this pandemic. Our annual Mushaira, our one picnic, drama club, our getting together with Mercer students seem to be things of the past. We also came to a financial standstill. Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) became a necessary part of vocabulary.

Then some things happened. Atlanta Aligarians/ supporters started calling each other more often. Emails became an essential part of daily communication. Discussion about Corona Virus and remedies became daily topics. Surveys were done as to what program can be done with social distancing and PPE in place. How can we meet our financial goals! Businesses are struggling and our sponsors were also in financial straps.

As the virtual annual Mushaira date came close a decision was made that we can watch it on a big screen, in a park with social distancing in place. It was also a unique experience. What we learned is that humans are social beings and the joy it brought to our colleagues was priceless. Everybody felt alive. No, virtual Mushaira is not the same thing, but it is the next best thing, if a live Mushaira with bustling audience and traditional dresses cannot be held.

The best part of getting together was free Corona testing offered by Dr. Shoeb Ahmed our president through his lab. While we were still thinking about financial setbacks, President Underwood of Mercer University appealed to AAAA for funds to help the needy students during this epidemic. Keeping our AAAA tradition alive we came up with $10,000 that was handed over to Mercer University. It showed Mercer University officials, the “Aligarian Doctrine” that education is the only way to change our society.

Yes, we still have the light shining in our hearts, that Sir Syed lit a century ago. Yes, Yeh Abar Atlanta Mein bhi Bursey ga! OR Khoob Bursey ga.

AAAA showed flexibility by requesting current leadership to continue till 2021. We felt that current leadership has done well and turning over the leadership in these special circumstances will not have the continuity we desire.

I am a witness to internet, cell phones, CT scans, and only heard about the Spanish Flu of 1918. But Corona-19 is real. Stay safe, be well.



Pandemic and Aligarians

Nadeem Fatmi, Atlanta

Planning is a way of life and us Humans are master planners. We plan our career, travel, vacations, even our retirement. But often life throws such a curveball that no amount of planning can prepare you for that. Year 2020 has been one such curveball.

It all started in late 2019 in a province call Wuhan in China. A deadly virus now known as COVID-19 started creating havoc there. Humans have a remarkable tendency to zone out things that don't affect us, hence COVID-19 was merely a footprint for the rest of the world. But in today's interconnected world it was only a matter of time before the virus will attack all of us with its full might.

Countries after countries, states after states started to report new infections and fatalities because of the virus. There have been over 47 million cases and over 1.2 million deaths worldwide and there is no end in sight.

As it often happens, during the time of crisis true leaders rise up to occasion and face the challenge head-on while others whimper or cave under the pressure. Though few, you can see examples of true leadership in countries such as New Zealand but by and large most of the world has been stuttering along in this pandemic.

In the absence of an effective vaccine, social distancing has been the only way to protect yourself and your loved ones and so it has been. Most of us have barricaded ourselves in homes, working remotely, attending school/college online, attending virtual events etc.

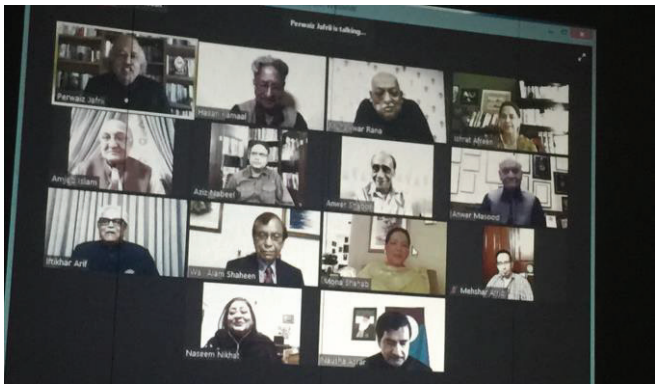
Us Aligarians have been no exception. Most Aligarh Alumni associations across the United States and around the world organize at least one or two marquee events every year; Sir Syed Day Mushaira being one such event which we all look forward to. Our own association – Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta under the leadership of Dr. Shoeb Ahmad had planned several events for the year 2020 with Sukhan and Mushaira being the key events. But alas, all came to a naught thanks to Covid-19. We were forced to conduct our regular association meetings online and virtually meet and greet each other.

But, as they say, necessity is the mother of all inventions and some traditions are too important to ignore, annual Mushaira being one of them; so, we worked with other associations and organized not one but two online virtual Mushaira via Zoom, Facebook live and YouTube. For one of the Mushaira, we even dared to watch the event in person, socially distanced of course. Few brave souls ventured to participate in person, but it was a success, nonetheless. Our own Rasheed Bhai (Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAAA) even gave a new nickname to this years' Mushaira – CovidShaira.

As I write this, a second wave of coronavirus is raging in many parts of the world. Some are even experiencing a 3rd wave and a mass available vaccine is still ways away. But the world never stops and life must go on. We are continuing to innovate and live with this pandemic. The work of the association must not stop, so we continue to plan for future events such as annual meeting where we will elect new members to replacing outgoing board of trustees and a new executive team virtually and conduct our business in a safe and socially distanced environment.

While 2020 may have kept us down but a new dawn is just around the corner. 2021 will be a new beginning and we will focus on our mission with a new vigor and commitment. Be on the lookout for a slew of new events and programs from Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta.





“That Deen which transformed enemies into brothers
The savage who swore by the sword learned to love
Even predators it taught to care for the others
To shepherds which gave the control of the world
The land which was grazeland for cattle and bare
Was turned to gold and green so the world it could dare.”

—Maulānā Hālī

With Best Wishes From

Shahid Ali and Family, Atlanta

On its 100th Year of AMU Becoming a Full-Fledged University (1920-2020)



Atlanta Hosts the 18th Annual Meeting of Aligarh Associations of North America

The XVIII Annual Convention of Aligarh Alumni Associations (FAAA) was hosted by AAA in Atlanta on July 26-28, 2019 at Double Tree Hotel by Hilton, Roswell, GA. The theme of the convention this year was "Sir Syed's Vision and the 21st Century." The convention was attended by over 125 delegates from all over the United States, Canada, India and the Middle-East. This was a record attendance in the history of FAAA conventions.

The Convention started on Friday evening, July 26th with an hour for socializing and networking followed by dinner. The participants were then entertained with brief sessions on "Sheri Nashist" recited by Ms. Sadaf Farooqui (also emceed), Dr. A. Abdullah, Mr. Perwaiz Jafri, Dr. Nausha Asrar, Dr. Razi Raziuddin, Mr. Siraj Karatela, Mr. SMA Naqvi and Mr. Zia Khairabadi. The last session of the day "Aligs Got Talent" was performed by Mr. Ali Rizvi, Dr. Hina Nazli, Dr. Ateeq Ahmad, Mr. Suhail Farrukh, Ms. Sheeba Masroor and Qawwali by Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) & others. The Chief Guest, Mr. Ravish Kumar also recited his poetry. The audience enjoyed all these sessions.

The program continued on the morning of July 27th with Tilawat-e-Qura'n by Dr. Ahmadullah Siddiqi followed by a welcome address by Dr. Asif Taufiq, the President of AAA Atlanta. Annual reports were presented by BOT Chairman, Prof. Tariq Haqqi and the outgoing BOD team members Mr. Noman Siddiqui (Treasurer), Mr. Faraz Hasan (Secretary) and Dr. Nausha Asrar (President). Dr. Rashid Naim & Dr. Ghulam Nadri of Georgia State University presented their views and findings on Sir Syed's vision, mission and its relevance on Muslim educational traditions and empowerment. Dr. Razi Raziuddin illustrated the failure of Muslim institutions and individuals, 150 years following the debut of Sir Syed's mission, to make any significant headway in advancing it.

Mr. Moez Wajihuddin of Dawat-e-Hadiya presented a message from His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University. The Chancellor's message emphasized the need for commitment to acts of kindness and generosity. He quoted a verse from the Holy Quran that states Allah raises those with faith and knowledge in stature and station. He further said, "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 flights." The Chancellor in his message expressed appreciation of the work done by Aligarh Alumni in community work and prayed for future success.

Professor Sufiyan Beg, Chairman AMU Alumni Affairs presented a brief talk on the current research and academic developments in AMU. He hoped and wished for creating an environment that would inspire students for intensive research in science and other fields aiming at becoming Nobel Laureates. In a powerful speech, Guest of Honor, Mr. Abbas Akhil, House Representative, New Mexico Assembly, USA spoke about his Aligarh journey and how it prepared him for what he is today. He recalled many interesting and inspiring instances of hostel life, academic and campus activities. Then, Mr. Akhil shared his experience of running for the political office and emphasized the importance of holding the public office to influence and help the citizens.

Chief Guest Mr. Ravish Kumar of NDTV gave an overview of deteriorating education and media status in India. He explained how systemically the entire education system is being distorted based on myths rather than facts or scientific researches. He emphasized the need to get involved, to protest and to resist these destructive forces in the broader interest. Mr. Kumar's presentation was highly appreciated, and the entire audience gave him a standing ovation.

Mr. Hasan Ghias of Dallas talked about improving AMU schools and its impact. Ms. Amtul Suhail gave an update on "Education of Girls and Orphans (EGO)." Prof. Shaheen Usmani of Brooklyn College (BC), NY spoke about their work with Sir Syed National Schools in U.P. Mr. Asad Equabal of Dubai explained uses and importance of "ALIGConnect" App. Next, the talk on "Global Initiative and Trends" was given by Dr. Wesley Barker of Mercer University, Prof. Anil Pradhan & Prof. Sultana Nahar of Ohio State University (OSU) and Prof. Mustaque Ahmad of Georgia Institute of Technology. Dr. Wesley shared her and her students' experience of visiting the AMU campus for a summer program. Profs. Pradhan & Nahar gave an overview of Indo-US AMU-OSU Collaboration in STEM Education and Research, and how they plan to continue helping students & faculty.

In the evening session, delegates were divided into groups for discussion and recommendations on theme topic "Motivating, Strengthening & Growing Member Associations." A quick rundown of previous efforts was given by Dr. Moyeen Haque. Many useful and creative recommendations were shortlisted by four breakout groups. It ranged from improving website, nominating young councilors to forming of new associations and changes in bylaws. Mr. Umar Farooq concluded the session.

The annual convention banquet started with recitation of the Holy Quran by Mr. Omer Kamal followed by welcome address by Dr. Rasheed Ahmad, President FAAA. Dr. Ahmad recognized the services of the previous FAAA presidents and also thanked the local Atlanta officers for their contributions. He briefly went over the background and aims & objectives of FAAA. Paying tribute to Sir Syed, Dr. Ahmad noted that Sir Syed symbolizes the phoenix which will continue to regenerate and to be born again. He laid out some of the proposals for AMU & FAAA including starting campus orientation tour for new students, developing an FAAAA digital newsletter and greater participation in the extension lectures on advanced topics.

Mr. Ravish Kumar, Anchor and TV Journalist, NDTV India spoke about responsible journalism and India's secular democracy. Mr. Kumar recalled the changes Indian society is undergoing and the various recent incidents. The color and tone of any event is viewed through a polarized prism. He was concerned about the loss of objectivity in the media. Mr. Kumar emphasized the urgent need to effectively disseminate the positiveness and respond to the fake narratives through social media. His talk was honest, factual, cogent and well-referenced. Once again, he received a standing ovation from the audience. Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Dr. Asif Taufiq and Dr. Wasi Siddiqui received AAA Atlanta award for their patronage & services. Dr. Nausha Asrar, Dr. Tariq Haqqi and Dr. A. Abdullah received FAAA awards for their leadership and dedication. Special awards were given to visiting guests, Dr. Sufyan Beg, Mr. Abbas Akhil and Mr. Ravish Kumar. Mr. Kauser Usmani, Seceratry FAAA thanked all the guests, sponsors, speakers, delegates and organizers for making the convention a huge success. Mr. Nadeem Fatmi mesmerized the banquet audience with his emceeing.

After a delicious dinner, the entertainment night started with a stage play on Sir Syed & Aligarh Movement by AAA Washington DC. The audience enjoyed and applauded the play. It was followed by University Tarana which drew everyone onto the stage. The next entertainment was Ghazals & Geet. Mr. Azhar Mahmood and Dr. Shahid Rafique delighted and mesmerized the audience with melodious songs and powerful ghazals. The banquet was attended by around 180 people.The July 28th event started with a brief session that included interaction of office-bearers with delegates and member associations. Discussion on FAAA Bylaws was coordinated by Dr. Saif Sheikh and Dr. Moyeen Haque. At the convention closing at around noon, the delegates were given a driving tour of Downtown Atlanta which included Georgia Tech, CNN, Coca-Cola, Olympic Park, etc.

This sold-out event was meticulously planned and executed by AAA Atlanta team & FAAA steering committee. All the arrangements from airport pickup, speakers' selection, topics to time management, entertainment and post-event site-seeing received very high marks from the attendees. Umar Farooq led the development of the program agenda and oversaw its execution. Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, Shahid Siddiqui, Syed & Rukhsana Waseem managed the front desk registration. The food and catering were coordinated by Dr. Asif Taufiq, Nasir Farooqui and Shahid Ali. Nadeem Fatmi, Uzair Shams, Abdul Moyeed, Shadab Anwar and others transported guests to/from airport. Dr. Naushad Ghilzai ensured the time management. Dr. Shoeb Ahmad helped in the logistics and led the downtown tour. Hasan Kamal kept the guests engaged in pre and post-convention days. Young Saad Tanzeem did most of the heavy lifting, literally. Nawaid Tanzeem took care of accounting and hall arrangement. Dr. Shahid Rafique worked out details of multi-purpose audio-visual needs. Dr. Farzana Bharmal very early on secured the major sponsorship for this event. Yasir Nomani hosted and travelled with the guest.

The local planning committee for FAAA convention included following members: Dr. Rasheed Ahmad (Chairman), Umar Farooq, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, S. Hasan Kamal, Syed Waseem, Dr. Asif Taufiq, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Dr. Shahid Rafique, Nadeem Fatmi, Dr. Naushad Ghilzai, S. Nawaid Tanzeem, Uzair Shams, Nasir Farooqui, Shahid Ali, Yasir Nomani, Meraj Beg, Siraj Karatela, Abdul Moyeed, Shadab Anwar, Dr. Jalal Zuberi, Dr. Rashid Naim, Dr. Farooq Khan, SMA Naqvi, Rukhsana Waseem, Sultan Khan, Enayat Khan, Mohd Arif, M. Inamullah, Dr. Ghulam Nadri, Suhail Waris, Irshad Ahmad, Maroof Shah, Imran Athar, Mahfooz Khan. Major sponsors included AMU Chancellor's Office, Turkish Airlines, Taufiq Family, Dr. Sayed Aamer, 27th Investments, Dr. Abrar Khan, Quality Inn, Hyderabad Association, among others.

FAAA 2019 convention will be remembered not only for its record turnout and quality programs but also for many firsts like distributing custom convention bag, Sir Syed's 200th birth anniversary commemorative coin and special souvenir magazine to all the delegates. Atlanta convention has certainly set the bar very high and it will be a challenge for the future host to surpass.



XVIIIth ANNUAL C ONVENTION ATLANTA, GA JULY 26-28, 2019



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Additional Photographs of 2019 FAAA Atlanta Convention









2019 Annual International Mushaira with Dr. Peerzada Qasim (Pak), Manzar Bhopali (Ind), Sarfraz Shahid (Pak), A.M. Turaz (Ind). Audience (below)



Farewell Party to Hon. Consul Shailesh Lakhtakia (sixth from left) along with AAAA members



Citizenship Bill Protest. At CNN.

Below (L to R). 2019 Festival of India , Diwali Mela with Consul-General Hon. Dr. Swati. Kulkarni





In Memoriam

Siraj Karatela 1947-2020



It was June 26, 1977 when I moved to Atlanta. Having driven down from Canada it was late in the day, highway construction was everywhere. I called a phone number given to me by an old classmate of mine, Iqbal. The phone was answered by a person named Siraj. I had never met him before or talked to him. Iqbal was his uncle. The welcoming tone of Siraj's voice was impressive. At his insistence I stayed with him for two days. This was the beginning of a friendship that spanned over 43 years.

When you start aging time seems to fly by rather fast. Apparently long, 43 years appeared too short a period to fully absorb the warmth of Siraj's company, appreciate the sincerity of his words, the humor and more importantly to fully enjoy his company at the dinner table. He and his wife visited us occasionally, usually unannounced. His lavish description of foods, how they are cooked and who in the community cooks them the best always made that evening enjoyable. O, His love of ice cream and mithai!

It was 1979, we invited the whole community, about 70 persons to the Aqeeqa of our son. In those days gatherings of the community were in community rooms attached to most banks. The program included a Mushaira-the first one of its kind in Atlanta. A small head table with a candle in the middle. Everyone had to recite a verse or two, not necessarily their own. It was here that Siraj dazzled the guests with his poetic style and excellence. His literary talent is not hidden from anyone. His recitation of poetry and rendering of prose won everyone's heart. He established himself on the stage with his role of Mirza Ghalib. Few would have guessed the he was on the stage with an active infection on his foot. His passion for the arts eclipsed his feeling of pain.

As part of their heritage communities stand on the shoulders of a few pioneers. These communities are beautified and enriched by the presence of members like Siraj. He evolved rapidly to become a role model for us all. You would not hear him boast or brag, speak ill of others or cast blame. He gave credit to whoever it belonged. He loved his family, his work and his community.
Over the past few years Siraj's attachment to the Masjid increased and he became quite saintly. This added another dimension to the pleasure one got in his company. Discussions grew in substance from idle talk to issues of life, family and community; then philosophical and occasionally metaphysical.

I had the honor to be his friend as well his physician. I miss the smile on his face when he would try to hide his kheer and Gulab Jaman at weddings and community gatherings. Yet he was a good patient, trying his best, never complaining. The calm and patience with which he faced every difficulty in life was exemplary. His trust in Allah was strong.

In the death of Siraj Karatela the community is left with a void. It has lost a leader and a servant and above all a role model for us all. May Allah give him a high place in the Jannah.

Dr. Y. Khalid Siddiq, Atlanta

For Whom the Bell Tolls

Someone has departed, and a day is set for all to make that eternal journey. Yet knowing that is still not consoling when you have to suffer the loss of a dear one. On September 30th we lost our beloved friend Siraj Karatela.

I remember Siraj as a very kind, soft-hearted & mild-mannered individual. He was gifted with an uncanny sense of humor. Siraj was well known for his sharp ability to remember and recall Ghalib's poetry and extemporaneous use of 'ashaars' (verses). He would dilute arguments and respond to complaints using rhetorical statements or verses and the complainer would forget about the issue and immerse in Siraj's poetic phrases. All his life, along with an active career as a microbiologist he remained an active participant of various literary activities in Atlanta. He played in various stage dramas and Atlanta cannot forget his enchanting role as Mirza Ghalib in a stage drama few years ago.

Siraj, was a vibrant person who is immensely loved, respected and now remembered by his friends, family and community equally. May Allah bless his soul.

Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Atlanta

Siraj, We Miss You!

Decades ago on the last Sunday of October 1971, we met Siraj Karatela at the Georgia Tech Student Center. He came with his uncle to watch an Indian film, the only Desi entertainment available to the Atlanta community during those days. Siraj had recently come from Karachi to pursue higher education in the USA. Couple of years later he went back home and got married to Shaheen. Shaheen's arrival was the beginning of a lifetime friendship between our families.

Siraj had an outgoing and charming personality. He had an immense love for Urdu poetry, especially Ghalib. Siraj being a patriotic Pakistani became active in the Pakistani Students' Association (PSA); he was twice elected as the president of the association. During the 50th Independence Day celebration for Pakistan, the Atlanta PSA hosted a cultural program at Agnes Scott College where Siraj recited Allama Iqbal's Shikwa with great emotional zeal and fervor. Siraj was an active member of the Aligarh Alumni Association since its inception. He was very hospitable and would always welcome the visiting poets to stay at his house.

Siraj being a devout Muslim was active in Islamic Centers and Masajid in and around Atlanta. He was one of the original members of the AlFarooq Masjid and an active participant at Doraville Masjid. He was a true family man who helped his family far and wide to settle them in the US. He leaves behind a great legacy with his son Suleiman and five grandsons.

Siraj and his wife Shaheen were part of our family. He was a great cook and Nihari was his specialty. We would often meet at each other's home; he and my mother in law would have poetry recitation competitions. During these meetings we would discuss and try to solve the political and social problems facing back home. With Siraj's passing we lost a sincere friend and Atlanta a dear community member. May Allah (SWT) give Sabr to his family and bless his soul, Ameen.

Mr. Akbar and Mrs. Tehmina Zaidi, Atlanta

Siraj Karatela was born in Rajkot, India in 1947. He came to Atlanta from Pakistan in 1970. He obtained his second Master's degree in Biochemistry from the Georgia State University (GSU). He was the President of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) from 1998-2001 and BOT member (2019-2020). He was involved in the formation of Aligarh Association in Atlanta. Siraj Bhai was the first Chairman of the BOT during 1984, the founding year of AAAA. He and his wife, Shaheen baji graciously hosted guest poets/artists year after year during annual mushairas and other literary events. He emceed many mushairas and adabi nashists including in 2006 FAAA Atlanta Convention. He was the founding member of MSA at GSU and Pakistan Society of Atlanta. He was not only a great lover of Urdu poetry but also had a photographic memory when it came to recitation. Siraj bhai also acted in stage plays such as Mirza Ghalib, Do Aalami Mushaira, to name a few. Siraj bhai was a microbiologist by profession and had worked in various research labs. With his sudden passing, AAAA lost a great subscriber of Sir Syed Tehreek and very sincere patron. May Almighty forgive him and grant him jannalul-firdous (amen). -Editor

سب کہاں کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئیں
خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہوں گی کہ پنہاں ہو گئیں

Story of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) – A Personal Recount

S. Hasan Kamal, Atlanta

کہاں سے چھیڑوں فسانہ کہاں تمام کروں

It was 1984 when a group of believers in Sir Syed Tahreek (mission) led by alumni of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) gathered at the Victory Lane, Douglasville, GA, then residence of Dr. Wasi Siddiqui. As I recall some of the names, who were present: Dr. Wasi Siddiqui and Mrs. Sara Siddiqui, Fasih Siddiqui, Marhoom Khurshid Ahmad and Ms. Zahra Ahmad, S. Hasan Kamal, Syed M. Waseem Sahib, Marhoom Amanullah Khan Sahib, Ms. Suriyya Khan, Mr. & Mrs. Akbar and Tahmina Zaidi, Dr. Feroze Yusufji and Ms. Perveen Yusufji, and Marhoom Siraj Karatela and Ms. Shaheen Karatela.

After having the famous dinner with grilled Kabob cooked by Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, it was decided to form an association in metro Atlanta. Thus AAAA – Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta with the same mission of Sir Syed Tahreek. It joined the Aligarh Alumni Association of Washington, DC as a chapter.

It 2002, AAAA joined FAAA – Federation of Aligarh Alumni Associations of USA as an autonomous member. In 2014, under the leadership of Umar Farooq, AAAA was registered as 501 c(3) with IRS - thus all donations are tax deductible.

Many members of AAAA, regardless of their graduation from AMU or not, became presidents and served well. Janab Mohammad Inamullah Sahib is one of them. He informed that APPNA - Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America decided to visit India in 2006. During the visit APPNA adopted a village in Punjab and decided to donate funds to the village. For one reason or the other it did not materialize. Inam Sahib convinced APPNA to redirect fund to AMU village in Aligarh. He succeeded. AMU village is no other than AMU.

APPNA donated INR 50,000 for 10 polio eradication camps organized by AMU. It added to AMU earning "Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Award for AMU" on October 28, 2006. This is the first time that this award has been given to a non-American University. President Carter Foundation Suristha Sehgal, an AMU alumnus, was there with President Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter. Please click on the following link for further reading:

https://www.oneindia.com/2006/10/28/jimmy-and-rosalynn-carter-partnership-award-for-amu-1162031852.html

For the term of 2005-06, I was elected as President-Elect of FAAA. Therefore, the convention of FAAA was going to be in Atlanta in year 2006. The two-year AAAA presidential term of Dr. Farzana Bharmal, a SS Tahreeki, was ending in 2005. She requested to extend her term for one more year so that she can manage the convention as the guest of honor was no other than AMU Chancellor Aziz Mushabber Ahmadi Sahib, the 26th Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India. He belonged also to Bohra community. Dr. Farzana rose to the occasion and got Bohra community involved it celebrating the occasion and also Bohra community donated $5,000. In the convention, AAAA served breakfast cooked by lady-members of AAAA to guests who stayed in the hotel. It is unique example of AAAA when it came to hospitality.

AAAA helped me during the FAAA presidential term (2006-07) in completing the following: (1) Tour of singer Khalid Mahmood, son of legendary Talat Mahmood, an alumnus of AMU. The tour contributed roughly $1,000 to FAAA. (2) Two Internet networks with 5 workstations in air-conditioned room with tables and chairs and one-year advance subscription to internet provider for each graduate girls' hostel: Sarojini Naidu Hall and Indira Gandhi Hall. It became AMU property there on. (3) On the request of Maulana Azad Library, three-dozen books from England were provided for medical students.

During August 11-13, 2008, Prof. P. K. Abdul Azis, AMU Vice Chancellor, visited Atlanta. AAAA managed to introduce him to American universities administration system. He visited Technology Enterprise Park of Georgia Institute of Technology. He visited University of Georgia. He signed a MoU – Memorandum of Understanding with GSU – Georgia State University. The idea of Global Alumni Summit was born in Atlanta. The first "World Summit of AMU Alumni" was held during October 18-19, 2008. It has been organized by AMU every year since then.

Marhoom Abdul Qayyum Sahib served as president of AAAA. He was also a member of Board of Indus Hospital, Karachi. This hospital primarily serves poor. It is administered paperless. It is immaculate, no cigarette butts, no paan spits. On hearing this from me, AMU VC invited Dr. Abdul Bari and Marhoom Abdul Qayyum Sahib to attend the first World Summit and they came. They met the administration of JNMC - Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College of AMU and shared the details how to do it. Following the summit, a meeting was held in Delhi with VC and Principal of JNMC to organize a visit to Indus Hospital. Unfortunately, Bombay terrorist attack derailed the visit.

Professor Dr. Sultana Nahr of OSU – Ohio State University decided to give four scholarships to the Physics Department of AMU: two to students and two for faculty. She approached AAAA as she has done her PhD at GSU. As I was in India, I arranged the meeting for Dr. Nahr with Chairman Prof. Wasi Haider of Physics Department. There was disagreement to how to reward the scholarships, but I convinced Dr. Haider to accept the terms and conditions of Dr. Nahr for rewarding the scholarships. In the meeting was also Dr. Anil Pradhan, Dean of Physics Department at OSU.

According to the accord that was signed between President Obama and the PM Singh of India, USA was going to lead and fund in education area. Among many US universities that applied for funding, Prof. Pradhan and Prof. Nahr of OSU also applied for funding and OSU was selected. Now they had to select a central university in India to work with. Prof. Pradhan said that relationship between alumni and AMU is the main factor that they selected to work with AMU. Alham'duLillah, it resulted into Abul Kalam STEM center at AMU campus. Alham'duLillah, AAAA was instrumental in this project.

Ms. Charlotte Connah went to Israel and moved by Palestinian plight. Upon her return to Atlanta she met Marhoom Abdul Qayyum Sahib, who in turn introduced her to AAAA. Her initiative for interfaith peace garden at the Atlanta campus of MU - Mercer University (MU) required funding of $15,000. Our Aziz Dhanani Sahib came forward and donated the amount in memory of his parents. To the best of my knowledge, this is only plaque at an American university displaying a Muslim and Muslima names.

The initiative went further. President of MU wanted to know about AAAA and AMU. Under the leadership of then Dr. Asif Taufiq, a Tahreeki, and then president of AAAA an event was organized. President Underwood with MU faculty attended the event. Please visit the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmIepUmBgpI

It led to exchange of faculties between AMU and Mercer University. Later, MU sent twelve students with Prof. Wesley Barker and Prof. Robert Nash during the month of fasting in May 2019. Please visit following link:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/paekmhiujdt3kt0/AMUevent072019Video.mov?dl=0

MU has introduced "Asian Religions" and invited Prof. Javaid Khan, Hafiz-e-Quran, to discuss about Quran and to explain the ideology of forced conversion of Non-Muslims to become Muslims. His comments about the conquest of Mecca and how Prophet Muhammad (SAW) offered freedom to the besieged to join Islam or not, will remain a shining example for Muslims to follow. Insha'Allah, such education will reduce Islamophobia.

In this COVID-19 pandemic, President Underwood wrote a letter to AAAA for helping MU students. He addressed AAAA as Mercer family. Alham'duLillah, we raised $10,000, Aziz Dhanani Sahib and Memon community donated generously to meet the target.

In 2009, on silver Jubilee (25th anniversary) occasion, AAAA under the Presidency of Dr. Rasheed Ahmad decided to invite Marhoom Mohammad Zakir Ali Khan Sahib. One of the founders of Sir Syed University in Karachi and recipient of "Most Distinguished Alumnus" award from AMU. AAAA assigned this project to yours truly. Alham'duLillah, he accepted the invitation and in spite his poor health he came to Atlanta. Zakir Sahib stayed with AAAA for a week. Dr. Asif Taufiq made arrangement for him at lakeside cottage. The very first night of his stay, Zakir Sahib found that Dr. Taufiq was massaging his legs. He got up and said that all his tiredness washed away. His health improved miraculously in seven days. His letter to AAAA can be read on the following link:

https://tinyurl.com/paigham-e-aligarh

Though, AAAA is a medium-sized organization but it remains favorite of many. Dr. Shariq Aqeel, CMO – Chief Medical Officer of JNMC – Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, while visiting USA, requested us to visit Atlanta. AAAA arranged a literary event in his honor, and he was the Nazim. Please visit:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwz1HQQmco4

AAAA made donation for two Smart Classrooms, one was donated by Janab Wasi Siddiqui and his brothers. Also donated Rs. 1,00,000 to AMU through Janab Umar Farooq Sahib. Additionally, AAAA sponsored Jamil Gibson student of Morehouse College for one semester at AMU. Dr. Rasheed Ahmad of AAAA held two-day workshops on "Theory and Practice of Environmental Engineering" at AMU Polytechnic and Zakir Husain Engineering College. AAAA also hosted AMU PVC Brig. Syed Ahmad Ali.

In 2012, Indian Consulate was established in Atlanta. Hon. Ajit Kumar Sahib became the Consul General. Mr. Subash Razdan, chairman of Gandhi Foundation, invited AAAA to welcome Hon. CG Ajit Kumar Sahib. I was the first person to welcome him with the following shair:

Vo aa.e ghar meñ hamāre ḳhudā kī qudrat hai
kabhī ham un ko kabhī apne ghar ko dekhte haiñ

It goes unsaid that he responded with warm handshake and hug. AAAA past President Dr. Farzana Bharmal was also there in the function to welcome him.

Incidentally, Marhoom Abdul Qayum Sahib, one of the AAAA presidents, was the first donor of $500 to Gandhi Foundation. Mr. Subash Razdan often mentions this as AAAA was the first donor of Gandhi Foundation.

Like other organizations, AAAA hold entertaining events like Mushairas, dramas, and entertaining events, like an evening with Tanya Wells. Please visit:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQ6OyHOdp34

For Annual International Atlanta Mushaira of 2015:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8dB2HEImgg

I like to end with AMU Tarana celebrating 100 years of AMU and a tribute to Aligarh:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eU7NiSscLFE
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1pqp0WGSCE

Raising MAO College to Aligarh Muslim University

EXCERPTS from A.G. NOORANI's Article Titled "**History of Aligarh Muslim University**" Published in Frontline Magazine

Historic Resolution

…..at a meeting of the College Board of Management, on March 31, 1898, Aftab Ahmad Khan moved the following historic resolution which was seconded by Nawab Mohsinul Mulk: "That steps to found a memorial, in honour of the Syed Ahmad Khan… and worthy of him be at once taken; and that the memorial take the following form; the collection of a sum of ten lakhs of rupees to be called the Syed Ahmad Endowment Fund, with the object of carrying out his *cherished desire of raising the MAO College to the rank of a Mohamedan University*."

The movement received a shot in the arm when the 12th MEC met in Lahore on April 1, 1898. Proposals for a Muslim university were fully discussed; about 900 people attended. The conference showed a keen spirit of enterprise. Badruddin Tyabji subscribed Rs.2,000 to the university. From Calcutta, Syed Amir Ali pledged his support.

As a young man, the Aga Khan had visited Aligarh in 1896 and promised Syed Ahmad an annual grant. In 1902, he had spoken in favour of a Muslim university in his presidential address at the Muhammadan Educational Conference. His second visit to Aligarh was in 1904, when he gave a handsome donation to Arabic studies scheme (Minault, Gail and David Lelyveld (1974): "The Campaign for a Muslim University, 1898-1920", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 8, No.2, pp. 149, 153 and 162).

The idea of establishing a Muslim university was warmly greeted by all the Muslim personalities of the day. In December 1902, at the 16th session of the MEC held in Delhi, the Aga Khan supported the proposal in his presidential address in which he visualised this university as a Muslim Oxford. He appealed to Muslims to raise funds for the project (Muslim University Press (1972): *Presidential Addresses* of the Muhammadan Education Conference entitled *Khutabat-I-Aliyah*, pp. 206-218). In July 1906, Badruddin Tyabji said in an address to the Aligarh College Association in England: "If, as I hope, Aligarh develops into a university it will become the centre of attraction of education for all Mohammedans, not only from the various Mohammedan schools and colleges of India, but also, it may be, from all other parts of the Mohammedan world" (Report of the Minorities Commission on AMU 1978, paragraph 13).

The movement picked up speed. On January 10, 1911, the Syed Memorial Fund Committee was replaced by a Muslim University Foundation Committee headed by the Aga Khan and based in Aligarh. It acquired the assets of the former. Yet another body was added in 1915, the Muslim University Association. On February 16, 1911, a Constitution Committee was set up with the Raja of Mahmudabad as president. These two men pushed the project forward. A deputation waited on the Education Minister, Government of India, Harcourt Butler on May 16, 1911, to present a draft constitution followed by another on September 23, 1911. Butler demanded that the university have an endowment of Rs.3 lakh.

Two obstacles

There were two obstacles in the path. The role of the extremists led by the disruptive Ali brothers was one. The other was retired English officials of AMU in London. Viceroy Lord Hardinge forwarded to the Secretary of State for India Lord Crewe on June 10, 1911, his advice to accept a university in Aligarh provided that it was adequately funded and under effective government control. He was given the green signal to negotiate the terms with Muslim leaders. But the Constitution Committee was in a truculent mood. In issue was the university's right to accept affiliation of colleges *all over India*, its autonomy, *and its name to which the British objected*. London had decided that "the university should be called 'The University of Aligarh', not the 'The Muslim University, Aligarh'" (Secretary of State to Viceroy, February 23, 1912, see Minault and Lelyveld ,p. 169). Butler tried to get London to reconsider this dispatch but failed.

However, while London was firm on affiliation, it was firm on official control, unlike Calcutta which wanted both the Benaras Hindu University and the AMU to be under its control. On August 11-12, 1912, the Constitution Committee met at Lucknow and passed three resolutions: to reject London's decisions on affiliation; the Viceroy's role as Chancellor; and the university's name. It had 54 members in addition to all the MAO trustees *ex-officio* and "had a good claim to be representative of Muslim interests" (ibid., p.171).

On October 10, 1915, the Benares Hindu University Bill was passed and strengthened the hands of the moderates. The Aga Khan gave a handsome donation to BHU. But politics in India emboldened the radicals. On October 15 an acrimonious meeting of the Muslim University Association decided by a controversial vote to accept the government's terms. The Foundation Committee, its superior, ratified the decision in April 1916. There was no

progress until Butler, now Lt Governor of the North West Province, came to Aligarh in November 1919. His successor as the Education Minister was Sir Mohammed Shafi, an old Aligarhian. Events softened both sides. A revised draft constitution was prepared in 1920. The government proposed some changes, which were accepted.

In July 1920, the Bill received London's approval and was published in the Gazette. It reflected a compromise agreed by both. Its Statement of Objects and Reasons correctly recorded that compromise. "The Muslim University Association *having requested the foundation of a University* and certain funds and property being available to this end, it is proposed to dissolve that Association and the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, and *to transfer the property of those societies to a new body called 'the Aligarh Muslim University*'. The present Bill is designed to incorporate this University."

The Bill was moved in the Imperial Legislative Council by the Education Member Sir Mohammed Shafi on August 20, 1920. It met at the Council Chamber, Viceregal Lodge, Shimla, with the Governor General in the chair. The proceedings are very significant. Introducing the Bill, the mover particularly recalled Sir Syed's remarks on January 8, 1877, on a university. The first graduate of the MAO College was a Hindu student. He recalled the "negotiations with the Government" by the Muslim University Association's president, the Raja of Mahmudabad; how a scheme it had agreed with the Government of India was sent to London in November 1911 after "considerable discussion and somewhat long negotiations".

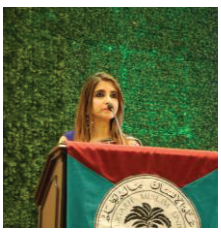
Surendra Nath Banerjee said: "Speaking as a representative of the Hindu community, we desire to welcome the Bill which has been introduced and also to congratulate the Honourable Member in charge of it on the admirable speech which he has made in introducing it. That, I think, represents the attitude to the Hindu community. This university is to be a unitary and residential university, and it is to represent an advance upon the type of universities, which has been established in Dacca and in Benaras. All that is welcome, not only from the Muslim, but also from the general and the larger standpoint."

Seth Nathmal also supported the Bill. Such was the spirit in the Council that the educationist Sir Deba Prasad Sarbhadikari's detailed critique won him a seat on the Select Committee. Its report was presented on September 2, 1920, and was considered on September 9. Replying to the debate, Sir Mohammed Shafi said: "In a somewhat long experience of Legislative Councils, both provincial and Imperial, I have seldom seen a Bill of the first importance such as the Muslim University Bill pass through the various stages with such little opposition and so smoothly as the measure which we are now about to place on our Statute Book." As President, the Governor General said: "Before putting the question [to vote] I should like to add my congratulation to *the Muslim community* on the passage of this Bill." It was devout Hindus who welcomed AMU…….

Website Accessed on Dec 1, 2020
https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/history-of-aligarh-muslim-university/article8523802.ece











Event Photos (T to B, L to R): In-Person Attendees of 2020 Sir Syed Day Mushaira.

Poets Arriving at 2019 Mushaira venue with Uzair Shams. Farah Toor Conducting the Mushaira

Saad Tanzeem Receiving Volunteer Award from Dr. Loyd Allen, Mercer Univ.

Award Recipients with Dr. Peerzada Qasim

Continuing Spirit of Optimism, Nationalism, and Secularism of Aligarh Movement

The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr: Prophet Mohammad (SAWS)

Dr. Syed M. Naseem, Washington, D. C.

The message of the Reform movement was simple that despite hardship, the struggle should continue and what went before must not hinder the efforts, but learns from it and thrive for a better future. These programs of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan eventually came to known as Aligarh Movement. The movement effectively demonstrated that Islamic teachings, culture, and traditions are a great asset and it provided enormous strength to Indian Muslims to struggle and were successful in life at that time. Aligarh Movement was never for a certain era and time but is a continual process.

Aligarh movement has committed a relationship with the nation, and nation to the Millat, toward Ummah, and finally for the development of a healthier society. One of the important characteristics of the movement was to reinterpret the religious rituals with the changing time, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan "Tafseerul Quran" was an important mission in this respect.

The question of whether AMU or its alumni are still following the spirit of the Aligarh Movement? The Aligarh movement and Sir Syed's vision requires that we do not make an idol out of him, as we alumni repeatedly do. Instead, we should pay attention to the spirit of his reform movement and follow the light and messages he left for the Muslim Ummah". We have to provide articulated vision or leadership to re-adjust in a fast-changing world and modern India. We cannot remain secluded from AMU tribulations, must involve in revamping the destiny of Indian Muslims.

In true spirit, the Aligarh movement denounces the narrowness of ideas, communalism, and groupism, but venture for openness and progressive thoughts. Unfortunately, AMU also has not been able to evade the effects of external forces which contributed to its weakening. AMU status has severely been affected by the political agendas of the present Indian government. Most crucial, the new AMU generation is ignorant of the Aligarh movement and its effectiveness. To bring the university back on its track would be a difficult task unless we the Aligarians make cohesive and sustained efforts.

The supreme interest of Sir Syed's life was an education in its widest sense. He advised Muslims against joining active politics and to concentrate on education only. However, in the present context of the Indian Muslims, the Aligarh Movement now needs to change with a different outlook, and campaign for a charter of demands, such as economic issues, development schemes, reservations in the job, and education for the benefit of the whole community in contemporary India. The Aligarh fraternity now must make efforts to have a dialogue with other communities to work together to combat not just communal forces, but also Muslim plight in current India. It would be nice if the AMU Associations of US, Canada, and UK would have regular dialogues with fair-minded organizations in India, along with Ulemas, sensitizing them to the existing social, economic, and educational problems of the Muslim community. We must develop alternative forms of Muslim expression that are less theoretical and more practical, in the existing realities of our country.

While there are numerous social and cultural organizations in most major cities in the world, there is one and only one Aligarh Muslim University. Very few educational institutions in India have played a pertinent role comparable to that of AMU in the life of their communities. AMU has contributed so much in every walk of life of our motherland. AMU gave us the aptitude, self-reliance, moderation, competence, and binding force that delineate an essential aspect of our distinctiveness as Indians and Indian Muslims. AMU and its traditions must be preserved as a renowned educational institution so that its charismatic positive thinking, nationalism, and secularism continue to inspire future generations. Let us hope that the vision of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in making this university a symbol of secular India remains true, and it will continue to be forward-thinking, professing liberal attitudes, professionalism and emphasizing merit. AMU's spirit of open-mindedness, tolerance, and secularism is indeed a model that not only other institutions of higher learning in the country but the whole country can emulate. Let's pray AMU alumni to find a vision that goes beyond stale objectives and pessimism instead of optimism. What our illustrious alumna, vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari had aptly said:

Agar Aflak ke Tare Torne Hain to Perwaaz ki Taaqat Paida Karni ho gi;
Sirf Guftaar kaafi Nahin Hai

Jamia Millia Islamia – Celebrating 100 Years (1920-2020)

Introduction: Jamia Millia Islamia, an institution originally established at Aligarh in United Provinces, India in 1920 became a Central University by an act of the Indian Parliament in 1988. In Urdu language, Jamia means 'University', and Millia means 'National'. The story of its growth from a small institution in the pre-independence India to a central university located in New Delhi—offering integrated education from nursery to research in specialized areas—is a saga of dedication, conviction and vision of a people who worked against all odds and saw it growing step by step. They "built up the Jamia Millia stone by stone and sacrifice by sacrifice," said Sarojini Naidu, the nightingale of India.

Conception: Under the colonial British rule, two dominant trends joined hands and contributed towards in the birth of Jamia. One was the anti-colonial Islamic activism and the other was the pro-independence aspiration of the politically radical section of western educated Indian Muslim intelligentsia. In the political climate of 1920, the two trends gravitated together with Mahatma Gandhi as a catalyst. The anti-colonial activism signified by the Khilafat and the pro-independence aspirations symbolised by the non-cooperation movement of the Indian National Congress helped to harness creative energies and the subsequent making of Jamia Millia Islamia. Rabindranath Tagore called it "one of the most progressive educational institutions of India." Responding to Gandhiji's call to boycott all educational institutions supported or run by the colonial regime, a group of nationalist teachers and students quit Aligarh Muslim University, protesting against its pro-British inclinations. The prominent members of this movement were Maulana Mehmud Hasan, Maulana Mohamed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, and Abdul Majid Khwaja.

Foundation: The known freedom fighter and Muslim theologian, Maulana Mehmud Hasan, laid the foundation stone of Jamia Millia Islamia at Aligarh on Friday, 29 October 1920. Considering the difficult circumstances under which it started, the list of its first teachers is very impressive. On 22 November 1920, Hakim Ajmal Khan was elected the first chancellor of Jamia. Mohamed Ali Jauhar became Jamia's first Vice Chancellor, as Allama Iqbal could not accept the offer made through Gandhiji. It also elected a syndicate and created a syllabus subcommittee.

Crisis: Born out of political crisis, it seemed for a while, Jamia would not survive the heat of the intense political struggle for the independence of India. It participated in the Bardoli resolution and sent volunteers across the country to motivate people to fight for the freedom of the country. The colonial British government soon imprisoned many of its teachers and students. In 1922, Gandhiji called off the non-cooperation movement. Even as its teachers and students were being released, Mustapha Kemal Ataturk declared the end of the Khilafat in 1924. Suddenly Jamia saw itself in a great crisis. Some thought it had achieved its mission, as others believed that the institution had lost its raison d'etre with the end of the non-cooperation and the Khilafat movements. Even the little financial assistance, that the Khilafat had been giving it, also dried up. As even prominent people started deserting it, Jamia's total collapse virtually became an imminent possibility.

Jamia Moves to Delhi: The saying, 'when going gets tough the tough gets going' cannot be truer about Jamia. As the crisis loomed large, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari and Abdul Majeed Khwaja—the first trio—supported by Gandhiji shifted Jamia from Aligarh to Karol Bagh, in New Delhi in 1925. Gandhiji boosted the morale of Jamia, saying, "The Jamia has to run. If you are worried about its finances, I will go about with a begging bowl". Jamia followed Gandhiji's constructive programme for self-reliance while it took to Charkha and Takli as favoured vocations. Although Gandhi's contacts helped to secure financial help for Jamia, the risk of helping a Congress-backed institution under the British Raj dissuaded many willing benefactors. Orthodox Muslims also viewed Jamia as a threat to Aligarh Muslim University, the 'Muslim Oxford'. During those difficult days, it was Hakim Ajmal Khan who met most of Jamia's expenses from his own pocket. Dr. M.A. Ansari and Abdul Majeed Khwaja toured India and abroad, explaining the importance of Jamia and collecting funds for this noble enterprise. Their collective intervention did avert a collapse that was almost certain.

Resurgence: The Second Trio- In 1925, after long deliberation, a group of three friends studying in Germany—Dr. Zakir Husain, Dr. Abid Husain and Dr. Mohammad Mujeeb—decided to serve Jamia. Dr. Zakir Husain, who had earned his doctorate in Economics from the University of Berlin, was a natural and charismatic leader. Dr. Abid Husain had his Ph.D. in Education.

Mohammad Mujeeb, an Oxford scholar in History and a student of printing in Germany, was a passionate and committed reformist. Early in February 1926, the three friends left Germany for Jamia by the Norddeutscher Lloyd steamer, SS Derfflinger. In Jamia, Dr. Zakir Husain, was offered a salary of Rs. 100. His two other friends with European qualifications were offered Rs 300 each. Realising that the possibility of making payments was beyond Jamia's limited resources, Abid Husain and Mohammad Mujeeb voluntarily reduced their salaries to Rs. 100 each. Moved by the commitment of his friends, Dr. Zakir Husain also reduced his own salary to Rs. 80. One of the first steps they took was the introduction of the hugely popular evening classes for adult education. This movement was later to become, in October 1938, an institution called Idara-i-Taleem-o-Taraqqi. It kept growing so popular that separate rooms had to be built to accommodate the students. In 1928 Hakim Ajmal Khan passed away. That was the beginning of the second financial crisis, as it was Hakim Sahib himself who had been meeting most of Jamia's financial needs. The leadership of Jamia then moved into the hands of Dr. Zakir Husain, who became its Vice Chancellor in 1928. To resolve Jamia of these frequent crises, a group of young Jamia teachers, led by Dr. Zakir Husain, took a pledge to serve Jamia for the next twenty years on a salary not more than Rs. 150. This group was called the Life Members of Jamia. (History repeated in 1942 when a second group of Jamia teachers took a similar pledge).

Shifting to the New Campus: On 1 March 1935, the foundation stone for a school building was laid at Okhla, then a non-descript village in the southern outskirts of Delhi. In 1936, all institutions of Jamia, except Jamia Press, the Maktaba and the library, were shifted to the new campus. The basic emphasis of Jamia was on evolving innovative education methods. This led to the establishment of a teacher's college (Ustadon ka Madrasa) in 1938. In 1936, Dr. M.A. Ansari passed away. On 4 June 1939, Jamia Millia Islamia was registered as a society. The fame of Jamia as an innovative education movement spread and dignitaries from foreign countries began visiting Jamia. Husein Raouf Bey (1933), Dr. Behadjet Wahbi of Cairo (1934), Ms. Halide Edib of Turkey (1936) were some of them. Foreigners, impressed by Jamia, began working in Jamia. The German lady Ms. Gerda Philipsborn (popularly known as Aapa Jaan) served Jamia for many years is buried in Jamia. In 1939, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi (1872-1944), a theologian and freedom fighter, came to stay in Jamia on the invitation of Dr. Zakir Husain. He started a school of Islamic Studies in Jamia, called Baitul Hikmal, propagating the ideology of Shah Waliullah. Zakir Husain, later the President of India, recalled those days of indestructible optimism in the face of depravity 'when they had a longing to build and nothing to build with, as "days of joy." In 1946, during Jamia's silver jubilee celebration, one could see the crisis that India had to face in the following year: Mr. and Mrs. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, and Liyaqat Ali Khan were on one side of Dr. Zakir Husain, the vice chancellor, on the dias; Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Asaf Ali and Sir C Rajagolapachari were on the other side.

Independence and After: The riots following partition that shook the northern India did affect Jamia; but not its campus. Gandhi observed that its campus remained "an oasis of peace in the Sahara" of communal violence. Maktaba Jamia alone lost books worth seven lakhs in arson. After the attainment of Independence, Jamia continued to grow as an academic institution with a difference. Many foreign dignitaries made it a point to visit Jamia Millia Islamia during their visits to New Delhi. Among those who visited Jamia include Marshal Tito (1954), king Zahir Shah of Afghanistan (1955), crown prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia, king Reza Shah Pehlavi of Iran (1956) and prince Mukarram Jah (1960). Following the death of Mr. Abdul Majeed Khwaja in 1962, Dr. Zakir Husain, who by then had taken charge as the Vice President of India, became Jamia's Chancellor (1963).

Deemed University to Central University: In 1962, the University Grants Commission declared the Jamia a 'deemed to be University.' By a Special Act of the Parliament, Jamia Millia Islamia was made a central university of India in December 1988. In the list of the Faculties, i.e. Education, Humanities & Languages, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences. Engineering & Technology, one more Faculty - Faculty of Law, was added in 1989. Many new courses and programmes at UG and PG levels have since been added. Besides its Nine faculties, the Jamia has a number of centres of learning and research, like AJK-Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC), Academy of International Studies etc. The Jamia is also marching ahead in the field of Information Technology (IT). It offers various undergraduate and postgraduate IT courses. Apart from this, the Jamia has a campus wide network which connects a large number of its departments and offices.

https://www.jmi.ac.in/aboutjamia/profile/history/historical_note-1



Jamia Millia Islamia's Main Campus - Mirza Ghalib Statue in Foreground.

جامعہ کا ترانہ

دیار شوق میرا دیار شوق میرا
شہر آرزو میرا شہر آرزو میرا

ہوئے تھے آکے یہیں خیمہ زن وہ دیوانے — اٹھے تھے سن کے جو آواز رہبران وطن
یہیں سے شوق کی بے ربطیوں کو ربط ملا — اسی نے ہوش کو بخشا جنوں کا پیراہن
یہیں سے لالۂ صحرا کو یہ سراغ ملا — کہ دل کے داغ کو کس طرح رکھتے ہیں روشن

دیار شوق میرا، شہر آرزو میرا

یہ اہل شوق کی بستی یہ سرپھروں کا دیار — یہاں کی صبح نرالی، یہاں کی شام نئی
یہاں کی رسم و رہ مے کشی جدا سب سے — یہاں کے جام نئے، طرح رقص جام نئی
یہاں پہ تشنہ لبی مے کشی کا حاصل ہے — یہ بزم دل ہے یہاں کی صلائے عام نئی

دیار شوق میرا، شہر آرزو میرا

یہاں پہ شمع ہدایت ہے صرف اپنا ضمیر — یہاں پہ قبلہ ایماں کعبہ دل ہے
سفر ہے دین یہاں، کفر ہے قیام یہاں — یہاں پہ راہ روی خود حصول منزل ہے
شناوری کا تقاضہ ہے نو بہ نو طوفاں — کنار موج میں آسودگی ساحل ہے

دیار شوق میرا، شہر آرزو میرا

از محمد خلیق صدیقی

کورونا اور سوشل ڈسٹینسنگ شاعری

اب نہیں کوئی بات خطرے کی
اب سبھی کو سبھی سے خطرہ ہے

جون ایلیا

یہ جو ملاتے پھرتے ہو تم ہر کسی سے ہاتھ
ایسا نہ ہو کہ دھونا پڑے زندگی سے ہاتھ

جاوید صبا

دل تو پہلے ہی جدا تھے یہاں بستی والوں
کیا قیامت ہے کہ اب ہاتھ ملانے سے گئے

ایمان قیصرانی

گھوم پھر کر نہ قتل عام کرے
جو جہاں ہے وہیں قیام کرے

شبیر نازش

بھوک سے یا وبا سے مرنا ہے
فیصلہ آدمی کو کرنا ہے

عشرت آفریں

ان دوریوں نے اور بڑھا دی ہیں قُربتیں
سب فاصلے وبا کی طوالت سے مٹ گئے

اعتبار ساجد

شہر جاں میں وباؤں کا اک دور تھا
میں ادائے تنفس میں کمزور تھا

پلوم شرا

راستے ہیں کھلے ہوئے سارے
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ظفر اقبال

کوئی دوا بھی نہیں ہے یہی تو رونا ہے
صدا احتیاط کہ پھیلا ہوا کرونا ہے

وجیہ ثانی

میں وہ محروم عنایت کہ جس نے تجھ سے
ملنا چاہا تو بچھڑنے کی وبا پھوٹ پڑی

نعیم ضرار احمد

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برسوں سے پڑے گم سم گھروں کو آباد کر گئی

یہ کیا سمئے آیا کہ
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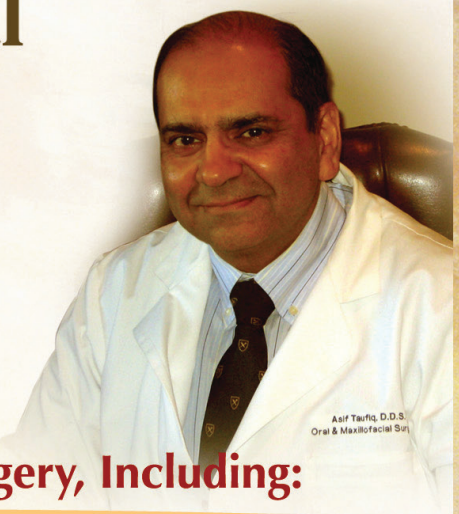
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