

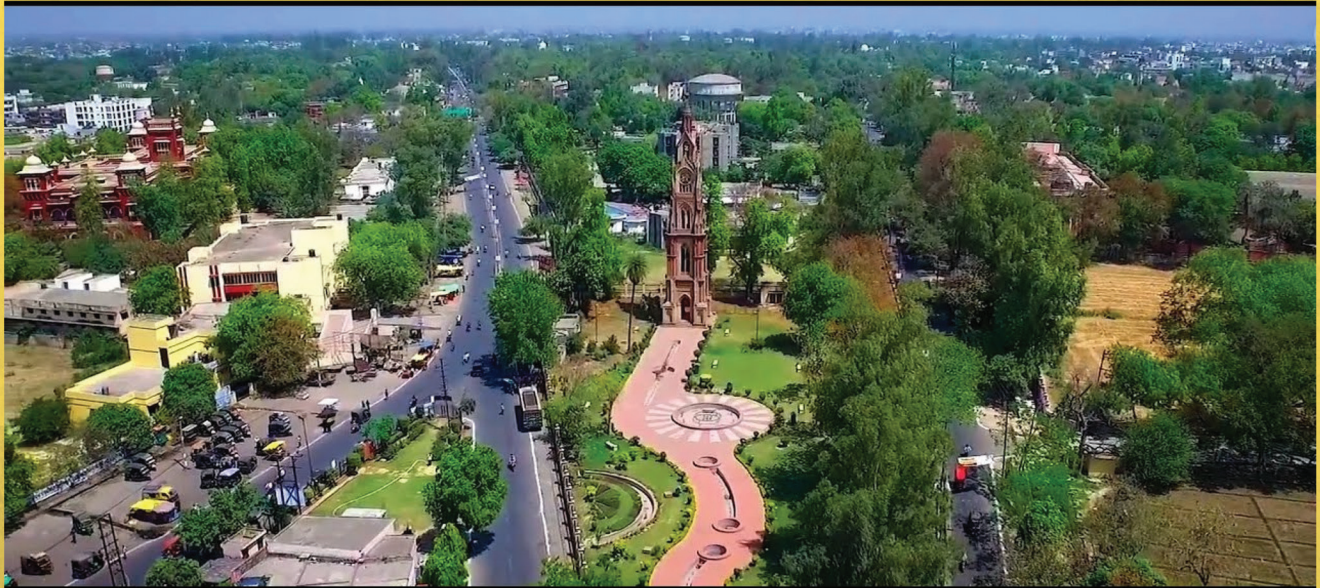
A Publication of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)

ALIGATLANTA

DEC 2021



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



*Forman and Sir Syed
Unending Mission
Zoomshaira*

*Coming of Age
Harnessing Alumni
Tale of Dr. Aziz*



Azfar Haque

Bulldog Insurance Inc.

713 Forest Parkway Suite #D

Forest Park GA. 30297

Cell: (404)-642-1000

email: azfar@bulldoginsurance.com

**From Editor's Desk**

*This pandemic? Absolute rollercoaster.
Wild. But I'm trying to carry on as normal now.*

.....
*We've still come so far
even if we're technically in the same place.*

-Rollercoaster by JASMINE GARDOSI

It has been almost two years since COVID-19 became a pandemic. Since then, real progress in fighting the virus has been made. A year ago, vaccine rollouts were in their infancy. Today, about 47% of the world's population is inoculated. While case numbers remain high, death rates have plunged. Yet life seems out of control. It is yet to return to normal. There are several new variants, and in many places the threat of re-infections remains. After Delta, the Omicron variant casts uncertainty and bewilderment. Once linear, life now seems circular. Schools and travels open. They close again. Impact of pandemic on learning and well-being is felt with increased level of anxiety and depression particularly among young population. It appears COVID-19 impact could continue well into 2022 although to relatively lower deaths and hospitalizations but with lingering mental health effects.

Winter/Spring 2021 was very tragic period for many. In India, we saw huge death and devastation due to Delta virus variant. Every family felt the impact. Many of our relatives became sudden victims. AMU campus community was especially hit hard. More than fifty (50) professors and non-teaching staff lost their lives within a span of 2-3 months. We still don't know why the virus was so deadly there.

We continue to publish ALIGAtlanta annually even in COVID time. This edition has great articles. There is a less known fact that founders of MAO College, Aligarh and Forman Christian College (FCC), Lahore were contemporaries. This edition covers a revealing article on this subject. Very rarely, we hear stories of Latin-America. Dr. Aziz's journey to academic world of Argentina is an adventurous story. For last two years, we have attended several Zoom/Virtual mushairas. A very timely article compares traditional mushairas with *Zoomshaira*. Alumni are a great resource to alma mater. A fresh look is presented on how to harness the alumni base. We recently lost Dr. S.M. Ghazanfar (Ghazi bhai) who was our regular contributor to the magazine. We remember his life. Former Vice President Govt. of India, Dr. Hamid Ansari's key note address at 2021 Virtual FAAA Annual Convention is reproduced here. Additionally, there are writeups on the Aligarh years, member profiles and memories of two sisters growing up with AAAA along with our messages and activities. Urdu articles contain a poetry inspired by Ralph Waldo Emerson's work and an inspiring short story.

I sincerely thank Syed Waseem, Hasan Kamal, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, Shahid Ali and Nadeem Fatmi for helping me in the articles and photos. I express my sincere gratitude to all the contributors, authors and sponsors for their submission and support. I gratefully acknowledge Professor Valeed Ahmad of Aligarh Muslim University for taking care of Urdu typing and proof-reading. He has been diligently doing this for last several years. I would also 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, projects and programs, literary work, reminiscences, education topics and Urdu writing. The publication also attempts to capture the life and times of the community around us.

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.
Honorary Editor
rasheedahmad@hotmail.com

Cover: Clock Tower on Way to AMU campus (top); AMU Campus in the Vicinity of Z.H. College of Engg. & Technology (bottom)



Mohammad Arif

**LOOKING FOR YOUR
DREAM HOME?**



Let me help save you money and provide you best service. With about 8 yrs of Real Estate investor experience, please contact me at:

762 217 7981
858 876 2743

Please mention "ALIG" for special credit towards closing and will contribute up to \$500 towards Aligarh Alumni cause.

<http://mohammadarif.virtualpropertiesrealty.biz/>



ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

Aligarh - 202 002, U.P., India.

PROF. TARIQ MANSOOR

MS (Surgery), FICS

Vice-Chancellor

Phone: (Off) +91-571-2700994/2702167
(Res) +91-571-2700173
Fax: (Off) +91-571-2702607
Email: vcamu@amu.ac.in

Oct 07, 2021

Message



1. I am immensely happy to learn that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, is going to publish 2021 Edition of its Annual Magazine, 'ALIGAtlanta', on the occasion of Birth Anniversary of our Founder Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
2. It is laudable that the Association publishes the Magazine every year as a dedication to our Founder. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's dream of MAO College becoming a University whose students serve as a medium of socio-economic & educational development and transformation, is now being fulfilled and turned into reality by the Alumni Associations which are engaged in various socio-cultural activities, thereby displaying the true spirit of Aligs.
3. Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, though its members, has always served the society and the University. The Association has actively supported the underprivileged thereby encouraging and promoting aspirations of every segment of the society.
4. I commend the Office Bearers of the Association on this publication and wish all the members success.

Tariq Mansoor
Prof. Tariq Mansoor 07/10/2021

**ADDRESS OF SHRI M. HAMID ANSARI, FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA AT THE
FEDERATION OF AMU ALUMNI, NEW YORK, ORGANISED VIRTUALLY ON JUNE 26,
2021, 2021AT 8.30 PM (IST)**

An Unending Mission

*Jahan jaeen wahan tera fasana chair dete hain
Koi mehfil ho tera rang-e-mehfil yaad aata hai*

Today is an occasion for recollections. Of all the human sentiments, nostalgia about youth is perhaps the most natural because it is a mix of pleasant happenings of the past. Memory is selective and recall voluntary; achievements become larger than life and moments of truth glossed over. Old albums are searched for a cherished group photograph and its discovery brings forth joyful recollections.

Needless to say, each of us recalls our AMU period in a manner that is unique. I have done likewise for the period I spent there as a student and many decades later as Vice Chancellor. In the latter responsibility, I discovered that much had changed. I shared my agony with a very senior, long retired, Aligarhian. He answered me in a couplet:

*Waa-e-nakami mata-e-karwaan jata raha
Kaarwan ke dil se ehsas-e-ziyan jata raha.*

He was right and not right. Times had changed and so had some of the purposes of existence. What had not changed was an ingrained human desire for seeking success.

The audience before me today, of different generations, represents good examples of success. What motivated you? At what stage of your AMU period did the process began or took shape? Did the urge dawn post-AMU?

Where and when did this journey begin?

Your Federation's statement of objectives states that it has an 'over-arching mission to promote modern education and support students in advancing their professional goals'.

Some home truths have to be faced. Muslims in India, over 14 % of our population and numbering around 200 million, are not homogenous in terms of class and caste. Data on the marginalization of Muslims in urban India, where a substantial majority of them reside, sheds much light on this. An eminent sociologist studied a few years back the specifics of Muslim presence in ten of the biggest urban Muslim conglomerations; this included Aligarh and two of its localities: Shah Jamal and Sir Syed Nagar. This audience is familiar with the contrasting social characteristics of both.

In October 2008 I was invited to address the World Summit of AMU Alumni. I opined on that occasion that Sir Syed Ahmad

Khan's mission in 1875 succeeded in highlighting the centrality of modern education that to him meant the spirit of rational thinking and scientific enquiry. He succeeded to a point but in the context of his times failed to go beyond it. I discerned four reasons for it:

- a failure to appreciate the need for universal education particularly at the primary stage;
- a failure to appreciate the need for women's education and its relevance for educating new generations;
- a failure to adopt creative ventures in education independent of government agencies as was done by other communities in India; and
- a failure to appreciate the need for organized philanthropy.

I suggested to the gathering that it should become the catalyst for a corrective, beginning at the grass root level. I am aware that this will come across a mental block since the famed Muslim egalitarianism on display in the mosque tends to be forgotten beyond its confines.

A good contemporary example proving the contrary is before us is the Sikh community and its educational and philanthropic institutions all over India. Equally relevant right before you in New York and elsewhere in the United States is the Jewish community.

Why have we failed to do likewise, apart from eloquent expression of grievances? Lack of resources is not the answer; perhaps it lies in the absence of a sense of commitment.

The Aligarh fraternity should therefore seek to locate in their own way micro project for primary education, facilitate to the extent possible their viability and propagate in them the need to inculcate a spirit of competitiveness so that it can draw maximum benefits from government scholarship schemes, seek equity (not concessions) from the government and mobilize opinion from religious endowments (Awqaf) for educational and professional institutions whose focus at all times should be on quality and relevance.

I am aware that things are changing, that much good work is being done now, particularly in southern Indian states and in Maharashtra. Commendable initiatives have been taken to establish medical and engineering colleges. Yet, this does not fill the gap of over half a century; nor does it focus on the inadequacy of the feed stock of competent school leaving

graduates who can avail of these facilities without seeking reservations that are becoming increasingly difficult legally.

Official and NGO data shows Muslims to be almost at the bottom of the social and educational pyramid. A resultant handicap is the low though improving number of Muslims succeeding in competitive examinations for middle and senior level government jobs. This is all the more necessary because subtle display of prejudice or discrimination is evident in some key areas of governance and has to be overcome by proven competence.

Allow me to take the liberty of suggesting that members of this audience, in small groups and in their own chosen areas, take the initiative of opening or supporting the opening of primary and secondary schools for the children of the least privileged segments of Muslim community, daily wage earners, who otherwise are too busy with the problems of existence to worry about educating their children and who would be happy enough if a child at the age of 10 or 12 himself or herself becomes a wage earner and thereby lessen the burden on parents by contributing to the daily wage packet.

The theme of today's Convention is not pleasant to hear or recall: 'Coronavirus: Lessons, Challenges, and Role of Aligs.' I understand that a very large number of Aligs: 46 on one count – former teachers, members of faculty and students – became victims of this pandemic in and around AMU itself. I do not know the numbers elsewhere in the country or here. I offer my condolences. May Allah bless the departed and give fortitude to their near and dear ones to bear this irreparable loss. I believe that Aligs, individually and collectively, rendered service wherever they could. Lessons to learn there are many; more will be learnt as we survey the full impact of the calamity.

Allow me to touch upon another aspect of AMU's mission. Its purpose was, and should remain, modern education and rational thinking. How do we interpret it in the second decade of the 21st century and in a fast-changing world?

What characterizes it individually and collectively, more so for those who travelled beyond the shores of India and are now gainfully employed and settled here? A visitor from the land of their origin is expected to say some things about it.

Let me recall a lesson learnt in AMU by all of us:

- An Aligarian does not forget the lessons of civility.
- A good citizen too resorts to it in times good and difficult.
- A good Muslim will at all times recall what is said in the Book:
"Ya aiyuhal lazi-na aaminu istaeenu bis-sabr was-

salaat inn al- Allah-ha min al sabireen"

O ye who believe! Seek help with patient Perseverance and Prayer: for God with those who patiently persevere" (II.153)

This patience and perseverance is also required of a good citizen. Thank you for inviting me today. I wish you good health, happiness and success.

Abridged from: <https://www.hamidansari.org/address-of-shri-m-hamid-ansari-former-vice-president-of-india-at-the-federation-of-amu-alumni-new-york-organised-virtually-on-june-26-2021-2021-at-8-30-pm-ist/>

The Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)

Board of Directors

Dr. Shoeb Ahmad
President

Mr. Nadeem Fatmi
Vice-President

Mr. S. Nawaid Tanzeem
Treasurer

Dr. Naushad Ghilzai
General Secretary

Board of Trustees

Dr. Asif Taufiq
Chairman

Dr. Farzana Bharmal
Member

Mr. Yasir Nomani
Member

Mr. Shahid Ali
Member

Dr. Rasheed Ahmad
Member

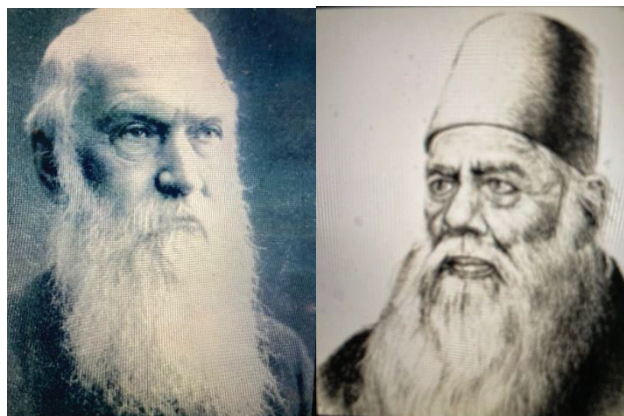
REV. CHARLES W. FORMAN AND SIR SYED AHMED KHAN: PIONEERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH INDIA



Jonathan Addleton, Ph.D., FCC, Lahore*

2021 marks the 200th birth anniversary of Charles W. Forman, minister, missionary, educationist and founder of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) in Lahore. Born in 1821 in the state of Kentucky, Forman attended Princeton and in 1847 traveled by sea to what was then British India, spending most of the rest of his life in what is now Pakistan's Punjab province. He is also buried in Lahore, a fitting tribute to a man who made Lahore his second home and was said by contemporaries to have loved "the very dust of Lahore."

Remarkably, Forman's life mirrors in important respects that of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan another great educationist of the nineteenth century who also founded a college, devoted his life to education and was much honored when he passed away. Both based their work on the principles of tolerance, openness and inclusion. For Forman, Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) in Lahore (founded in 1864) remains as his enduring legacy. For Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, it is Aligarh Muslim University in Aligarh (founded in 1875) that stands as a permanent monument to his vision for the future.



Charles W. Forman
(1821-1894)

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
(1817-1898)

As it happens, the lives of both Charles Forman and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan spanned most of the nineteenth century, making them near-contemporaries: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in 1817 (four years before Forman) and died in 1898 (four years after him). Both placed faith at the center of the institutions of higher learning; both were pioneers in

providing a modern education to the young people of their time; and both established universities that produced long lists of distinguished alumni, in turn shaping both India and Pakistan throughout the twentieth century and beyond.

And the similarities don't end there. Looking at pictures from that period, it is clear that both also bore a striking physical resemblance to each other, starting with their imposing physical presence and ending with the long white beards that both sported during their later years, making them instantaneously recognizable in photos and pictures. When they passed away during the 1890s, their funeral processions drew large numbers of mourners representing multiple faith communities, not just their own -- Christian in the case of Forman, Muslim in the case of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. This statement, said of Charles W. Forman on his death, could probably be used to describe both men: "He does not work for praise from man. He has worked from higher motives".

Dr. Sikandar Hayat -- Distinguished Professor of History and Public Policy at Forman; Dean of Forman's Faculty of Social Sciences; and author of *A Leadership Odyssey: Muslim Separatism and the Achievement of the Separate State of Pakistan* and *The Charismatic Leader: Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan*, both published by Oxford University Press -- draws out some of the comparisons in still further detail:

As a student of history, I can't avoid drawing comparisons between Forman's contributions and those of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), another extraordinary educationist who was his contemporary. Both achieved the distinction of founding a college. Both were also highly motivated, setting about their mission with what can only be described as a sense of missionary zeal. Dr. Forman and Syed Ahmad Khan both started with a school and ended up with a college that later became a university. In the case of Dr. Forman, a College section was added to the school in 1864. In case of Syed Ahmad Khan, the College was established in 1875. Initially known as Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College, MAO, it later became known simply as Aligarh College. As mentioned previously, Forman Christian College did not acquire this name until after the death of Dr. Forman in 1894.

Both Forman and Aligarh, in spite of their Christian and Muslim foundations, emphasized interreligious harmony

from the outset. While both assumed the superiority of Western knowledge and an English education, neither viewed themselves as elitist or built around class or caste in terms of the types of students that they hoped to attract. Both Forman and Sayed Ahmed Khan stressed the primacy of science. While emphasizing a Western education, both provided space for traditional learning, among other things including the opportunity to learn local vernacular languages. Both valued transformation and change. Both pushed for social uplift and the betterment of society. Both promoted ethical values in teaching and conduct. Both attracted students from the length and breadth of the country, ensuring a diverse student community that extended to all religions, castes, creeds, and social status.

More importantly, both Forman Christian College and Aligarh College went on to grow over time developing into a breeding ground for the middle classes, in particular producing an educated urban middle class that included professionals as well as government servants. Against that backdrop, both colleges recognized that a Western education was a requirement for government service. Both also made important contributions towards the creation of a class of rulers, public representatives, and political leaders that would assume leadership roles during the post-independence period . . . Aligarh produced a host of Muslim leaders with a footing in both Western and Muslim culture, endowing them with a nationalist consciousness that eventually led to the demand for and creation of the separate nation-state of Pakistan in 1947. For its part, Forman provided leadership at all levels for a post-independence Pakistan, ranging from presidents to

governors, chief ministers to justices, ambassadors to generals.

As far as I know, Forman and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan never met; after all, they carried out their lifework in different parts of the Subcontinent. But it is nonetheless intriguing that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, addressing a public meeting in 1888, has been quoted as stating that as a sincere Muslim he was obliged to follow the Quran that had "ordained" Muslims and Christians to be friends, noting that "we should cultivate friendships with them". No doubt it would have been fascinating if the two of them had somehow met, discussing over a cup of chai the meaning of higher education and the importance of faith-based approaches toward achieving it!

Of course, the trajectory of Forman and Aligarh following "Freedom at Midnight" and the independence of India and Pakistan in August 1947 also had an impact on both institutions, perhaps most notably in the fact that Aligarh (in the case of India) and Forman (in the case of Pakistan) immediately became the leading minority-led institutions of higher learning in their respective countries. That reality continues up until the present day, providing both institutions with the opportunity as well as the responsibility of promoting inter-faith harmony while also producing informed and educated students who continue to contribute throughout their lifetimes -- not only in South Asia where Forman and Aligarh are physically located but also in numerous other countries, given that Forman and Aligarh graduates have travelled widely and now live in every part of the world.

**Jonathan Addleton is Rector/President of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) in Lahore. Born and raised in Pakistan, he retired from the US Foreign Service in 2017 after a 32-year career, having served as US Ambassador to Mongolia, USAID Representative to the European Union, and USAID Mission Director in India, Pakistan, Cambodia and Central Asia. His family is originally from Macon, GA.*



Armacost Building (left) and Forman Christian College (FCC) Campus Main Entrance (right)

Coming of Age in Aligarh



Jalal Zuberi*, MD, Atlanta

I came to Aligarh in 1960 as a young child when my father got transferred from another city in his government job. My earliest memory of Aligarh is tagging along my elder sister to AMU girl's school, which allowed boys till fifth grade after which I got transferred to all boys' school, *Mintocircle*. Although school's official name had been changed a few years back to Syedna Tahir Saifuddin (STS) HS it retained its original identity among locals. The school comprised of several buildings inside a circular wall, hence the name, with a massive entry gate. One side of the school housed primary grades and the other side held senior grades on the upper story and hostels on ground floor. School day began with morning assembly, announcements by the principal, teachers, and monitors. School's uniform was khaki pants, white shirt, and green blazer during winters. Occasionally, rowdy students got punished in front of whole school! Out of town students, named *residents* lived in hostels on school campus, outnumbering students with homes in Aligarh, like me, called *Day Scholars*, giving AMU a 'residential' university designation. For administrative purposes all residents hostels were grouped under different *Halls*, like SS Hall, MM Hall, HH Hall, Abdullah Hall (for girls), for socializing and creating competitive teams for extracurricular activities and tournaments for games. Day Scholars also had their Non-Resident Students Clubs (NRSC) for the same, where we enjoyed our evening playing table tennis, badminton and other board games. A popular evening pastime for boys was hanging out in front of Abdullah Girls college gate just for the glance of passing girls and for any rare and daring romantic rendezvous in the conservative college town. A loud alarm at 8:30 pm signaled curfew time for resident students to head back. We had an Alsatian dog I had named Jack, who would start mimicking the alarm sound as soon as it began and when scolded to be quiet, would get upset refusing to eat his evening meal unless cajoled by his masters!

Life in Aligarh in the 60's was simple; most people rode bikes and man-pulled *rickshaws*. Inter-city travel was mostly by trains, as air travel was unaffordable for most. The joyous train rides from my younger years have stilled a passion for trains in me ever since. We would often take day's train trips to New Delhi for latest Hollywood flicks, not screened in smaller towns

like Aligarh. After school, we played cricket, hockey and *Gilli Danda* with friends, and had also joined *Bal Biradari* a neighborhood boys club for games and tournaments between local teams. Summers were extremely hot and winters made us bundled up as most home didn't have AC. During summer, household members slept outdoors in the open-air courtyard on wooden cots with mosquito nets. Memories of scrambling to get inside the adjoining veranda when it rained in the middle of night are etched in my mind like it was yesterday!

As most Indian youth, we loved Bollywood movies as an escape from reality. Long lines and scuffles at movie theaters tickets counters was a common site. Film magazines were a craze to get as soon as they came for the latest news on movies, famous stars and tinsel town gossip. Shamshad market, nearby AMU campus was a go to place for AMU students for its book stores, stationary and related student needs on one side of the street and restaurants and shops for other daily use items on the other side. From there, students could venture to close by Tasveer Mahal, a popular movie theater for an evening show. Listening to Radio Ceylon's *Binaca Geet Mala* every Wednesday evening in Amin Sayani's melodious voice was a joyful ritual and guessing which song would top the popularity chart of the week as they were played! University's main cultural activities like drama, musical evenings were staged at the Kennedy Hall auditorium while smaller events like debates, bait baize and sporting competitions were held at various Halls of residence. These programs usually began with recital of the AMU tarana by a pre-selected team of students with better voices who would practice the singing for a few days before the event. Such extracurricular activities added to the richness to AMU life that Aligs savor throughout their lives long after leaving the town, creating many Aligarh Alumni Associations throughout the world, and perhaps fulfilling AMU's founder's dream as depicted in its final lines of its famous tarana *Jo Abr Yahan Se Utthe Ga, Woh Sare Jahan Par Barse Ga....!*

While stale food served in the hostels has been a butt of many jokes, Day scholars had the luxury of home cooked meals prepared on demand by cooks, who lived in outhouses along with house cleaners. Breakfast

wasn't complete without famous *matry* biscuits, made by a special baker in the city, with locally made butter, *malai*, *omellete* and delicious homemade jellies. Occasional treats of fresh jalebis, aloo sabzi with puri from Taj Sweet from Dodhpur market would be an added delight for the palate. Having two cups of tea in one setting was customary in Aligarh and guests were served tea without question as tea stalls were a common site for meeting points at AMU and all over the city. We lived in a rented house on Dodhpur road leading to medical college and surrounding *Malah ka Nagla* before moving in our own home in close by neighborhood we helped name as *Sir Syed Nagar* just before my medical graduation. We were very excited in finally becoming a homeowner and a true Aligarian! *Dodhpur* bazar was a short walk to get seasonal fruits, *seikh kabobs*, meat at butcher shops and day to day items at the *Banya* store from where I learned pearls of marketing as they would lend us stuff even when we were out of cash, making us their lifelong happy customers! Every month or so we venture to main city markets for household shopping in man-pulled rickshaws. At the bridge connecting civil lines with market area called *kathpula*, male members would often get off to ease rickshaw puller's burden.

Seeing resident friends off at the railway station was customary when the traveler was expected to pay for the tea for everyone from the platform stall.

My years at AMU and the Medical school were a lot of fun, creating lifelong friends with whom we still keep in touch daily on WhatsApp. Ragging of junior students by the seniors was a necessary evil but brought the students closer after the initial ordeal! On finishing medical school and specialization in Pediatrics for a Diploma in Child Health, I looked for job prospects locally and considered overseas opportunities created by the recent oil boom in the Middle East and opening of several new medical centers and hospitals. My dad's willingness to let his doctor son leave, while he would support my younger siblings on his limited income, cemented his legacy of self-sacrifice for children's future and love for family which has guided me throughout my life. Memories of Abbaji include never seeing him sitting idly even after his retirement, keeping himself busy reading newspapers for latest news, explaining politics, complex world events to his kids, reading books on different topics, making notes in his journals, telling stories and jokes, fixing things around the house with his tool box have inspired me to embrace these lifelong habits and trying to pass these on to my own kids.

I arrived in the US in 1985 in Springfield, IL just a few months after my marriage in Pakistan. After finishing Pediatric residency there, I moved to Atlanta in 1989

for fellowship training at Emory, then joined medical school as a professor teaching medical students and residents for almost 30 years. For past few years, I run a private medical clinic in suburban Atlanta adding a new chapter to my professional journey enabling me to provide care to a more diverse group of people while continuing teaching medical students and residents from private Caribbean medical schools for the joy of teaching. As a father of four grown up and successful children and now a grandfather, life seems to be completing a full circle!

On coming to ATL I served Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, as its Treasurer, Vice President, President, advisor and recently as member of Board of Trustee. Organizing a first joint India-Pakistan Golden Jubilee Independence Day celebration (1997) at Ga Tech Auditorium where Aarti Pandiya, an Ophthalmologist in training and an upcoming singer performed reciting famous songs and ghazals from the subcontinent to enthrall the audience for a memorable evening. Although AAAA was already more than 10 years old when I joined, Youth Programs were organized for the first time under my tenure as President, including debates on interesting topics, awarding them prizes and certificates for the participant's delight and as an incentive for the youth to remain engaged. Other highlight of my tenure includes extra efforts in organizing AAAA's signature annual *Mushairas* to make it a household name in the desi Indo-Pak Atlanta community.

I hold the belief that you may leave Aligarh, but Aligarh never leaves you! In my recent visit to Aligarh a few years back, I couldn't recognize any neighborhood I used to visit including my own home, now converted into a duplex, with drastic changes in infra structure, I urge all Aligs to plan your trip to Aligarh or other hometowns sooner than later to preserve cherishable memories as the landscape everywhere is changing at an unrecognizable pace.

**Jalal Zuberi, MD, DCH, FAAP is a Pediatric Specialist in metro Atlanta, GA and has over 45 years of experience in the medical field. Dr. Zuberi has worked as an Associate Professor of General Pediatrics at Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta. Dr. Zuberi has been AAAA President from 1996-97.*

Aging of Senior Aligs

Syed Hasan Kamal, Atlanta*



Aging of senior Aligs is being experienced by many of us. This raises the question, what responsibilities and roles should us seniors take on? Many thoughts come to my mind. And let me share a few of them:

- (1) Motivate younger generation to take the responsibility of leadership in our association
- (2) Advise them when needed
- (3) Make oneself available in helping to complete a project

Motivate younger generation to take the responsibility of leadership in our association:

Seniors should recognize the talents of the young. While motivating them by proposing their names for a particular position, comfort them with the commitment to assist them in projects they undertake. Promise to lend them a helping hand, as the seniors have much time at their hands. Work with the young leaders to define the goals they are trying to achieve. Convince them that all projects are for “Raza-e-Ilahi.” Should the young leaders decline to accept the advice, the seniors should not be offended. This should be part of grooming for maturity. It will also ensure cohesiveness and will maintain a positive relationship among the seniors and the younger leaders.

Advise them when needed:

Seniors should not have dictatorial relationships with juniors, but rather be an affectionate elder. When a senior believes that a junior is not in agreement with the senior, if possible, lay down his vision before the junior and let him/her decide for future action. The seniors must always assure the juniors for their support and maintain a good homogeneity in the organization.

Make oneself available in aiding to complete a project:

Seniors should maintain a relationship with the younger leaders such that they perceive the willingness of the seniors to be available when needed. This perception will promote seamless cohesiveness in the organization for completing projects.

One such project is to have a brainstorming session with leadership about how to develop mechanisms for promoting matrimony among our younger generation. Hope the leadership will address this issue as many families have youths in their 30s and even 40s who never got married.

--

**Syed Hasan Kamal is a founding member of AAAA and has been an AAAA & FAAA President.*

Harnessing A.M.U. Alumni Base – Way Forward



M. M. Sufyan Beg, Ph.D., AMU, Aligarh*

The alumni are one of the most important stakeholders of an educational institution. They have an obviously strong emotional attachment to the alma mater. With the background experience of industry and outside world, they have a better understanding of the College's need and requirements. This equips them with the much-needed ability to act as a bridge between the institute and the outside world. The research collaborations will flow

in then, the joint supervision and publications will ensue, the industry interaction will flourish, the Intellectual Property will grow, the revenue and infrastructure will improve, and so on.

Apart from the generic initiatives mentioned above, there are some concrete steps that one must take strides into. First and the foremost, help AMU gets its first Nobel Prize, with hopefully many more to follow. In this

regard, the minimum the alumni can do for us, is to organize an annual series of lectures (online or preferably offline) from world-renowned speakers on why the Nobel Prize has been awarded in different streams that year. This will not only provide the much-needed motivation for the students and teachers of AMU, but will also provide them the understanding of the work in their field that has fetched the Nobel Prize that year. It is earnestly hoped that this will bring them the encouragement that the Nobel is just not out of reach for them. With this “*Target – Nobel Prize*” initiative, many other prestigious awards such as Bhatnagar Awards, etc. will come on the way.

I will also recommend providing an enhanced Ph.D. Fellowships for our research scholars. It may surprise many to know that the non-NET U.G.C. Fellowship at AMU is a very meagre amount of Rs. 8,000/- per month. Only those who qualify NET+JRF are provided with 25k-32k per month but they are very few in number. This way, we are not able to attract good quality Ph.D. students to our University. We know well that the research of any University runs mainly through the Ph.D. students. If we are able to get only those students admitted to our Ph.D. program, who are not admitted elsewhere due to the shortage of Ph.D. Fellowships, the research of the University will suffer. We should rather be offering them a Fellowship in excess of something like 75k INR per month, so that the best Ph.D. students come to us. This will definitely propel our research output and hence the rankings. It may kindly be noted that this Fellowship has to be separate from Teaching/Research Assistantships. For the sake of completeness, let me also mention that we are lacking in the married accommodation for our research scholars.

Another thing that we need to work upon collectively is the AMU Alumni Endowment Fund. Frankly speaking, the problem at A.M.U. is that, as a Public University, we are duty-bound to invest the endowment fund wherever the Government directs, the directions may also keep varying from time to time. So, that way, the return on investment is not actually in our control. What we can do instead is that an alumni association abroad opens up a trust in its own name and puts the endowment amount there and keeps investing the way it is best. The income thus generated can be given to the University for the purposes mutually agreed upon. Regardless of where the money is invested, the donor alumnus or alumni can strictly direct A.M.U. to use the income for a specific purpose in view of the very definition of Restricted Endowment, which reads, “*Restricted endowments have their principal held in perpetuity, while the earnings from the invested assets are expended per the donor’s specification*”. The alumni may help us in identifying the potential donors to the

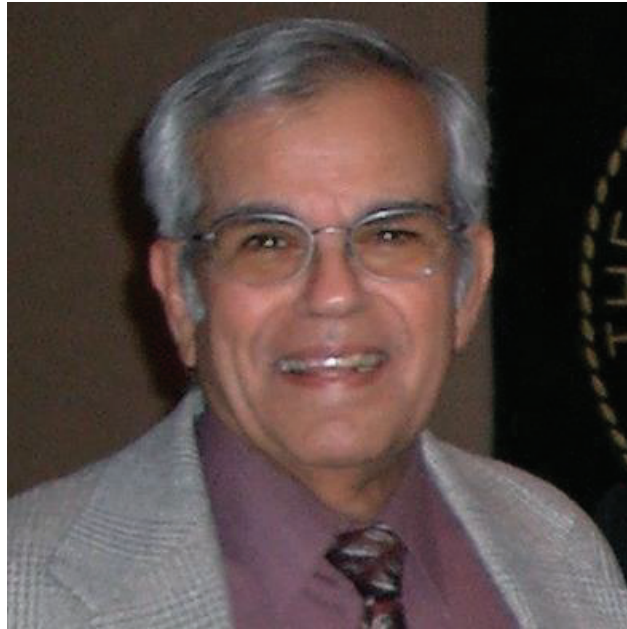
endowment fund from within India or abroad. Particularly in the west, the aged persons are looking for noble causes that they can transfer their life-earnings to. We need to present the case of our Alma Mater before all such golden hearts.

With the immense harnessing potential that the alumni carry, we need to handle them with care. They may get furious on something as small as not being able to get a room at the University guesthouse. If one forgets to acknowledge one alumni association from a long list of associations, it invites their wrath. The alumni are very fragile in that sense. May I humbly request the alumni to show magnanimity and overlook all the human shortcomings. We love to get their honest feedback so that we can introspect and improve upon. But, instead of letting us know directly, if they keep talking about our lapses elsewhere, that hurts us hard. Need I say that the Alma Mater is bigger than every individual.

The National and International Advisory Committees include senior, active and contributing alumni/ae from all across the world. The inclusions in the Advisory Committees have nothing to do with the recognition or non-recognition of one Alumni Association or the other. In fact, it is not done on the basis of anyone holding a position in any Alumni Association, whatsoever. It is done more on the basis of merit, the decision of which is the prerogative of the Vice-Chancellor. The University, on its part, gives due recognition to all the Alumni Associations and their office bearers regardless of their inclusion or exclusion in any of these committees. While the charter of the Alumni Affairs Committee is in place, we have not put together any such charter for the Advisory Committees. They are given all the flexibility to advise, operate, innovate, implement in the very interest of the Alma Mater. For them, sky is the limit. All of us need to work together for the furtherance of the cause of education, in general, and the Alma Mater, in particular.

**M. M. Sufyan Beg obtained his B.Tech. (Electronics) degree from the Aligarh Muslim University, M.Tech. (Microelectronics) degree from IIT Kanpur, and the Ph.D. degree in the area of Computer Technology from IIT Delhi. He also visited the University of California at Berkeley, USA as a BT Fellow from November 2005 to October 2006. Currently, he is a Professor and Chairman at the Department of Computer Engineering at the Aligarh Muslim University. He is also serving as the Principal of Z. H. College of Engineering and Technology. He is also serving as the Chairman of the AMU Alumni Affairs Committee for the last 3 years.*

In Memoriam
Dr. S.M. Ghazanfar (“Ghazi”) 1937-2021
Professor Emeritus, Author, Global Scholar, Interfaith and Human Rights Advocate



S.M. (Ghazi) Ghazanfar was professor of economics (1968-2002; emeritus, 2002), former chairman of the Department of Economics (1979-1981; 1993- 2001), former director of International Studies Program (1989-1993), and served as adjunct professor (2002-2003; 2005-2006), University of Idaho, Moscow. He had published over 200 papers, four books and several monographs in various areas of economics and contributed chapters in books and entries in encyclopedic works. Recent publications pertained to the origins of economic thought in medieval Islamic scholarship, including numerous journal articles; the book *Economic Thought of Al-Ghazali (450-505AH /1058-1111 AD)*, King Abdulaziz University Press, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (1998); and the edited volume *Medieval Islamic Economic Thought: Filling the "Great Gap" in European Economics*, Routledge Curzon, London (2003). He also contributed to the 2001 PBS television documentary *Islam: Empire of Faith*.

Dr. Ghazanfar held visiting assignments at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, and the University of Maryland (College Park), both during 1974-1975, and King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (1983-1986). He was a consultant on budgetary issues for the Idaho Legislature (1974-1996) and was an occasional referee for professional journals. Listed in several Who 's Who's, he had received honors and awards for teaching and other scholarly contributions, as well as recognitions for voluntary civic and human-rights activities. He was a co-founding member of Moscow's (Idaho) Human Rights Commission.

He was born in Phalour, British India on April 1, 1937. S.M. Ghazanfar was 4 years old when his father was murdered. At the age 10, his family moved to Pakistan. He grew up in foster homes and completed high school while working to support his family. He pursued higher education and was admitted to Washington State University (WSU). After receiving a doctorate from WSU in 1968, he was hired at the University of Idaho. In his self-published memoir "Lost Life Recovered: An Odyssey," S.M. Ghazanfar recalls the story of his journey as an abandoned orphan in India and Pakistan to the United States.

I met Ghazi bhai (as we called him) for the first time around 2014 when he moved to Atlanta after his retirement from University of Idaho. The occasion was either AAAA's International Annual Mushaira or Bazm-e-Adab's event. We immediately clicked and started recalling many AMU personalities whom he either worked with in Saudi Arabia (1983-1986) or met them during his memorable visit to India and Aligarh in 2000. He fondly remembered his AMU visit and somberly recalled the historic visit to his ancestral town in Indian Punjab where he was born and where his father & other relatives are buried. In an article to our ALIGAtlanta 2016 edition, he wrote a detailed account of that visit.

Very soon, Ghazi bhai became a regular participant in community & interfaith activities in/around metro Atlanta. He would be invited to religious centers & academic institutions as speaker and moderator on topics ranging from Islam to interfaith to human/civil rights. From time to time, he wrote his observations on current affairs and Islamic topics in local newspapers, such as Marietta Daily Journal and Atlanta Journal & Constitution. He supported the establishment of a Peace Garden in Mercer University's Atlanta campus in which Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) was one of the sponsors.

He was an intellectual and global scholar. Through his work, he defended Islamic values and system. Always at ease, he was a humble man who would engage in wide-ranging discussions and leave you a lasting impression. He remained very active till his passing away on March 11, 2021 in Atlanta. He was buried in East Cobb Islamic Center (ECIC) Cemetery, Georgia. He is survived by his wife, Rukhsana, two sons and a daughter. May Almighty forgive him and bless his soul – amen.

-Editor

WITH COMPLIMENTS FROM

Farzana M. Bharmal, M.D.

**Professor of Clinical Psychiatry
Diplomate American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology
Board Certified Addiction Psychiatry**

1800 Howell Mill Rd

Atlanta, GA 30318

Ph. 404-756-1400

Office Hours: by appointment only

2021 AAAA Activities



Top (L to R): AAAA Booth at 2021 Festival of India Organized by India American Cultural Association (IACA)

Bottom (L to R): Dr. Naushad Ghilzai, AAAA General Secretary Presenting at 2021 Festival of India. AAAA Members with Ustad Shafaat Khan after the Concert on Indian Classical/Folk/Fusion Music Using Sitar organized by IACA.



BOT Member, Dr. Rasheed Ahmad (back row) in Governor Kemp's Proclamation Ceremony of Declaring August 15 'India Day' in Georgia.

2021 AAAA Activities (Cont'd)



Top to Bottom: AAAA Members Along with Other Community Leaders in Mashal-e-Rah-Program Organized by Bazm-e-Adab. Stage Performers of Sold-Out Half-Plate Comedy Play. Indo-Pak Community Leaders with Consul-General of India in Atlanta, Dr. Swati Kulkarni .

“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”

“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 Compliments
From**

**Shaukat Syed and Wajiha Syed
Atlanta, GA**

Syed and Rukhsana Waseem

Founder, Power Duo, Gracious Host, Resident Patron

Syed and Rukhsana Waseem have been the core of Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta since its founding in 1984. This couple not only volunteered to house international poets year after year since 1985 but also provided all logistical support to every event. Their house has also been a working and “unofficial” address of AAAA.

Both came from very respectable families where education ran into their veins. Syed Waseem’s father Khan Bahadur S. M. Mansoor had been an MAO College graduate of 1910. After his retirement as DY. Postmaster General of Bihar and Orrisa, his family moved to Aligarh in 1948. Syed Waseem has eight brothers and one sister family, and all of them are Aligarh graduates except his sister and one brother. He narrates an interesting story how his family stayed back in India after the partition. His father planned to move to Pakistan. On their way to train station, his father asked his MAO class fellow, Col. Haider (husband of Mumtaz Apa, retired Principal of AMU Women’s College) who was the AMU Proctor at that time to meet him at the Aligarh train station. Col. Haider did arrive there but with a different plan in mind. He came with all his proctorial staff and asked to unload luggage of Syed Waseem’s father from the train. Then, Col. Haider took everybody to his house on Marris Road in Aligarh Civil Lines and convinced Syed Waseem’s father to stay in Aligarh so that all of his kids can get good education at AMU. That was how his and all his brothers’ journey began at AMU.

In 1953, Syed Waseem was admitted to class 4th at AMU High School, known as Minto Circle. He passed his high school in 1959. There, he was very active student and involved in various activities. He was elected as Judge of School Boy’s Court, Secretary and Vice President of AMU High School Students’ Union. In 1959, his teacher and school Headmaster famous S. M. Tonki established a School Parliament and Syed Waseem was appointed the first Speaker of the Parliament. The installation ceremony was presided by MA Ayyangar, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Govt of India.

Syed Waseem started his BS engineering in 1962 at Z. H. College of Engineering and Technology. After obtaining his degree in Mechanical Engineering, he joined Bokaro Steel Ltd. Dhanbad, Bihar where he worked as Shift Engineer in Central Mechanical Engineering Department. Syed Waseem recalls an interesting coincidence of AMU

days when he was appointed the Secretary Table Tennis by our own Dr. Wasi Siddiqui who was then President NRSC (Non-Resident Students Center). Syed Waseem excelled in sports as well and represented AMU in All India Table Tennis Inter-varsity 1965 and 1966 Tournaments as team captain and was awarded prestigious University Color award in 1968.

In April 1977, he got married to Rukhsana and their US journey started in June 1977. In Sept 1977, he was hired as Mechanical Designer in Austin Company, Cleveland, Ohio. He moved to Atlanta in 1981 when he got a job with Simons Eastern Co. Atlanta. Since then, Atlanta became their permanent home.

In 1984, Syed Waseem met AMU alumni Syed Hasan Kamal, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui and Razi Siddiqui, among others. A consensus was developed that Atlanta Aligs should establish an Aligarh Alumni Association herein Atlanta just like one in Washington DC. Syed Waseem recalls that a meeting was held at Dr. Wasi Siddiqui’s residence in Douglasville, GA and there the formal launch for the Association was initiated. In this newly formed association, he holds the honor of being nominated as the first Treasurer. Syed Waseem also served in AAAA BOT and as Mushaira coordinator for several terms.

Rukhsana Waseem was born in Shajapur, Madhya Pradesh in a family of accomplished poets and writers. Her grandfather, Muztar Khairabadi, was a renowned scholar and poet of his time. Her parents, Yadgar Husain and Sarfraz Fatima Nashtar Khairabadi, were also poets. Her siblings, 3 brothers and 3 sisters, are also highly educated and have made names for themselves in their respective careers.

Rukhsana Waseem went to AMU for her university education. She studied there philosophy and psychology. She came to USA after getting married in 1977. Since couple’s move to Atlanta in 1981, their house became one of the hubs of Aligarh activities. When international mushaira started under the auspices of AAAA in 1985, Waseem household hosted poets almost every year since—sometime five to six poets at a time. Syed and Rukhsana Waseem would receive poets from airport, house/feed, bring them to venue and continue to host till their departure to local/international destinations. They enjoyed their company and the poets also felt very comfortable staying

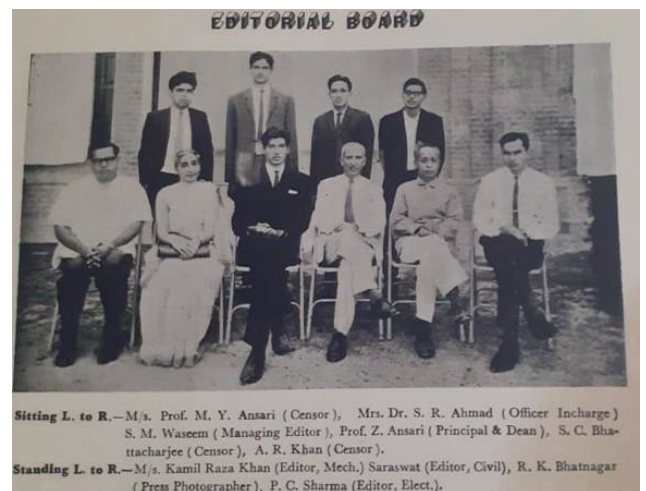
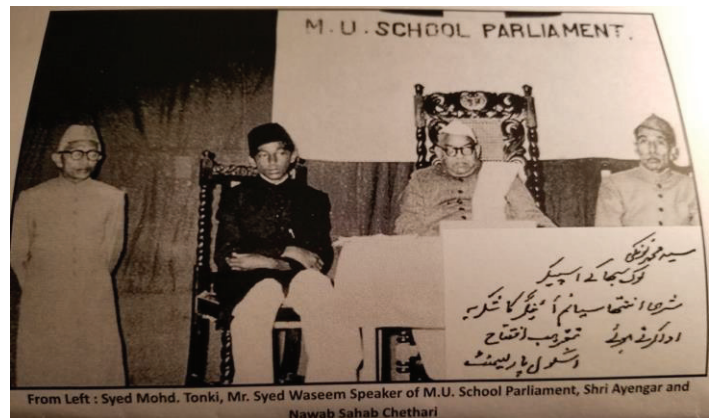
with them. They had the privilege of hosting poets like Khumar Barabankavi, Himayat Ali Shayer, Qateel Shafai, Kaifi Azmi, Mohsin Bhopali, Saghar Khayyami, Malikzada Manzoor Ahmad, Jaun Elia, Gulzar Dehlvi, Saba Akhtar, Sharyaar Khan, Kaleem Aajiz and many more. There are many good and interesting stories of the poets staying with them, Rukhsana Waseem recalls. According to her experience, Himayat Ali Shayer was the easiest host. One time she remembers she had six poets staying in their small house and she had to go to work, but nobody among poets knew how to run the kitchen. So, Himayat Ali Shayer took the responsibility of taking care of kitchen to ensure all the poets were fed during breakfast & lunch till she came back from work in late afternoon.

Although Rukhsana Waseem served as AAAA President (1989) and Treasurer (2007-09), the couple never went after positions. Holding positions or no positions made no

difference for them. They call themselves *Do Diwaney* for Aligarh which is very true. Their two daughters, Sumbul & Sunober, have been raised in the same family mold and both have been great helping hand to their parents in AAAA work for many years.

If we survey the names of one couple in Atlanta which is most recognizable with Aligarh, we all will agree that it will undoubtedly be Rukhsana & Waseem. They have been consistent in their support regardless of who was at the helm. Both avoided any controversies and stayed away from occasional organizational buzz. Their selfless and nonstop efforts have helped AAAA where it stands today. It won't be an exaggeration to note that they were first to arrive and last to leave in many Aligarh programs. AAAA is fortunate to have received their consistent services for last 36 years. May this *power couple* continue their support and be a source of inspiration to others.

-Editor



Top (L to R): Syed Waseem, Daughters; Sumbul & Sunober, and Rukhsana Waseem. Syed Waseem at 1959 MU School Parliament Function with Dignitaries. **Bottom (L to R):** Extended Family with lyricist/screenwriter Javed Akhtar (center). Syed Waseem with 1967-68 Editorial Board of the College Journal of Engineering & Technology.

Zoomshaira: Not Just a New Name for the Traditional *Mushaira*

Rasheed Ahmad*, Ph.D., Atlanta

Like many other cultural events that have moved online due to the pandemic, Urdu lovers have also adopted this change and are now hosting virtual *mushairas* and *shayari nashists*—as poetry conclaves are called in Urdu. Now that the *mushairas* are mostly held over Facebook Live or Zoom, dare we give them a name and call them *zoomshaira*? However, it is not only change in the name that these times have inspired. Having been involved in hosting international *mushairas* in Atlanta for 20 years, I am in a position to observe many differences between in-person and virtual *mushairas*.

It is generally accepted that there are four elements of any *mushaira*: the poets, the audience, the host or *nazim-e-mushaira*, and the environment which set the ambience using the sounds, lights, venue, etc. Every element is equally important for the complete success of a *mushaira*. Each *mushaira* is also unique. A successful poet in one *mushaira* may not necessarily receive equal applause and compliments in another. So, it is sometimes said that *mushairas* are like *bazaar-e-Misr* or bazaar of ancient Egypt, where betting on success is unpredictable.

In *zoomshaira*, while all those elements are necessary too, the audio setting and the internet connectivity are the most important factors. They can make or break the *mushaira*. So, the *nazim-e-mushaira* has a huge role in ensuring that not only do they have good connectivity and audio quality, but also that the participating poets do as well.

Compared to traditional *mushairas*, the poets in *zoomshaira* are very selective in reciting their *kalaams* or poetry. They tend to recite what they feel is their best composition, not necessarily the most popular *ghazal* or *nazm*, the two popular poetry forms, unless specifically requested. In traditional *mushairas*, hosted in front of a live audience, poets benefit from directly communicating with the audience and reciting their most popular *kalaams*. Either way, the quality of *shayari* and *tarannum* or musical composition on display in *zoomshaira* is no lesser than that of traditional *mushairas*.

An important aspect of *zoomshaira* is that young and new poets get to share the platform with renowned and senior poets on equal footing and receive the same kind of attention. It surely gives newcomers a lot of encouragement.

The most noticeable missing element in *zoomshaira*, however, is the audience's chorus of applause, the resounding *wah wah!* Absence of that can deprive the poets of the necessary connection with the audience. Even though you can comment and send feedback through chat box, it can't quite replace the traditional applause replete with frequent shouts of *mukarrar irshad*, *shandaar*, *bahut khoob*, *wapas aayiye*, etc. As the famous Urdu poet Ameer Minai said:

shā.er ko mast kartī hai tārīf-e-sher 'amīr'
sau botaloñ kā nashsha hai is vaah vaah meñ

(Poet gets intoxicated with applause for the couplet, Ameer / Oh! the word of praise carries the thrill of hundred bottles of wine).

It doesn't look like technology will ever be able to fill this gap. This major disadvantage will be inevitable when hosting a virtual *mushaira*. For the audience too, the virtual *mushaira* gives a more academic ambience rather than one of entertainment. Due to technical reasons, and also to avoid background noise, most of the audience are put on audio mute mode which gravely limits their participation.

Zoomshaira has certain advantages though. First, online scheduling forces *zoomshaira* to start and end on time, compared to traditional *mushairas* which have been notorious for starting and continuing till late. Many poets who, due to visa restrictions, health concerns, or other reasons cannot travel, can now participate in *mushairas* through Zoom. We recently attended a virtual *mushaira* where a famous 96-year-old poet participated. We also saw some poets who rarely share the platform with others agree to share dais on virtual setting. With everybody staying home, the poets have also run out of excuses to decline any *mushaira* invitations due to scheduling or traveling conflicts. *Zoomshaira* definitely has made their accessibility more possible.

On the monetary side too, holding *mushairas* are much cheaper through Zoom. The travel, housing, hall, and publicity costs are saved. The attendees also don't have to pay much to register and, in many instances, it is totally free. Interestingly, though, the attendance is much lower as compared to the hundreds thronging in traditional *mushairas*. The apparent reasons could include limitations on how many people can join the Zoom call, and also many enthusiasts still feel these remote *mushairas* can't fully

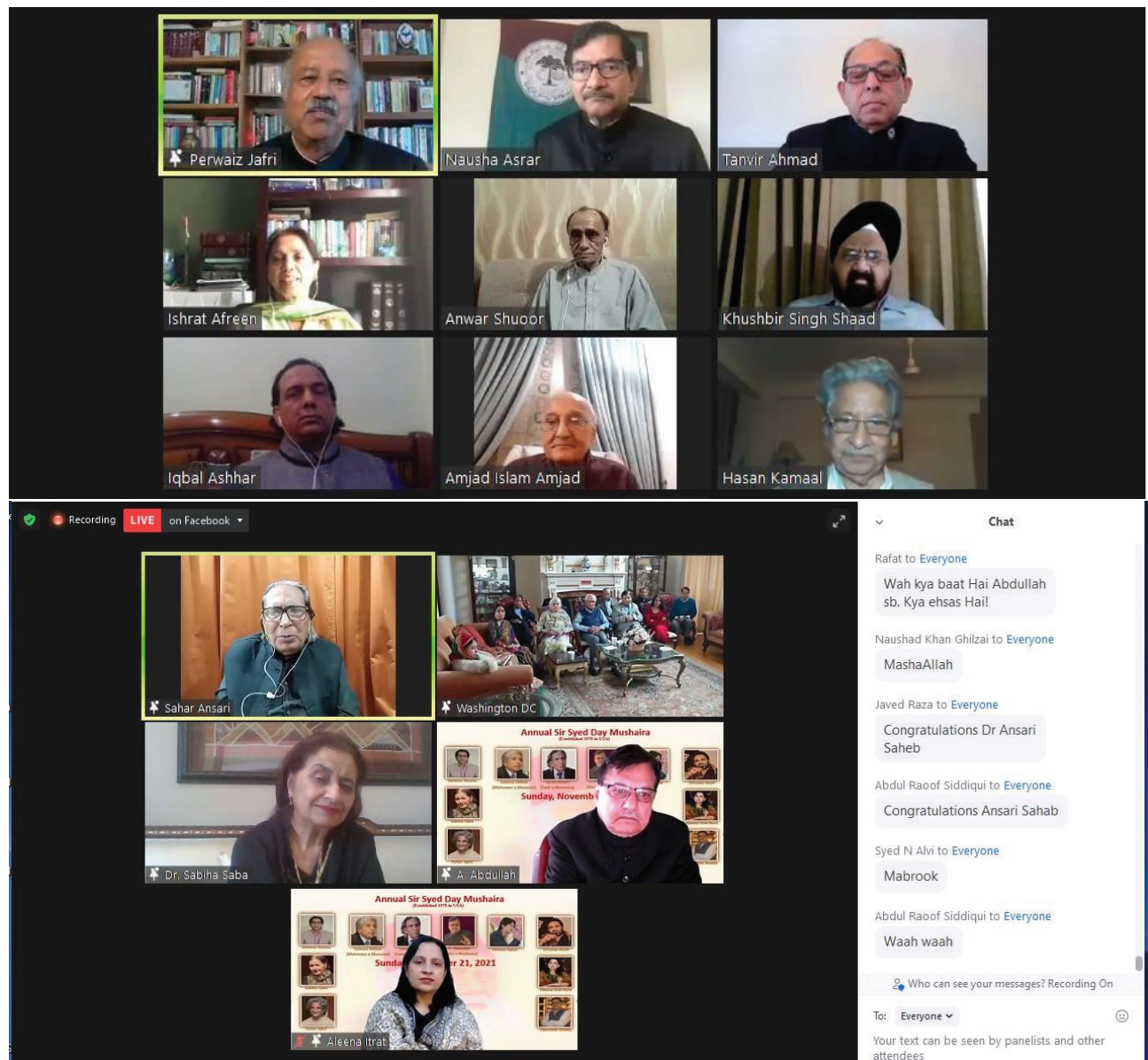
entertain in all their elements. Some people probably prefer to watch the recorded version instead of live feed, like other YouTube uploads.

An unintended aspect of the virtual *mushaira* is that we sometimes get to see poets' libraries and living style, which was virtually impossible in pre-pandemic time. It could inspire us, or conversely make us a bit judgmental of them. Another change with the *zoomshaira* is the timing of the event. Some *mushairas* are now held in the daytime because of time difference in one part of the world to another. It has also broken the national boundaries and is truly becoming international, both in poet and audience participation. Also, *zoomshairas* are much more easily

recorded and digitally saved. These will be much easier to retrieve and view in the future.

The *zoomshaira* has its advantages and disadvantages. Certainly, it can never replace the traditional version. However, even in a slowly post-pandemic world, the *zoomshaira* is here to stay as an alternative in some situations. Regardless, this phase of literary activities and events will certainly be preserved like no other.

**Rasheed Ahmad, Ph.D., P.E. was AAAA President (2007-09) and is an AAAA BOT member. He serves as honorary editor of ALIGAtlanta.*



Top: FAAA International Virtual Mushaira, Oct 23, 2021. **Bottom:** Annual Sir Syed Day Facebook Live Mushaira, Nov 21, 2021

Daughters of the “Tarana”



Sunober Waseem & Sumbul Waseem, Atlanta*

Aligarh Muslim University didn't just run in our family. It was rooted deep beyond education - it ran in the way we spoke, the way we were taught to carry ourselves, even in our name.

My nickname, “Bulbul”, picked to compliment my sister's name, Sumbul, both rooted from the opening lines of Aligarh Muslim University's alma mater.

*Ye mera chaman hai mera chaman,
main apne chaman ka bulbul hun
Sar-shaar-e-nigah-e-nargis hun,
paa-basta-e-gesu-e-sumbul hun*

We were daughters of the tarana. Aligarh was a part of our literal identity. More than being Indian, I've always identified with being Aligarian. How could I not?

My father Syed Waseem, son of Late Khan Bahadur S.M. Mansoor, and his 7 brothers and sister were boarding a train to Pakistan where they were going to settle after the partition when the Proctor of AMU, Col. Haider, brought his department staff, unloaded all their luggage, and convinced my grandfather that Aligarh was the foundation for the *tarbiat* he sought for his children. My father went on to attend Minto Circle, where he was elected Judge of the School Boy's Court, as well as Secretary and then Vice President of AMU High School Union and he was appointed first Speaker of the School Parliament.

At Aligarh Muslim University, while enrolled in the Z.H. College of Engineering and Technology, my father balanced academics with sports. He was appointed Secretary of the Table Tennis Club by our very own Dr. Wasi Siddiqui and went on to represent the University in two table tennis intervarsity as the Captain in 1965 and 1966.

His love for Urdu poetry was always there but it truly came to color when he met my mother, Rukhsana Waseem in 1977.

My mother, Rukhsana, granddaughter of Janab Muztar Khairabadi, daughter of Husain Nashtar Khairabadi had poetry in her blood. The ability to beautifully craft and harness the power of words flowed in her bloodline generation to generation, settling into each descendent as easily as the DNA that determined the deep brown of their eyes or soft, dark curls of their hair.

From poets and lyricists to authors and writers, every branch in this Khairabadi family tree is connected directly to the ripe soil of love for the Urdu language. And this is evident in the ease with which they're able to blossom simple words into sweet phrases which flourish into vibrant imagery and ideas that captivate any audience.

Needless to say, Aligarh, a place built on that same soil of love, was embedded in her story seamlessly. Her fondest memories of childhood were of tagging along when her father and mother would take moonlit walks and he would recite poems for her all the way. My mother and her 6 siblings never let that love of language falter. They all attended Aligarh Muslim University, receiving PhDs in literature, philosophy, psychology and sciences but their true passion always remained the same as their University's - the Urdu language.

In 1978, a year after marriage, my parents moved to the US, bringing these passions, this pride with them. That's where this journey started for us.

In 1984, they met Hasan Kamal. Along with him, Wasi Siddiqui, Razi Siddiqui, my parents founded the Aligarh Association of Atlanta.

My father served as Treasurer but my mother was elected President of the Association in Atlanta. Even now I am impressed by how progressive that was for the times. That Aligarh Muslim University bred men that believed in empowering women while simultaneously raising women with the confidence to be leaders.

This small but mighty team, that met in living rooms to plan and organize, is the reason so many people in this city have had the opportunity to see countless renowned poets over the last 37 years. But it was truly an effort of blood, sweat, and time but that's the power of pride.

Growing up, every year the Mushaira was treated like a holiday in our household. With a new association at that time and limited funds, our humble house would host 3 - 6 poets every year. As a child, I remember things such as sitting across the breakfast table from Javed Akhtar, who I would later come to realize isn't just family, but also one of my most favorite poets. I remember my mother cooking all the best desi foods and making fresh *paranthas* so that no guest feels homesick in a new country. I remember watching Himayat Ali Shayer, who always helped my mom in the kitchen as he recognized how difficult it must be for her to work full time and simultaneously host so many people - and that exchange of hospitality was the Aligarh *tehzeeb*.

The day of the Mushaira was unbeatable. With excitement and energy usually saved for events like weddings, everyone was running here and there to setup. The sounds of poets reciting in *taranum*, the familiar and enthusiastic "wah, wah" and "mukarar" from an engaged audience, the sight of all my uncles, but especially my father, proudly dressed in their black sherwanis all flood me with so much nostalgia even today.

But more than the Mushaira, the most special part of the evening is what took place after. The "after party," as it would be called in western culture. Usually hosted in our modest home, furniture would be moved to the sides, a dozen white sheets would be laid down, people would be sitting from wall to wall on the floor while chai would be made in massive pots on the stove and snacks were passed back and forth from room to room while the *shayers* sat and recited new poem, old poems, requested ghazals and the audience recited right alongside them like old friends.

No shoes, no stage, no mics or cameras, no fame, and no formalities - everyone sitting on the floor together as one -

the true *deewaney* of Urdu shayari. My favorite part as a child was watching the audience. People being moved by the miracles of the Urdu language - the elegant and intricate pairing of words that would have a houseful of people feeling the deepest feelings of loss and betrayal one moment to picturing the sweetest imagery of love and childhood the next, just through poems. It was art.

And this community that has built up around a University and a University that was built around a language and this language that has influenced the way we carry ourselves, the way we revere one another, the way we view things a bit more vividly, and are able to feel for one another a bit more deeply every single day - that is the power of Urdu.

In that way, it's difficult to imagine if my grandfather indeed had boarded that train and Colonel Haider hadn't stopped him. If my father was raised in Pakistan instead of Aligarh. If he hadn't met my mother, who ignited his passion for poetry with her own and pride for their shared AMU roots. If they hadn't worked together tirelessly with a handful of others to continue the traditions and bring the passion for poetry across the ocean and make it accessible in this new country. If these values and *tehzeeb*, thirst for art and poetry, and pride of community and connection hadn't been the foundation we took our first steps on as children - how dull and bland life would be today.

Everything I am, everything we are, is indebted to a small university in a small town with a big, momentous impact. And every year, at the Mushaira, when the music comes on, I recognize we are the daughters of the tarana and always will be.

Yeh mera chaman, hai mera chaman, mein apne chaman ka bulbul houn.

**Sunober Waseem & Sumbul Waseem are daughters of Syed & Rukhsana Waseem.*

The Strange Tale of Dr. Aziz

Naved Masood, New Delhi

This ‘tale’ is about Dr. Aziz-ur Rahman (1928-73) an Indian Chemist who left the country on account of career related frustrations and found name, fame and meteoric rise in of all the place in Argentina, becoming a Vice Chancellor and one of the founding fathers of research in Chemistry in that country. It is also a tale of the strange quirks that life took in a particular family. The moral of our story is that it proves that truth is indeed at times stranger than fiction.

Dr. Aziz-ur Rahman’s father Habibur Rahman was the grandson of Shaikh Husain. Dr Rahman was born at Bhopal on 29th March, 1928 a few months after his father, a qualified Civil Engineer, working as Building contractor, was found mysteriously murdered at Raisen in Bhopal State – apparently by a business associate whose corrupt practices he had exposed. Dr Rahman’s mother, Memooda Begum, went back to her parents in Lucknow along with her two children. Young Aziz had his entire education in Lucknow completing High School and Intermediate courses from the Christian College with First Division in 1941 and 1943 with a good grounding in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics along with Persian language and literature. He did his B.Sc and M.Sc in Chemistry from Lucknow University in 1947. At that stage Dr Omar Farooq Professor of Chemistry at AMU took him under his wings as a research scholar. Prof Farooq was much more than a research guide – he was in loco parentis to the young man barely out of his teens who had seen no father – indeed, till his departure for Germany Dr. Aziz continued to stay at the place of Dr. Farooq. The large-scale migration of teachers in the wake of partition of the country led to his appointment as Lecturer in Chemistry at AMU in 1947 itself. He became prolific researcher publishing his works co-authored with his mentor. He obtained the degree of PhD from AMU in 1953 and proceeded to the University of Tübingen for research in Biochemistry under Professor Alfred Butenandt (1903-1995) recipient of Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1939 and equally well known as among the few top-notch scientists who had formally become Nazis by joining the National Socialist German Workers’ Party. He obtained the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences (Dr.rer.nat) of that University in 1955. While in Germany he married Hilde Garcia with whom and a young daughter he returned to Aligarh apparently with the intention of carrying out and guiding research of international standards.

He started doing research in right earnest in Aligarh despite financial constraints of a family with a European spouse at the measly salary of a Lecturer in an Indian University which led him to supplement his income reportedly by doing some work for some industry in the city. While coping thus he underwent the trauma of being denied promotion to the post of Reader when a senior colleague, with no research degree, was preferred over him. The trauma appears to have been aggravated as its ostensible source was someone who was a father figure to him. Speculations aside he was determined to make a break with the institution which according to his lights he had served well and which had let him down for no good reason. Around that time he attended a conference in the US where he met Dr. Lelong, a Franco-Argentinean who had just joined as Director of the newly established Department of Chemistry at the National University of Bahia Blanca. Dr Lelong seeing a disgruntled, experienced teacher and researcher, made him the outlandish offer of a Research Professorship at the nascent University apparently promising him all the infrastructural support. Argentina then was a major magnet for professionals wishing to leave parts of Europe that had not yet fully recovered from the after-effects of the World War II – in the words of his son it was the “emerging US of Latin America” – in short a land of hope and opportunity where the disappointed young scientist from Aligarh dreamed of building up a career as a teacher and researcher. The migratory genes which brought his great-grand father from Yemen to India apparently made him take the plunge in terra incognita of Argentina.

Aziz-ur Rahman joined the University of Bahia Blanca on 1st February, 1959 as Professor with no knowledge of Spanish, the medium of instruction. According to his student Professor Julio Podesta during the first year he would deliver his Lectures in German or English with someone doing simultaneous translation in Spanish! By the second year he picked up enough Spanish to be able to manage on his own. He started his researches in right earnest and within a year the University emerged as a significant center of Chemical research in Argentina. He ensured that two of his research students at Aligarh, Ausat Ali Khan and Mohammed Sami Khan were given Fellowships to continue their researches under him at Bahia Blanca. These two young Indians thus became pioneers of Chemistry research in Bahia Blanca! The Department of Chemistry of the University soon became the epicenter of quality research in Argentina. The young

Professor enthused with his success decided to throw his lot with the country that had provided him with all that was denied to him in his 'home country' obtained the nationality of Argentina.

The maverick Indian did not go un-noticed either, President Arturo Frondizi (1905 – 1995) himself from an Italian migrant family, appointed the Indian migrant as the Rector (Vice Chancellor) of the University, a post which he held with distinction till 1967 though with a tumultuous termination. By all accounts the young Rector rose to the occasion and soon his University claimed a position of excellence in teaching and research in several disciplines. In 1964 he was also appointed President of the Inter University Council of National Universities i.e. Central Universities of the country – a position that gave him a role in evolving higher education policies and maintaining standards of tertiary education in his adopted country. The position of leadership did not dampen his penchant for research; during his tenure as Rector he contributed as many as 15 papers as the first author for international journals and continued to guide research making the Department of Chemistry of the National University at Bahia Blanca the preferred destination for serious students of Chemistry in that country. A recent historical review of education and research of the subject in Argentina identifies Prof Aziz-ur Rahman as one of the chief benefactors of Chemistry education in that country.

Argentina, like much of Latin America saw acute turmoil in the 1960s. Quite apart from radical leftist movement in the wake of the Cuban revolution and the exertions of the charismatic Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1928 – 1967) throughout the region, the country bore the additional burden of that confused 'hybrid ideology', Peronism and a politically ambitious military, the country became a cauldron of strife. Dr. Aziz being a rank outsider, had occupied a necessarily ambivalent perch: While his lack of political affiliation was an asset; it was also the Achilles heel with his imperfect understanding of local history and culture. With Universities in the 1960s becoming the crucible of all political movements – after all students in the 60s of the last century were the storm troopers of political uprisings all over the world – the Rector, born and brought up in genteel Muslim middle class of India, was increasingly at sea. He tried to come to grips with a situation that was obviously alien to the Chemist cum academic administrator. He tried in vain to stand his ground with the radical leftist students. It all resulted in his losing the position of head of the University sometime in 1967. He attempted to retrieve the lost ground by trying to buy peace with the then President, the dictator Juan Carlos

Onganía, (1914 – 1995) to no avail. As his son Prof Shahid Rahman puts it; "The Peronists saw him as an enemy; the radicals did not like that he had an interview with the dictator; the dictator mistrusted him; and the left wing students (who had supported him) felt betrayed."

His last few years in Bahia Blanca were an anti climax – a reversal of the first eight years. The family became increasingly isolated and his colleagues minimized their contacts for fear of falling foul of the establishment. A few years later he accepted an offer of a Visiting Professorship – 'Invited Professor' – at a Private University at Guadalajara (Mexico) to be away from a violence ridden Argentina where the family was feeling insecure on account of threats from various quarters. The unpredictable man that he was, Dr. Aziz also enrolled himself as a Medical student! The family has the impression that he had in the meantime applied, and secured, Professorship in Munich. At any rate he succumbed to a heart stroke on 9th July, 1973 where his mortal remains were interred.

The subsequent story of the privations suffered by a now impoverished family are beyond the scope of this piece; suffice it to say that the family had to return to Argentina and his elder son (three siblings, a daughter and two sons) had to work as a cleaner in the University Library where his father was the Rector with the family supplementing his meager earnings by letting out a part of their house.

This brings us to the end of a most unusual, or shall we say a strange, story. The story has many facets – the unusual enterprise of a scientist who, having found himself wronged, thought nothing of transplanting himself in a completely alien soil; the strange course of the life of his paternal family; his own destiny which took him to the right place at the right time and left him stranded at the wrong place at the wrong time! At a different plane it is an instructive story of the feudal mindset that prevailed – and continues to prevail – in older Indian Universities. We are told to refrain from hypothesizing about what would have happened had a particular event not taken place or taken a different course. We will, therefore, not attempt to surmise the course of the Dr. Aziz's career if he had made it as a Reader in Aligarh in 1958 – may be he would have ended up in places like Libya or Nigeria like many of his contemporaries or he would have stayed put as a venerable Professor in Aligarh much like a couple of other scholarly souls with European spouses. Since we are not allowing ourselves the liberty to speculate, we may conclude that the tale is indeed strange and the likes of Dr. Aziz-ur Rahman appear but rarely on the scene – certainly not amongst the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent.

Abridged from https://www.ummid.com/news/2013/June/03.06.2013/dr_aziz_ur_rehman_amu.html

یہ اشتہار پڑھتے ہی رحمان کے رونگٹے کھڑے ہو گئے۔ دماغ ایک لمحہ کے لیے رک سا گیا دل کی دھڑکیں تیز ہونے لگی اسنے گہری گہری سانسیں لینا شروع کیا اور فائل کو بند کر دیا۔

کچھ دیر صبر کرنے کے بعد جب اس کی کیفیت کچھ بہتر ہوئی تو اس نے ہمت جوڑ کر فائل کو پھر سے کھولا۔
 اشتہار کے بعد فائل میں ستر سے اسی کے قریب خطوط موجود تھے۔ ہر خط کے ساتھ اسکا لفاظہ منسلک تھا جس پر بھیجنے والے کا نام پتہ درج تھا۔
 رحمان نے ایک ایک کر کے خط پڑھنا شروع کیے۔ رحمان خط پڑھتا جاتا اور اس کی آنکھوں سے آنسو بہتے رہتے خطوط میں جس طرح سے لوگوں نے اپنی پریشانیوں اور تکلیفوں کا ذکر کیا تھا لگتا تھا جیسے اپنا کلیجہ کاٹ کر رکھ دیا ہو۔

زبان بہت عام تھی مگر احساسات اور جذبات انمول تھے۔ ایسی عاجزی اور انکساری سے عرضیاں لکھی گئیں تھیں جیسے وہ خود خدا کے سامنے گڑ گڑا کر فریاد کر رہے ہوں۔
 جن تکالیف اور پریشانیوں کا لوگوں نے ان خطوط میں ذکر کیا تھا کہ رحمان سوچنے پر مجبور ہو گیا کہ آخر لوگ ایسے حالات میں زندہ کیسے رہ سکتے ہیں۔ اسے اندازہ ہی نہیں تھا کہ ایک انسان اتنی تکالیف برداشت کرنے کی بھی سکت رکھتا ہے۔

اسی کیفیت میں رحمان اپنی کرسی سے اٹھا اور ساتھ بچھی جا نماز پر سجدے میں گر گیا اور زار و قطار رو کر خدا کی نعمتوں کا شکریہ ادا کرنے لگا۔
 سجدے کی حالت میں ہی رحمان کے دل میں ان لوگوں سے ملنے کی چاہت جاگی جنہوں نے خطوط لکھے تھے۔
 اگلے صبح رحمان نے ایک فہرست تیار کی اور باری باری لوگوں سے ملنے ان کے گھروں کو پہنچا۔ یہ کام اتنا آسان نہیں تھا جتنا رحمان نے سمجھا تھا۔ کچھ لوگ انتقال کر چکے تھے۔ کچھ لوگ گھر تبدیل کر چکے تھے، کچھ دوسرے ممالک اور شہروں میں جا بسے تھے۔

مسلل تین ماہ کی محنت کے بعد رحمان زیادہ تر لوگوں سے یا ان کے رشتہ داروں سے یا ان سے فون پر رابطہ کرنے میں کامیاب ہو پایا۔
 ان تمام سے بات کرنے سے رحمان پر یہ بات واقع ہوئی کہ یہ تمام افراد ایک خوش و خرم زندگی بسر کر رہے ہیں مگر ان سب کی پریشانیوں اور مشکلات کے ختم ہونے کا دورانیہ ایک دوسرے سے بالکل مختلف تھا۔

کچھ لوگوں کی زندگیوں میں تبدیلیاں کچھ ہفتوں میں کچھ کے یہاں مہینوں میں اور کچھ کے یہاں سالوں میں رونما ہوئیں لیکن ایک بات جو سب میں مشترک تھی وہ یہ کہ ان سب کا اس بات پر پختہ ایمان تھا کہ ان کی تکالیف اور پریشانیاں رحمان کے والد نے ہی خدا اور کریم تک پہنچائی ہیں اور وہ آج بھی رحمان کے والد کو اقبال صاحب اللہ والے کے نام سے یاد کرتے ہیں۔

اس لب لباب کے بعد رحمان ساری عمر اپنے آپ کو اس سوچ سے باہر نہ نکال سکا کہ کیا واقعی اس کے والد نے یہ پیغامات خود خدا تک پہنچائے ہوں گے، یا جس تڑپ، عاجزی اور انکساری سے لوگوں نے اپنی یہ عرضیاں لکھی تھیں وہ دعا بن کر قبول ہوئیں۔
 رحمان کے ذہن میں اس کے والد کے کمرے کی دیوار پر لکھا اقبال کا شعر گونجنے لگا۔

دل سے جو بات نکلتی ہے اثر رکھتی ہے
 پر نہیں طاقت پرواز رکھتی ہے

گھر بالکل ویسا ہی تھا جیسا ۳۰ سال پہلے وہ چھوڑ کر گیا تھا۔ کھانا کھانے کے بعد رحمان اپنے والد کے کمرے میں گیا اور سنانے کی خاطر اپنے والد کی جگہ پر جس پر آج بھی اس کے والد کا تکیہ ان کے پسندیدہ غلاف میں جس پر اس کی والدہ نے قریشی سے کڑھائی کی تھی موجود تھا، لیٹ گیا۔ لیٹتے ہی اسے فوراً نیند آ گئی۔ رحمان کی جب آنکھ کھلی تو صبح کے ساڑھے دس بج رہے تھے۔ یعنی وہ ۱۵ گھنٹے سو کر اٹھا تھا۔

نیند سے اٹھتے ہی رحمان کو یوں محسوس ہوا جیسے وہ برسوں بعد اتنی پرسکون نیند سویا تھا دل میں ایک عجیب سا اطمینان اور خوشی تھی۔

ناشتے کے بعد رحمان اپنے والد کے کمرے کی بالکنی میں رکھی راکنگ چیئر (Rocking Chair) پر بیٹھ گیا اور اس گھر میں گزارے وقت کو یاد کرتا رہا۔ اسی دوران رحمان کو اس کے والد کے کمرے سے منسلک اس کمرے کا خیال آیا جس میں اس کے والد اکثر اپنا فارغ وقت گزارا کرتے تھے۔ رحمان کے والد ایک شریف انفس انسان تھے۔ بظاہر وہ ایک مذہبی شخص معلوم ہوتے تھے لیکن رحمان نے انہیں کبھی نماز پڑھتے یا عبادت کرتے نہیں دیکھا۔ وہ گھنٹوں اپنا فارغ وقت اسی کمرے میں گزارا کرتے تھے۔

رحمان کا شاید ایک دو بار اس کمرے میں جانے کا اتفاق ہوا اور وہ بھی کسی مہمان کی آمد خبر دینے کے لیے۔ مہمانوں کی آمد کا سلسلہ ان کے گھر اکثر رہتا تھا۔ بقول رحمان کے والد کے ”مہمان خدا کی رحمت ہوتے ہیں“ اس لیے مہمانوں کی خاطر داری کا خاص خیال رکھا جاتا تھا۔ مہمانوں میں مسجدوں کے امام، گرجہ گھروں کے پادری، شیعہ اور سنی اسکالرز، تعلیمی اداروں کے اساتذہ، کتب فروش، درزی، دوکان دار، صحافی، اداکار، سیاسی اور سماجی شخصیات غرض کے ہر طرح کے افراد شامل تھے۔

بڑی بڑی گاڑیوں سے لے کر بسوں میں آنے والے افراد اس کے والد کے حلقہ احباب میں شامل تھے اور کمال یہ کہ ان تمام کی خاطر داری بالکل ایک طرح سے کی جاتی تھی۔ کمرے کا خیال آتے ہی، رحمان اس کمرے میں داخل ہوئے کمرے میں ایک میز اور کرسی رکھی تھی، ایک طرف جاء نماز بھی ہوئی تھی، کمرے کی دود یواروں پر بک شیلف (Book Shelf) پر کتابیں موجود تھیں۔ ایک طرف ایک فائل کابینٹ (File Cabinet) تھا جس پر بے شمار فائلیں موجود تھیں۔

رحمان آہستہ اپنے والد کی کرسی پر بیٹھ گیا۔ میز پر ایک قلم اور رائٹنگ پیڈ (Writing pad) موجود تھا۔ رحمان نے میز کی دراز کھولی تو اس میں کچھ (Files) فائلیں موجود تھیں۔ رحمان باری باری ان فائلوں کو ٹوٹا رہا انہیں فائلوں میں ایک فائل جو کافی موٹی تھی رحمان کی توجہ کا مرکز بنی فائل کی جو چیزیں رحمان کی توجہ کا مرکز بنی وہ فائل کا عنوان تھا۔

”خدا کے نام“

عنوان اتنا منفرد تھا کہ رحمان کچھ دیر تک فائل کو اوپر سے ہی دیکھتا رہا۔ اس کے دماغ میں ہزار ہاں خیال برق رفتاری سے دوڑنے لگے۔

- کہا میرے والد خدا سے خط و کتابت کرتے تھے۔

- کیا کوئی شخص ایسا کر سکتا ہے۔

- کیا یہ ممکن ہے۔

- خدا کو بھلا کوئی کیسے خط لکھ سکتا ہے۔

اسی شش و پنج میں اس نے فائل کا کور پلٹا۔

فائل میں تقریباً ۱۰۰ سو کے قریب صفحات بڑی نفاست سے لگے تھے۔

سب سے اوپر ایک اخباری اشتہار فائل میں لگا ہوا تھا اشتہار کے کو نے پر اس کے والد کی ایک تصویر تھی۔ اشتہار کا متن کچھ یوں تھا۔

”بھائیوں اور بہنوں میں گزشتہ کئی مہینوں سے ایک مہلک بیماری میں مبتلا ہوں۔ بقول ڈاکٹروں کے میرے پاس کچھ ہی ہفتوں کا وقت ہے۔ میرا ایمان ہے کہ مرنے کے بعد مجھے خداوند تعالیٰ سے ملاقات کا شرف حاصل ہوگا۔

اگر آپ میں سے کوئی اپنا پیغام عرضی خداوند تعالیٰ تک پہنچانے کے خواہش مند ہوں تو مندرجہ ذیل پتہ پر اپنے خطوط ارسال کر دیں

میں کوشش کروں گا کہ آپ کے پیغامات اور عرضیاں خداوند کریم کے حضور میں پہنچا دوں۔ دعاؤں کا طالب۔“

اقبال خان

دل سے جوابات نکلتی ہے

شاہد علی، اٹلانٹا

آج رحمان کے لیے بہت بڑا دن تھا۔ صبح کے 7:30 بجے کا وقت تھا سورج کی کرنیں کھڑکی سے چیرتی ہوئی رحمان کے چہرے پر چمک رہی تھیں۔ فون کا الارم (Alarm) آہستہ آہستہ اپنی آواز بڑھاتا جا رہا تھا کہ نیم بیداری کے عالم میں رحمان کا ہاتھ فون پر پڑا اور رحمان نے الارم (Alarm) بند کر دیا۔

سورج کی کرنیں بدستور اس کے چہرے پر چمکتی رہیں۔ جیسے وہ بضد ہوں کہ اب اٹھ جاؤ۔

رحمان میاں بھی زیادہ دیر ان کمروں سے منہ نہ پھیر سکے اور اچانک اٹھ کھڑے ہوئے۔

حسب معمول دفتر جانے کے لیے تیار ہوئے۔ نیا سوٹ پہنا کیونکہ آج دفتر میں توجہ کا مرکز وہ ہی ہونے والے تھے۔

رحمان ایک مالیاتی ادارے (Financial Institution) میں اعلیٰ عہدہ پر فائز تھے۔ پچھلے کئی برس سے ان کی کمپنی ایک بڑے Client کو اپنی خدمات پہنچنے کی کوشش کر رہی تھی لیکن کوئی خاطر خواہ کامیابی حاصل نہ کر سکی تھی۔

رحمان نے اس Client کو حاصل کرنے کا چیلنج قبول کیا اور ایک ماہ کی انتھک محنت کے اس client کو حاصل کر لیا۔

رحمان جیسے ہی دفتر پہنچے تالیوں سے ان کا استقبال کیا گیا۔ کمپنی کے تمام پارٹنرز (Partner) نے رحمان کی محنت کو سراہا۔ رحمان جیسے ہی اپنی میز پر پہنچے وہاں ایک لفافہ ان کا انتظار کر رہا تھا۔ رحمان نے لفافہ کھولا اور دیکھ کر وہ دنگ رہ گیا۔

رحمان کو ایک ملازم سے ترقی دے کر اس ادارے کا ایک پارٹنر (Partner) بنادیا گیا تھا یعنی اب وہ اس ادارے کے مالکان میں سے ایک تھا۔

ادارے کے سربراہ نے رحمان کو اپنے نئے کمرے میں آکر اپنی نشست سنبھالنے کی درخواست کی۔

رحمان کو یہ سب خواب کا معلوم ہو رہا تھا۔

اس نے اپنے کیریئر (Career) میں اس طرح کی کہانیاں تو سنی تھیں مگر اس نے کبھی یہ سوچا بھی نہ تھا یہ سب اس کے ساتھ بھی ہو سکتا ہے۔

رحمان نے اپنی ذمہ داریاں سنبھالیں اور جانفشانی سے اپنے کام میں مشغول ہو گئے۔

کچھ سال بیت گئے رحمان نے اپنی محنت اور قابلیت سے اپنے ادارے کو امریکہ کی بہترین مالیاتی اداروں کی فہرست میں لاکھڑا کیا۔

رحمان نے معاشی اعتبار سے صرف 48 برس کی عمر میں وہ سب کچھ حاصل کر لیا تھا جس کا اس نے کبھی صرف خواب ہی دیکھا تھا۔

ان تمام مادی آسائشوں کے باوجود بھی کچھ عرصہ سے رحمان ایک بے چینی کا شکار تھا۔ سب کچھ ہونے کے باوجود بھی زندگی میں ایک خالی پن تھا بچی خوشی، دل کا قرار جیسے صرف خیالی باتیں معلوم ہوتی تھیں۔ اس اضطرابی کیفیت میں وہ اپنی بالکنی میں کھڑے چائے کا گھونٹ لے رہے تھے کہ اچانک انہیں اپنا بچپن پاکستان میں اپنا پرانا گھر محلہ یاد آیا۔ ان خیالات کے آتے ہیں رحمان کو ایک سکون کا سا احساس ہوا۔ اس کا دل چاہا کہ وہ اس سکون کی کیفیت میں غرق ہو جائے اور یہ لمحہ ختم جائے کہ اچانک فون کی گھنٹی بجی۔

فون پر رحمان کا بزنس پارٹنر (Business Partner) تھا رحمان کافی دیر تک اس سے بات کرتا رہا اور باتوں باتوں میں اس نے اپنے بزنس پارٹنر سے کچھ دنوں کا بریک (Break) لینے کی خواہش کا اظہار کیا۔ اور کہا کہ میں کچھ دنوں کے لیے پاکستان جانا چاہتا ہوں۔

بریک لینے اور پاکستان جانے والی بات رحمان کو منہ سے بے اختیار ہی نکلی تھی مگر اس کے بزنس پارٹنر نے اس کے اس فیصلہ کی تائید کی۔

فون رکھتے ہی رحمان کو یقین نہ آیا کہ اس نے اچانک پاکستان جانے کا فیصلہ کر لیا تھا۔

رحمان نے سفر کی تیاری شروع کی اور کچھ دنوں میں وہ پاکستان کے لیے روانہ ہوا۔

کراچی ایئر پورٹ پہنچ کر وہ ٹیکسی (Taxi) کے ذریعے اپنے گھر کی طرف روانہ ہوا۔ رحمان ۳۰ برس بعد پاکستان آیا تھا۔ والدین کے انتقال کے بعد اس نے کبھی پاکستان جانے کا سوچا بھی نہیں تھا۔ دوران سفر ایک بے اختیار اس کے چہرے پر عیاں تھی۔

گھر پہنچے پران کا پرانا چوکیدار اکبر خان اس کا انتظار کر رہا تھا۔

”معمار ملت“

Mr.Ralph Waldo Emerson کی نظم

The nation builder کا اردو روپ سنگھار

سید محمد شاہ تنظیم

صرف دولت سے کہیں ہوتی ہے تعمیر وطن
چاہیے کردارِ عالی عزمِ محکم بانکپن

حق پرست افراد ، جو ناموس لٹتی دیکھ کر
پنچہ جبر و ظلم توڑ ڈالیں موڑ کر

ہوں جو مصروف کشا کش ، درمیان کار زار
ان کے ساتھی ڈھونڈتے پھرتے ہوں جب راہ فرار

جان کی قیمت پہ ہو ممکن تو ملت کے ستوں
گاڑ دیں تحت اثریٰ سے تابہ چرخ نیلگوں
لوٹتے ہیں جن کے قدموں پر شہنشاہوں کے تاج
وہ جو طوفانوں سے لیتے ہیں عقیدت کا خراج
قوم کے فرزند جن پر خواب کی لذت حرام
وہ عظیم المرتبت ، معمار ملت ہیں تمام

مورخہ: بریلی ۲۵ جنوری ۱۹۶۰ء بروز دوشنبہ

COVID-19 RT-PCR Test

Quick Results in 3, 8, 24hr

We are here to help when you need the most.

Open 9-5; 7 days; Walk-ins are welcome.

Guaranteed Turnaround Times.



5.0 ★★★★★

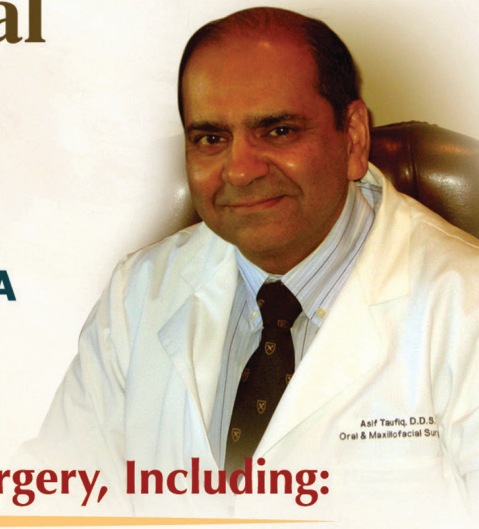
Based on 1,250+
reviews

www.mygenomics.com

11535 Park Woods Circle, Alpharetta, GA 30005
(855) 647 4363

Gwinnett Center for Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Asif Taufiq, D.D.S., M.B.A



A Full Range of Oral Surgery, Including:

DENTAL EXTRACTIONS
DENTAL IMPLANTS
COSMETIC SURGERY
RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY
TMJ TREATMENT
ORAL DIAGNOSIS
INFECTIONS OF HEAD & NECK
TRAUMA TO THE FACE

15 Collins Industrial Way, BLawrenceville, GA 30043
Tel: (770) 962-0515 Fax: (770) 962-1244

369 Braselton Hwy., Suite 101Dacula, GA 30019
Tel: (770) 831-6602 Fax: (770) 831-6608

www.centerforomsga.com