

ALIGATLANTA

DEC 2022



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



Education Status and Challenges
Doctor at 24 Marris Rd
Chemistry Teaching to Disadvantaged

Youth Perspective of AMU
Aligarh Role and Memories
In Memoriam



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**From Editor's Desk**

In *The Pandemic Is a Portal*, Indian author Arundhati Roy writes, “Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.”

The COVID-19 impact is largely over now. This year we have started seeing more in-person activities. As we observed, this pandemic has the largest disruption of education systems. In a sophisticated analysis of thousands of public-school districts in 29 states, researchers at Harvard and Stanford Universities found that poverty played an even bigger role in academic declines during the pandemic. The remote learning erased students’ progress in math and reading in the US. In a different study, researchers examined the intersection of COVID-19 fear and mental health consequences among college students in Northern Michigan. They showed increased fear, stress, and decreased happiness, and these were associated with their learning quality change. These findings are alarming and timely.

As we observed, the pandemic crisis has accelerated the pace of digital transformation and e-commerce, and has increased the degree of adoption of telemedicine, videoconferencing, and fintech. However, now globalization of commerce is being relooked at. Among other factors, too much dependence on offshoring is believed to have caused the supply chain disruption. We are likely to see companies re-shore some of their production. On the other hand, pandemic has a positive impact on international students’ admission to US universities. Most US colleges report increased numbers of international student applications for 2022-23 year. The US consulates in South Asia issued record numbers of student visas for this academic year.

The Annual International Mushaira this year was impacted. After having online mushairas in 2020 and 2021 during COVID time, this year very few cities in US hosted mushairas. The Federation of Aligarh Alumni Association (FAAA) decided not to hold 2022 Mushaira so did Atlanta. It appears that the audience was more keen on having an in-person event rather than another *Zoomshaira*.

The ALIGAtlanta 2022 edition has articles from authors of different background. This will provide readers with much wider perspectives. Prof. Dr. DP Agrawal in an exclusive article lays out in detail the educational challenges and opportunities for Muslim minorities in India. Dr. Razi Raziuddin analyzes the educational status of Muslim Indians. Dr. Mohd Tariq Ghazi takes down to the memory lane of AMU and its days in 1960s. Article *the Doctor at 24 Marris Road* will provide an interesting history of AMU Tibbiya College. Dr. Shariq Aqeel captures the impacts of COVID-19 on our lives. Dr. Mohd Ahmad Badshah recounts Sir Syed’s vision of a debating society and students union. Two projects for the community betterment are part of this edition. Dr. Sardar Yaqub Khan Yousufzai explains his ongoing program of teaching chemistry to the disadvantaged. Mr. Saad Hashmi introduces his organization’s education and training initiatives. Mr. Saad Tanzeem provides a youth’s perspective of AMU. Dr. Wasi Siddiqui writes about the influence of AMU on his life. We also pay tributes to our departed colleagues and patrons. Dr. Asif Taufiq pens down a remembrance of his beloved mother. Ms. Rukhsana Waseem writes a eulogy for Drs. A and F Rahman. Additionally, there are official messages along with event photographs.

I sincerely thank Shahid Ali, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad, S. Nawaid Tanzeem, Syed Hasan Kamal, and Syed Waseem 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. I also acknowledge S. Nasir Hussain and Dr. Valeed Ahmad for their help in Urdu typing. I would like to thank my wife, Shaista, and kids in preparation of the manuscript.

This yearly bulletin aims to publish articles on Association activities, education, projects and initiatives, 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.

Honorary Editor

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Cover Photo: AMU Victoria Gate with Recent Solar Panel Installation (Top), 2022 Sir Syed Day Function at AMU (Bottom)



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September 30, 2022

Message



1. It has given me immense pleasure to learn that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, is publishing the 2022 edition of its Magazine.
2. It is a matter of pride for all of us to be a part of this institution whose foundation was laid by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. His farsightedness and unique initiative has made our University a repository of not only knowledge but values and culture as well.
3. It fills us with immense pride to see our Alumni celebrate their association with AMU. Our Alumni have always extended their support in the development and promotion of their alma mater. They have always stood as a pillar of strength. You may be thousands of miles away from your University but your commitment towards the alma mater has never faded.
4. It is heartening to note that Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, has actively supported and promoted endeavours of the underprivileged, thereby encouraging and promoting aspirations of every segment, especially the weaker sections of the society.
5. My compliments to the Office Bearers and members of the Association for the excellent job which they are doing.

Tariq Mansoor
30/9/22
(Prof. Tariq Mansoor)

The Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA)

www.aligarhassociation.org



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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

Only a life lived for others is worth living - Albert Einstein

I would like to begin by thanking all the volunteers at Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta for their continuous support and hard work. Their commitment to serving others is the foundation for our success.

The beginning of 2022 was an uncertain time. Covid cases were rising as we all tried to return to normalcy. Despite the uncertainty, the new year brought hope and opportunity. As cases slowly began to decline and the need for a sense of community grew, we planned the Eid Ul Fitar Picnic to be held on May 7, 2022. The thought behind this event was to bring our communities together and to show our children how Eid should be celebrated. Above all, the idea behind the Eid picnic was to spread the message of love and prosperity.

Allhamdulillah, by the Grace of God, we were able to spread that message. The event was a success. More than 2000 people attended and enjoyed the festivities of Eid Ul Fitar with their families. The event would not have been possible without the countless volunteers, especially our youth, and donors who dedicated their time and money to ensure its success.

Our second event for 2022 was for Eid Ul Azha. It was a literary and musical event titled "SUKHAN.". It was truly a unique event featuring Urdu Ghazal, Nazms, Qawali, and Dastangoi. The event had overwhelming support from the community and was a sold-out show! The generosity of the sponsors was phenomenal and because of their support we were able to save \$20,000 from this event.

Aside from the events, the Association was able to pay the academic expenses of two deserving students from Pakistan who were pursuing higher education in Canada. We also gave scholarships through SIR SYED GLOBAL SCHOLAR AWARD (SSGSA) to 4 students from India who were pursuing their PhD degrees in USA. In addition, we are also working with Forman College Lahore to bring 8 students next year from Pakistan who are interested in doing their PhD in USA.

At Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta, our mission is to bring the communities together, help humanity beyond boundaries, and provide financial assistance to deserving students from India and Pakistan. We strive to provide a platform in Atlanta where we can cherish our cultural values, celebrate our festivals, and establish a strong relationship with the communities in which we live.

The Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta is a community unlike any other and with your support, InshaAllah, it will continue to grow. The year may be coming to an end, but our work never will. I look forward to continuing our success and bringing our communities even closer in the next year.

Sincerely,
Shahid Ali
President, AAAA
www.aligarhassociation.org



Muslim Minorities in India: Challenges and Opportunities

Prof. D. P. Agrawal*, Aligarh, India

Introduction

I wish to begin this essay by sharing the assurance by the PM of India Shri Modi that No citizen would be left behind because of religion and everyone would get equal opportunity so that everyone can fulfil their dreams.

India is a vast and multi-cultural country with followers of various faiths and religion living together in harmony over centuries. The panorama of Indian culture has been enriched over the years by everyone who came to its land and became a part of it. Its glory and scholarship attracted many travellers to understand India and its society. It gave birth to many religions and faiths, and enabled its citizen to pursue their faith and beliefs.

The framers of our constitution brought in the concepts of Socialism, Secularism, Sovereignty, Fraternity, Equality, and welfare state which form the substratum of the Indian Constitution. Over the past many decades, we are the most vibrant democracy of the world committed to fulfilling the dreams of our citizen.

In a pluralistic society, the right of minorities and weaker sections need to be safeguarded. The constitution of India has afforded protection to the minorities in the country and also ensures the fundamental rights of all citizens. It gives a sense of security to all minorities.

Demography as per Census 2011

Communities viz. Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Parsi are declared as minority communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.

Muslims, are the largest religious minority of the country. As per 2011 Census, the percentage and population of different communities are: Hindus : 79.8% (966.3 million), Muslims : 14.23% (172.2 million), Christians : 2.30% (28.7 million), Sikhs : 1.72% (20.8 million). It is known that Muslims are lagging behind other religious minorities on all indicators of human development, such as living standards, financial stability, political existence, education etc. Their socio-economic status is far behind than that of other minorities and is also less than the national level. They have widespread illiteracy, low income, irregular employment, and high incidence of poverty.

Muslim Minority and Education:

Education is one of the most important instruments for the development and empowerment of any marginalized community. This plays an important role in gaining a respectful and dignified life within the society and also helpful for earning employment and money for the livelihood. A well-educated population, adequately equipped with knowledge and skill is not only essential to

support economic growth but is also a precondition for growth to be inclusive.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a great visionary reformer who recognized the role of modern education to uplift the Muslim community. His untiring efforts led to the establishment of Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College at Aligarh in 1875 which later grew to become Aligarh Muslim University, a highly ranked university today.

The Educational Policy (1986) has stressed the need to liberalise education for the welfare of the marginalised sections of society including minorities. Various education statistics show that nearly one fourth of Muslim children in the age group of 6-14 years have either never attended school or are dropouts. The educational attainment of Muslims at matriculation is 17%, as compared to the national average at 26%. Only 50% of Muslims who complete middle schools are likely to complete secondary education, compared to 62% at the national level. While 68.5% of Muslim males are literate, female literacy among the Muslims is also low and this is one of the important reasons of ignorance, illiteracy, and school dropouts in the Muslim community. Poverty is also an important reason for many Muslim children to be out of school.

Madrasas find an important place in the education system of Muslim community from ages. Sachar committee in 2006 found that only 4-7% of Muslim students study exclusively in madrasas. All the others study in mainstream government or private schools. According to information provided by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, India has 24,010 madrasas, of which 4,878 were unrecognised in 2018-19 data. Unofficially, it is claimed that only one organisation, Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, has over 20,000 Deobandi madrasas in north India.

A Madrasa Modernization Programme was introduced in the National Policy on Education of 1986 and an updated plan was presented in 1992. Some Indian states have established government Madrasa Education Boards with which madrasas can be affiliated. Selected madrasas receive government support to teach secular “modern” subjects such as science, mathematics, English and social sciences. A number of Indian universities recognise credentials from certain madrasas thus enabling their graduates to continue to higher education. Students typically go on to study Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Islamic subjects but also other subjects. Government supported Madrasas provide mid-day meal scheme to children. One of the major concerns has been the curriculum which lack STEM education and opportunities for holistic education and personality development through social and sport activities. This hinders the future growth of madrasa pass outs in higher education and other professional field.

Enrollment in Higher Education

NEP 2020 advocates a multi-disciplinary and flexible education for a learner as per his/her need. NEP 2020 concedes that minorities are under-represented in education, but states that such deprivation is not exclusive to minorities alone. To facilitate learning for all students, with special emphasis on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged groups (SEDG), NEP 2020 proposes that the scope of education shall be broadened to facilitate multiple pathways for learning including distance education.

For Muslim Minorities, the higher education enrolment has gone up from 2.53% in 2010-11 to 5.45% in 2019-20; and their share in teaching faculty has risen from 2.95% to 5.55% during the corresponding period indicating that given the opportunity, the community is keen to be in the mainstream. It is worth noting from a number of studies that in post Sachar committee, the Muslims have realised the value of mainstream higher education. This trend repudiates the widespread assumption that the actions and preferences of Muslims, including their choice of education, are guided by their rigidly-held religious beliefs and non-progressive attitudes.

Central universities and government-aided deemed universities have better Muslims enrolments at 8.41% and 14.5% respectively. As per the AISHE Report, the enrolment of Muslim students in the Institutes of National importance is only 1.92%. Muslim students depend highly on government institutions (54.1%) as compared to other communities (national average 45.2%). Only 18.2% go to private aided higher education institutions and 27.4% to private unaided higher education institutions against a national average of 24.4% and 30.1% respectively. Private aided and unaided higher education institutions are mostly English medium professional colleges, and Muslims have less access to those institutions. As of now Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is 16.65% for Muslims in higher education compared to 26.3% GER nationally.

Muslim Minorities in Government Jobs

As the country progresses and technology enables the work place, a large number of opportunities are available to all in both Government and private sector jobs. Growth of IT and IT-enabled services have attracted bright candidates to private sector jobs and Muslim minorities cannot remain untouched. The sectors in which employment occurs in large numbers in India for Indian citizens cover Railways, Defence, Science and Technology, Administration, Police, Education and Teaching, Health, Industry and Business, IT sector, Insurance sector, Power sector, Banking sector, Media, Revenue department, Agriculture etc.

The Government of India, through Sachar Committee (2005 to 2006) looked at the status of Muslim Minorities in education, government jobs and other social indicators. Based on the report, various steps were taken by the government to ameliorate the prevailing conditions of the Muslims. One of the key findings of the Sachar committee was much lower representation by Muslim minorities in

Government jobs, especially in senior civil services where it is only about 5%. The percentage of minorities in Central Government jobs almost doubled from 5.3% in 2014 to 9.9% at present as per information from GOI.

A number of recruiting agencies recruit for the jobs in governments. Most prominent amongst them is UPSC which recruits for all senior posts in the Government. The staff selection commission of India recruits for the other posts.

UPSC is a constitutional body (Articles 315-323) charged with recruitment, promotion and punishment of class one government officials. All the recruitment through UPSC and staff selection commission are merit based. It provides equal opportunity to all and has completely un-biased selection irrespective of cast, creed, religion or region. It must be realized that there are many jobs in both central and state governments. It provides an opportunity to all candidates to choose a job of his/her liking, consistent with their capability and preparedness. Most of the government jobs attract a very large number of candidates from all over the country and thus there is an intense competition for such posts. These jobs provide all the advantages of the government job securities, salaries, and perks including retirement benefits, jobs satisfaction and also a standing in the society. While the jobs through UPSC are for graduates only, state govt and staff selection jobs are also available for 8th pass, 10th pass and 12th pass too.

Civil Services Examination (CSE)

In India, civil services play a significant role in enforcing laws and enabling policy creation and its implementation. The civil services examination conducted by the UPSC for recruitment to the various civil services is complex, competitive, and popular. These services have consistently been among top career choices of the educated youth across the nation. With a passing percentage of just 0.1%, it is one of the most difficult competitive examinations in the nation in terms of structure. In spite of that, a growing number of people with professional degrees are choosing positions in Civil Services. Every year nearly 1.2 million candidates apply for nearly a thousand vacancies. UPSC also conducts 12 other examinations to recruit for central government jobs.

The CSE is a three-stage examination conducted every year. The stages are as:

1. Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination (Objective Type) for the selection of candidates for Main Examination;
2. Civil Services (Main) Examination (Written) for selecting candidates for personality test; and
3. The personality test: for the selection of candidates for the various Services and posts

Candidates belonging to General/Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) category are allowed six attempts, those belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC)/Scheduled Tribe (ST) are given unlimited chances, nine each to the those belonging to Other Backward Classes (OBC) and for the Persons with Benchmark Disability (Unlimited for SC/ST).

Muslim Minority can draw benefits of OBC category and can avail EWS quota.

Government Supported Dedicated Coaching Centres

Coaching and guidance centres to facilitate minorities and women candidates are supported by central government in leading minority institutes viz AMU, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), Jamia Hamdard and MANU. A number of coaching institutes are also in operation in the country through society intervention or as private entity. Religious organizations run on *zakat* (charity) started residential coaching classes too. A *masjid* committee in Chennai, for instance, served as a model to set up IAS coaching centres; a couple of its candidates even qualified for government services. The budget for providing free and subsidised coaching for minority candidates was increased from Rs 8 crore in the previous year to Rs 20 crore for the year 2019-20 under the 'Support for students clearing prelims conducted by UPSC, SSC, State Public Service Commission's etc scheme.' The performance of JMI coaching centre has been very good this year. Coaching or holding hand is essential for CSE exams as it has become complex. **Nai Udaan** - Support for minority students clearing prelims exam conducted by UPSC, State PSC and SSC.

Reasons for Poor Success

The debate on success of minority candidates starts every year when civil service results are declared. In my opinion it is not the sole bench mark to determine the success and failure of an entire community or to judge a government's interventions for the development of the community at large. Development of a society or success of candidates from a society is not the sole responsibility of a government. There is need for all stake holders to contribute. There are a number of reasons:

1. Firstly, the government jobs aren't religion-specific. They are open to all. However, seats are reserved for SC, ST and OBC and also for Economically weaker sections as per national policy. Muslim candidates are also eligible for these reservations where ever applicable.

2. It should be noted that the majority of Muslims are not even eligible for these posts as very few of them are university graduates. Surveys suggest that roughly five per cent of Muslims in the country have successfully completed university education. Poor participation in Higher education by the Muslim Minorities and limited access to quality education with overall personality development are the major reasons behind the non-participation by the Muslim candidates in large numbers. Those who understand the need of higher education better, they have benefitted. Most Muslims are still in lower income groups. Thus, it causes their inability to provide quality education to children. Many of them depend upon local religious schools. The Muslim community should spread awareness about the need and importance of higher education as a key to their progress and upliftment. Appropriate measures should motivate Muslim students to pursue higher education in mainstream institutions and aim at higher targets

3. Success in competitive examination entails hard work and, often, multiple attempts. Economic constraints force

Muslim youth to start looking for employment opportunities early. This, in turn, prevents them from spending time in clearing the multi-layered CSE.

4. The analysis of CSE results of many years show that the possibility of selection of Muslim candidates in the UPSC examination remains the same as for any other social group. If more and bright students appear in large numbers, more students from community shall be selected. It must be reiterated that UPSC selection processes are unbiased and are completely merit based. There is a need to improve Muslims participation in the UPSC competitive selection process. The former Vice President of India, Hamid Ansari also said, "If Muslims apply in huge numbers for civil service examinations, more Muslims will qualify and their percentage will rise. This should be the focus of our community."

5. High birth rates cause distribution of earnings in livelihood, very less left for education and other development activities. Large families have the major economic fallouts. Further, many state governments have imposed the number of child norms for government jobs. This adversely impact the participation of Muslims in jobs.

6. Students preparing for UPSC/state public service commission's examinations are deprived of key infrastructural support for their sustenance when preparing over a number of years. Provide amenities including residential hostels like Ashram Shalas operated for Dalit, tribal and OBC students. Jains community provide facilities of accommodation and even coaching to its candidates at important centres and their candidates have high success rates. Communities specifically Wakf board, societal philanthropy, and CSR financing may create these facilities.

7. Proactive actions by the minority communities must be visible and available to bright and deserving candidates as a supplement to Government initiatives (free coaching, scholarships, etc), to motivate and hand hold the candidates to enable them to prepare well. Those who are already beneficiary of the success in UPSC posts may act as mentors.

8. Community must appreciate that the success only in civil service cannot be the sole criteria of achievements of youth and the confidence in the community. There is need to encourage, motivate and support community youth in seeking engagements in all sectors of economic and social arena.

9. I had talked to many parents and students in minority groups over last 10 years and learnt that the students wish to go to more certain lucrative professional courses viz engineering, medicine, law, and management instead of highly risky UPSC examinations.

10. As the country grows economically, job opportunities in the private sector have emerged. There is a great rush for private jobs in India and abroad. Many bright students through campus selections join them.

The Road Ahead

The competitive examination system has become so complex and competitive, and distinct from university examination that one has to be coached to write these examinations. Students work a number of attempts to write these examinations. I think a little help from outside will make a big difference if it is done in a scientific manner.

All examinations conducted by the UPSC and other recruiters for the Governments jobs where everyone, whether Hindus or Muslims, is treated equally. Whoever works hard will qualify. The UPSC is a very fair organisation and there is no partisan approach, communalism, or classicism in the UPSC. The boys and girls from the minority communities should work harder without fear and prejudice about the examination because they are competing with the best of the others.

There is a need to create an awareness amongst all undergraduate students by the universities, especially minority institutions, that the students should plan early and start preparing from the beginning. The earlier one decides, the better it is. Sit down, work hard from the day you enter the university. Success only comes through extra hard work. Those who are graduates should be encouraged to apply for these services.

There are bright and ambitious students in Muslim community who do not suffer from complexes. Universities may create a group of all such students and enable them through beyond the class inputs. University career counselling unit must ensure that all government job announcement is permeated to all students and they are encouraged to apply for them and coached. Universities may include beyond curriculum learning as part of student assessment. This may encourage the UG students of the arts and social sciences to read a lot of general books, biographies, and autobiographies and participate in leadership activities. University may inculcate amongst students the culture of group working in multicultural and gender sensitive groups.

Sachar committee report had come in 2006 and relied on the data older to that date. Since then, there is a paradigm shift in demography, education, technology, opportunities and work place need. Minority universities must research these issues and come up with new studies and data to draw right conclusion instead of continuing to get demotivated

Prof. D.P. Agrawal is a former Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), New Delhi, India. He is a 1970 Mechanical Engineering graduate of AMU. He taught at the Department of Mechanical Engineering in IIT Delhi.

There is an urgent need for Muslim intellectuals and philanthropists to form an organization so that people are made aware of all beneficial educational schemes, policies and programmes run by the government of India. Also, the Waqf Board of India should open modern educational institutions on its vacant lands so that Muslims can be educated and they can improve in the field of education. State Governments and Government of India need to pay special attention towards the education of Indian Muslims.

Lack of awareness and motivation, preference of soft options by very bright students like Medicine, Engineering, and other professional courses, preferring lucrative employment opportunities for supporting family economically and averting risk of failure in Civil Service Exams are some of the reasons for poor performance. In this situation, great responsibilities lie with the institutions associated with the community, religious leaders and its well-off members.

You need role models to inspire the young Muslim students. The achievers in all walks of life must commit to the society to create awareness and mentor the youth about the difficulty one faces to get the top place. Identify such mentors from AMU alumni groups, former bureaucrats, business persons, innovators and entrepreneurs. The religious leaders must heed the need of the hour to reform the various education, social, and cultural institutions they run. The importance and need of education, not just religious, but also modern and secular, must be stressed.

In addition to this, every child has the right to education under the RTI act. It requires that all parents must send their children including girls to schools. This will ensure that the voiceless should start to talk about their problems and dreams. It is not so important which school they finish, but their quality of life.

There is a need to reassess the benefits of various government schemes implemented for the improvement in education, health, employment and standard of living, bank and financial assistance and infrastructure development for the minority community and how they have helped to boost the social, educational and financial development of the Muslim community.

The Doctor At 24 Marris Road, Aligarh

"The government of U.P. decided to establish a department of the Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine at Aligarh. The charge was given to Dr. Butt"

In 1947, my mother Tahirah and her eldest sister Amina were the only two members of their family who migrated to Pakistan, leaving behind their parents, two brothers and a sister. Their parents continued to live alone in the university town of Aligarh. During the 1950s and early 1960s, my mother, with her children in tow, paid her parents a yearly visit, taking off from Walton at Lahore, landing in Delhi and then catching a train for Aligarh. My grandfather, whom we called Baba Jan, did not own a car and took us home from the railway station in a small cavalcade of cycle rickshaws. Near the Civil Lines, the cavalcade turned off Station Road onto Marris Road, which was flanked by large houses and the one at 24 Marris Road was built by my grandfather. My father was a senior officer in the Pakistan Army and for as long a duration that my mother was visiting her parents, a man from the government security masquerading as a fruit seller placed himself next to the gate.

Most of the large houses in Aligarh were called either Manzil, Haveli or Kothi – preceded by the name of the owner. However, my grandfather's house was named Ashiana. It was constructed during the 1930s and based on typical bungalow typology, having an arcaded porch in the front with a verandah on a raised plinth, high ceilings, and a long central corridor with sitting, dining and bedrooms on either side. The 3-acre compound was neglected because Baba Jan was not well-off after his retirement, but the most attractive feature of the house for us children was an adjoining mango orchard, a Persian Water Wheel that still drew water, and a large enclosed patio at the rear of the house along a deep verandah where we slept in summer.

Baba Jan's name was Ataullah Butt. His parents migrated from Kashmir to Sialkot, where he was born in the same locality as Allama Iqbal. He graduated from Lahore and was married around 1910 to Ameer-un-Nisa whose parents lived in Mochi Gate, Lahore. Her brother was Khalifa Abdul Hakim, who received his doctorate from Heidelberg University in Philosophy. For his degree in medicine, Dr. Butt went to the Friedrich-Wilhelms University in Berlin, which was established in 1810 and was one of the largest universities in Germany. Its archival records show that Ataullah Butt was registered on 30 April 1923 under registration number 4790/113. On 2 May 1924, he received his doctorate with the dissertation "On tuberculosis of the lacrimal gland." That same year his brother-in-law Khalifa Hakim received his doctorate with a dissertation on the "Metaphysics of Rumi." He was appointed as one of the founding professors of the Department of Philosophy at Osmania University on the recommendation of Dr. Allama Iqbal and remained as head of the department from 1925 till 1943.

The British disliked employing Indians who had been educated in Germany. One of the leading personalities who was associated with establishing the University in Aligarh was Sahabzada Shehzad Ahmed Khan, the brother of Sahabzada Aftab Ahmed Khan. The university was in need of a medical officer and when Dr. Butt returned to India, Shehzad Ahmed arranged for him to be appointed to this post in 1925 – and Dr. Butt established a first-class medical department for the healthcare of the students. The Pathan boys at the university often carried knives, and once a while, injured each other. They then had to come to Dr. Butt to be patched up but were very frightened in case they were reported. It would have led to them being expelled. However, Dr. Butt used to reassure them by saying, "It is not my job to report you but to repair you!"

That same year, the government of U.P. decided to establish a department of the Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine at Aligarh and, in 1927, awarded a recurring grant of Rs. 50,000/- per year. The charge was given to Dr. Butt and the department made rapid progress. A laboratory with X-ray equipment and a collection of pathological specimens enabled the students to receive training in the latest methods of diagnosing diseases. A museum of anatomy was established with a large collection of models from Europe covering all the systems of human anatomy and the department of Physiology was also well equipped.

In 1930, the department was upgraded to a college and the post of principal was created, separating the medical department from Tibbiya College. Concurrently, Dr. Butt was given exclusive charge of the college. Like many others, he would cycle to the college – but on a Raleigh that was the Cadillac of bicycles and envied by the students. Many nawabs and landed gentry had settled in Aligarh and one of them gifted Dr. Butt an Indian Chief motorcycle. It was a powerful machine that was built in America with a 4-stroke V-twin engine generating 1,000 cc. It probably also had a sidecar because my mother remembers that the entire family of two adults and five children used to ride on it.

By 1931-32 the syllabus of the Tibbiya College had matured into a five-year program that in the first year taught the fundamental principles; the second year covered the study of the origin and properties of simple drugs used in the practice of Unani medicine; the third year covered pathology, and in the fourth year, symptoms and treatment of diseases. The final year was devoted to the study of different types of fevers and the Unani medicine/cures contained in the book *The Canon of Medicine* by Ibn-e-Sina, the Persian polymath who died in 1027 AD. In addition, pharmacy classes were regularly held

in which compound drugs were prepared and examinations were conducted by the Board of Indian Medicine. 1932 was a defining year for the college when 14 students of the first batch completed the 5 years course. That same year, a Tibbiya College Hospital was also created.

During his tenure as pro-vice-chancellor during the 1920s, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed provided wholehearted support in establishing the department of Unani Medicine. When he returned to the university as Vice Chancellor in 1935, one of his top priorities was the construction of a new building for Tibbiya College but due to a shortage of funds, it took nearly ten years to be completed. A major milestone was achieved in 1939 when the government of the United Province appointed 25 Hakims qualified from the Tibbiya College for rural dispensaries in the province. That same year, the foundation of a new building for the Tibbiya College Hospital was laid. Another milestone was in 1943 when the government allowed courses of study and examinations to be regulated and controlled by the Academic Council of the university.

Dr. Butt was the longest-serving principal of the college and ultimately retired in 1949. He then devoted his life to serving the poor and needy. Writing on his connections with Aligarh, Muslim Saleem says in his blog that Dr. Butt loved humanity as a whole and kids in particular. He remembers a septuagenarian Dr. Butt with a smiling visage often distributing ‘lemon drops’ to the locality kids. He was also a great philanthropist and after retiring, scores of people were given alms by him when he opened a clinic at Baradwari, near the landmark of the Ghanta Ghar.

A cousin who was more than me in age and maturity recalls that his “[...] maternal grandfather was a devout man, who said his prayers five times a day throughout his life, and made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He was also a man of infinite sweetness, tolerance and patience, who taught his brood of grandchildren that there were to be no limits, in his presence, on what could and could not be discussed. ‘Baba jaan, I’ve decided I don’t believe in God,’ a serious little boy could say to him, and he would reply, ‘Is that so? Come and sit down here beside me and explain to me how you arrived at such a foolish conclusion.’ His tone might have been gruff, but his eyes were twinkling. Openness: it was always openness with Dr. Butt. And we learned from that twinkle in his eyes that it was all right to push, and test, and try to open the universe a little more, even before we knew how.”

It seems Dr. Butt had mellowed with age like many of us do, but in his early years at Aligarh it was a different story. He had a heavy voice that carried far when he was scolding a student and most were afraid of him. During the 1950s, when my grandparents came to stay with us at Rawalpindi, General Ayub Khan, who had been a student at Aligarh in the 1920s when Dr. Butt was the Medical Officer, came to pay his respects. He later confessed to my mother that, “*Abhi bhi doctor sahib ki awaz sun kay dar jata hun.*” [“Even now when

I hear the voice of doctor sahib, I get frightened”]. My father’s sisters first met my mother while she was studying at Lady Hardinge Medical College in Delhi and told my father that they had met this lovely person who would make a good match for him. However, when he came to know who her father was, his first reaction was, “*Mein Dr. Butt ki kisi beti se nahi shadi karun ga.*” [“I am not going to marry any daughter of Dr. Butt”].

My father was from Lucknow but had strong links with Aligarh. Apart from having studied at AMU, his grandfather Syed Jafar Husain who was an engineer was an associate of Sir Syed and had supervised much of the initial construction of the university buildings. Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, another associate of Sir Syed lived in Aftab Manzil. As a Trustee of the Aligarh Muslim University, he also supervised the construction of many of its charming buildings and hostels, and from 1924 to 1926 was its second Vice-Chancellor. His daughter was married to Sir Ross Masood the grandson of Sir Syed and his son Anis Ahmed Khan was married to Razia, the eldest sister of my father. Zafar Omar the author of Neeli Chattri, the first detective novel in Urdu, gave his house the same name as his book. His son Shaukat Omar was married to Jamila, another sister of my father.

My grandparents migrated to Pakistan in 1967 as well as all their offspring except the youngest son Mahmood Butt. After Independence, he transferred from the Royal Indian Air Force to the ICS and was honest and upright. While serving as administrator of the Municipal Corporation at Allahabad, he recovered the arrears of electricity and water bills from Anand Bhavan, the family home of the Nehru Dynasty which were outstanding since Independence. He ultimately became the first Muslim chief secretary of U.P. and after four-and-a-half successful years in the office, he relinquished the post due to differences with Sanjay Gandhi. Mahmood inherited the house at 24 Marris Road but sold it when he moved to Bangalore.

Dr. Ataulah Butt passed away in 1969 in Rawalpindi and his funeral was attended by many old students of Aligarh University.

Abridged from:

<https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2022/10/10/the-doctor-at-24-marris-road-aligarh/>

Shahid Rafique, MD

Citizen's Physician, Literary Group Founder, Multi-Talented, Adventurous

Who transformed Atlanta's cultural and literary landscape in a significant way? One name always will come to top. That is none other than Dr. Shahid Rafique. Before 2000, we had to wait for international artists to come to Atlanta and perform. It used to be once or twice a year event and there was a long & anxious wait for artists' visa and travel. With the arrival of Dr. Shahid Rafique in 1999, this situation was completely changed. Dr. Rafique and his dedicated colleagues not only consistently organized literary/musical events 3 to 4 times in a year but also provided local talents a forum to perform. This allowed Atlanta to develop and tap into its own pool of talents. He also formed an organization that has served the literary needs of Atlanta and around for the last two decades.

Dr. Shahid Rafique was born in Lahore, Pakistan in 1952. He came from a learned and scholarly family. His father, Mr. Rafique Ahmed, was a Banker by profession. His siblings are all well-educated and well-settled in Lahore.

Dr. Rafique obtained his MBBS degree from Dow Medical College Karachi in 1977. He completed his residency from SUNY at Buffalo in 1995. Moderate weather, growing city and job opportunities in Atlanta attracted him. Dr. Rafique credits his friend the late Dr. Khalid Goheer for the help in finding his first job.

His arrival in Atlanta was a great boost for literature/art enthusiasts. Dr. Rafique narrates that he was always involved in literary, cultural and social activities. He used to have music programs and Mushairas in Abu Dhabi quite regularly, often at his home. So, once he settled in his new house in 1999, he started inviting some friends to their home and had a small gathering performing music and reading poetry.

That is how Bazm-e-Adab Atlanta was founded. There were no formal bylaws or official launch. The individuals who were regular part of its gatherings in the beginning were Dr. Mohammed Afzal Shahid, Mr. Tahir Sayal, Mr. Qadeer Siddiqui (who used to play *tabla*), Dr. Waqas Khwaja and Mr. Jehangir Rathore. A couple of years later, Asif and Sadaf Farooqui, Sadaf's father Mr. Ghulam Mohiuddin and her mother also joined. That took the Bazm-e-Adab to the next level. Subsequently, Mr. Mohammed Inamullah and Dr. Farzana Bharmal were introduced to Bazm. That invigorated the Bazm and the program attendance increased from 15-20 guests to 50-75 guests at every event. Mr. Masarrat Hussain, Dr. Durshi Zuberi, Mr. Zafar Muzaffar, Late Mr. Shehbazi, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, Mr. Syed Waseem and Rukhsana Waseem, Mr. Zubair Asmi and Mrs. Huma Asmi joined, and they have been ardent supporters ever since. Mr. Mohsin Ashfaq very graciously let Bazm use his office for its sessions for 2-3 years. The Bazm sessions included reading poetry, prose and singing Ghazals. Singers included Mr. Azhar Mahmood, Shaheen Siddiqui, of course Dr. Shahid Rafique and anyone else who wanted to perform. The focus has always been on literary

quality. Dr. Rafique recalls his most cherished programs: Shagoofon-Ki-Shaam (2005), A Tribute to Mehdi Hassan (2013), Mahir-e-Nafsiyat (written by Dr. Shahid Rafique himself), Do Alami Mushaira (2017) and Half Plate in Atlanta (2021), among others.

"I was introduced to the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta (AAAA) through the annual Mushaira. I don't remember who invited me or I saw an advertisement. Later on, Inamullah invited me to attend the AAAA meetings. I whole-heartedly agreed with the AAAA mission. I was also impressed with the stature of individuals who were leading the association in Atlanta. They were so dedicated and selfless. Mr. Hasan Kamal, Dr. Wasi Siddiqui, Dr. Rasheed Ahmad, Dr. Asif Taufiq, Dr. Farzana Bharmal, Mr. Yasir Nomani, Mrs. Sadaf Farooqui, Mr. Umar Farooq, Dr. Shoeb Ahmad and many others are some of the individuals who have led the spirit of Aligarh in Atlanta. Most recently Mr. Shahid Ali has infused new blood in the AAAA veins with his vision and dynamic energy. Dr. Naushad Ghilzai, Mr. Nadeem Fatmi, Mr. Nawaid Tanzeem and several others have joined over the last few years and are doing remarkable work," recalls Dr. Rafique when asked about his association with AAAA. He rates the Federation of AAA 2006 Atlanta Convention as one of the most interesting and rewarding events in which everyone helped President Dr. Farzana Bharmal to hold a successful event of that scale. Dr. Rafique credits the auspices of Aligarh Association for the opportunity to meet and listen stalwarts like Himayat Ali Shair, Zia Mohiuddin, Iftikhar Arif, Yasmeen Hameed, Dr. Pirzada Qasim, and others. He appreciates Mr. Hasan Kamal who is again visiting Pakistan to coordinate and facilitate students' enrollment in Ph.D. programs in USA.

Dr. Shahid Rafique's contribution to the Atlanta community is immense. His organization Bazm-e-Adab is still active and has a loyal audience of about 150 individuals. This organization is credited for holding 60 literary programs of ghazal, songs, drama, music, and comedy over 22 years! This is no small achievement. These quality programs were well received and awaited by the audience. In addition to literary activities, Dr. Rafique also worked on establishing an Urdu library in Atlanta. Through his personal efforts, he has already brought over 1,000 books. Despite a few disappointing attempts, Dr. Rafique is all confident that he will find a suitable space to house those books and his dream of an Urdu library will become a reality one day.

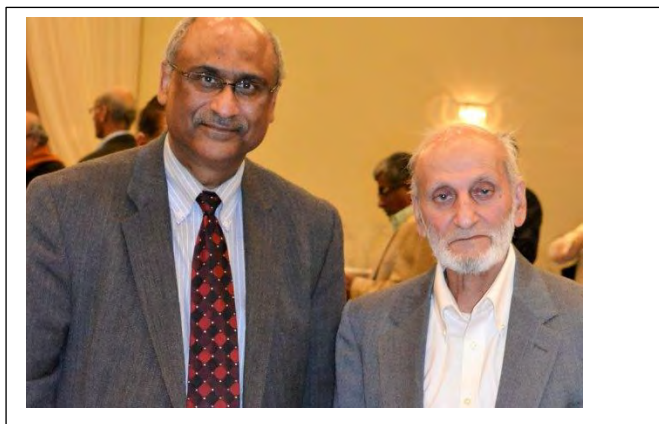
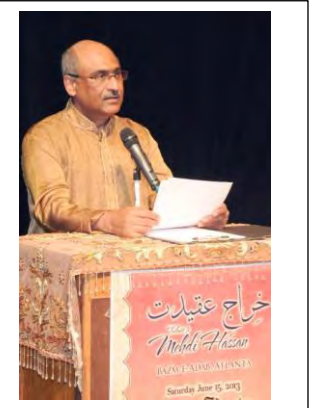
As medical care provider, Dr. Rafique's patient care has been par excellence! He currently works for a medical group in Morrow and lives with his wife Saba Ahmad in McDonough, GA. Ms. Ahmad is a Clinical Lab Scientist by profession. She is an amateur artist (painter) and loves poetry and music.

Atlanta is really blessed to have Dr. Shahid Rafique. He and his dedicated colleagues have certainly transformed the Atlanta literary landscape. His pioneering work will continue to inspire

and attract literary talents. He has worked across organizations and communities which has generated respect, harmony, and goodwill. For AAAA, his footprints are everywhere – be it yearly mushaira, annual convention, silver-jubilee event,

community gatherings, or guest receptions. His ever-reachable medical care will be hard to find. He is surely an asset to the community!

-Editor



L to R, Top to Bottom: With his wife Ms. Saba Ahmad
 In Taleem-e-Balighaan Stage Play (second from right)
 In Darbaar-e-Mughaliya Cast Intro (third from right)
 Performing Qawwali, Paying Tribute to Mehdi Hasan
 In Do Alami Mushaira Drama (forth from left)
 With Syed Waseem in Eid Milan Picnic
 With Dr. Zaki Kakoravi in a Literary Event

Siddons Union Club



Sir Syed's Vision for Aligarh Muslim University Students Union

Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Badshah, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the first educationalist who realized and visualized around 1857 that only Modern Education was the sole and most powerful weapon which could empower his community with improved living standards and walk side by side with the other educated elite of not only his country but worldwide. In 1870 Sir Syed returned from London and thereafter he never looked back. The mission of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan under the banner of Aligarh Movement changed the future of Muslims and he established Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875. Professor Henry George Impey Siddons was the first principal of M.A.O. College.

Apart from imparting good and modern education to his community, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his son Syed Mahmood, projected the college as the Cambridge of India. All traditions and customs of University of Cambridge students were introduced by Syed Mahmud to the students of MAO College which were effectively imbibed and are now referred to as "Aligarh Tahzeeb". Also Sir Syed wanted to inculcate courage, braveness and fearlessness among the college students who were expected to be the future Indian societies at large. Thus, he visualized and decided introducing Students' Debating Society sort of thing in the college on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge Universities in shape of the "College Union Club", on the same principles of Cambridge Union Society and Oxford Union Society, where the scholars of not only India but the world used to have debates of rich variety and high intellect.

In 1883, Syed Mahmud traveled England to recruit the next Principal for the College and he requested his close friend of Cambridge, Theodore Beck, to join the college and he came to Aligarh and joined as the Principal. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Theodore Beck became familiar to each other by exchanging views. Prof. Beck easily understood the vision and idea of Sir Syed for the establishment of a second Cambridge in India. Under such state of mind and wishes of Sir Syed, Professor Theodore Beck was all set to justify his appointment and committed himself to bring the stature of Cambridge to Aligarh. Eventually, the College Union Club was established which was expected to be instrumental in making the MAO College as the Oxford of East or the Cambridge of India. Thus, on 26th August 1884 'College Union Club' was founded by Professor Theodore Beck, and it was named after the first Principal of the MAO College, Henry George Impey Siddons and was known as "Siddons Union Club" to honor him. Initially, it began with the activities of debates in Strachey Hall, but later the Club was shifted to a Bungalow.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan inaugurated and presided over the Siddons club's first public debate held on November 13, 1884. The topic of the debate was - The spread of female education is to be desired by home tuition, not through schools and colleges. It was the result of this debate that ultimately the Women's College in the University was established. The importance of this club can be understood very well by the variety and nature of the topics of debates that were covered and discussed like: Female Education, Pardah System, Present Marriage System among the Mohammedan of India, Mohammedans shall never rise again, Indian Universities have proved a failure, this house prefers Indian Costume to English Dress, etc.

Siddons Union Club was the "Dream" of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and he gave a great importance to this club since it was his wish to develop a strong connection between MAO College and University of Cambridge. Sir Syed was himself the Chief Patron of the Siddons Union Club. The prestigious club was the backbone of Aligarh Movement as it was the main factor for unifying the Intellectuals, Thinkers, Writers, Speakers, Politicians, Kings of the world with Aligarh Muslim University during that period.

Later on, this union club was extended after the donation of Rs. 3,000 from His Highness the Nawab of Maler Kotla and from Maulvi Ghulam Jabbar Sahib of Hyderabad and from many other well-wishers of the College.

On 22nd February 1905, Theodore Morison, the third principal of M.A.O. College, laid the foundation of "The Siddons Union Debating Hall", the debating chamber, which consisted of a debating hall, a library and a reading room. It was inaugurated by Raja Mahmudabad on 17th April, 1911.

In 1920, when the M.A.O. College became the University, the Club was renamed as "Muslim University Students' Union Club". Until 1952, the Vice-Chancellor was always the President of Club, whereas, the student body elected the Vice President, Librarian and Hon. Secretary, with 10 cabinet members. In 1952-53, a new Union was established which came to be known as "AMU Students' Union", which is said to be the first Official Student Union of the World. The entire structure of the debating union changed. The Vice Chancellor became the Patron; the position of Librarian was abolished in 1958 and replaced by that of the Vice-President.

AMU Students' Union adopted a constitution of its own and formally registered as an Official Union of the University. The Siddons Union Club remained suspended since 1945 and, finally in 1960-61, the Historical Club vanished.

It was the Siddons Union Club due to which Aligarh Movement traveled into different countries and different parts of Indian Sub-Continent. It was also important because of its International Recognition, a platform for the intellectuals of Aligarh Muslim University to represent in the different Universities of the world. Siddons Union Club, Students' Debating Society, could develop ties with the other Students' Debating Societies of the prominent universities of the world but its incorporation into AMU Students' Union led to discontinuing the relations with other Students' Debating Societies' of world's best universities.

Aligarh Muslim University student body was once considered to be the trendsetter in the cultural, educational and social movements of Muslims and rightly became a great institution of learning, which is not true anymore. Regrettably, it is now a difficult and nearly impossible task to refurbish and restore the values and ethos of Student's Union at Aligarh. AMU Student's Union was an extremely progressive, forward thinking and innovative institution for generations. Reform movements, progressive ideas, and dynamic thoughts pertaining to our national identity and existence, were initiated and accomplished in this institution.

Unfortunately, the Student's Union at Aligarh went through a very gloomy phase with a shaky future, mostly due to its own conduct and performance. But it is wisely said that every cloud has a silver lining.

On 7th July, 2015, some serious and sensible students began a struggle for the revival of Siddons Union Club as an Independent Debating Society. They campaigned for two years tirelessly for the club. Thanks to the reputed news website *Scroll.in* to notice their struggle and to give them a voice at a national level. The issue of Siddons emerged as a major cause of the time. At every corner of Aligarh, Students, Teachers, And Alumni were discussing the Siddons Union Club.

The Revivalist Team met the Honorable Vice Chancellor, Lt. Gen. Zameeruddin Shah, to discuss the matter of Siddons Revival. He himself studied the case of its separation from AMU Students' Union and finally agreed to revive the prestigious club on 27th March, 2017. It was the day when Sir Syed died in 1898 and it was a befitting tribute and the day was dedicated for the revival of Siddons Union Club to the Great Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

The Honorable Vice Chancellor, Lt. Gen Zameeruddin Shah asked the revivalist team to draft the instructions of the separation and Constitution for Siddons Union Club. Revivalist Team took 1 month and 5 days in writing the constitution of the newly revived Siddons Union Club. Constitution and other related documents were reviewed by the Honorable Vice Chancellor from time to time. Amidst the process of its revival, the Honorable Vice Chancellor inaugurated the Siddons Union Club. The Historical Function for the restoration of Siddons Union Club was held on 11th April, 2017 by the AMU Students' Union. Revivalist Team was honored by the Honorable Vice Chancellor. Lt. Gen. Zameeruddin Shah, made the revival of Siddons Union Club his priority and gave a full support to the Revivalist Team in their endeavors for reviving the true vision of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

As a reminder to all, let us hope that there will be another student in AMU like that of Zakir Hussain Khan belonging to the year 1918, who was not only the Vice President of the then Siddons Union Club, but also, later became the Vice Chancellor of his own Alma mater and finally served as the President of India as Dr. Zakir Hussain. Let us hope that the present Vice Chancellor of AMU, Prof. Tariq Mansoor will further accentuate the revival process and the ultimate glory of Siddons Union Club will be restored *status quo*.

- **Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Badshah is a Professor at King Saud University, Riyadh*



L to R: The Siddons Union Debating Hall Exterior. The Hall Interior.



Educational Status of Muslim Indians

Razi Raziuddin*, Ph.D., Frederick, Maryland, USA

Educational status of Indian Muslims is at the lowest tier of education ladder of India. Even, below the lowliest categorized Dalits/ SCs. Quite shocking, isn't it? Ironically, nearly same was the situation at the time of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan - a one hundred-fifty years ago, with the only exception that Dalits/SCs were not taken into any consideration of accountability then.

Ironical and distressing as it may sound, especially when a community with a baggage of pride of ruling the very same subcontinent for almost a millennium, now finding itself at the last level of progress.

This "pathetic state of downslide" compels many in raising genuine (multiple) questions;

- what was the status of Indian Muslim masses, in general?
- Were they financially, educationally, professionally, or socially at the top tier(s) of the existing society of their times, during those so-called periods of Muslim rule?
- Or, did their status started sliding down gradually along with the decay and shrinking of the Muslim rule?
- Was their status same, or different in non-Muslim-ruled States within the subcontinental India of their time?
- Or, whether only a certain small section of Muslims was always in good condition, economically, professionally, socially, while the vast majority of their community was no different than the vast majority of other existing communities?

These set of (above) queries -if resolved analytically - may then tell us far more honestly the reasons and root- causes of why we are in this state of backwardness today that we are.

This, in fact dawned upon one old man - Syed Ahmad Khan - after experiencing the sudden collapse of an Empire, and the follow up devastation and destruction of the society, Muslims in particular.

Post-1857, brought before him and to a select few others to look into scientific reasons of our inability and weaknesses to face the challenges of a fast-changing world around them.

Being a man of reason, and of rational thinking, it became quite apparent to him and his legion of wisemen (Hali, Shibli, in particular) that the single-most handicap facing the community is in not being equipped with the knowledge of modern disciplines, especially of sciences and technical skills associated with it. This, clear edge that the European masters possessed made them far better competitor in every endeavor of human imagination.

His was not any unique discovery. Long time ago, exactly the same secret was uncovered by the then Muslims of the Arabian lands when they came in close contacts with the Europeans of their time - resulting in turning their semi-Nomadic societies into the fountainhead of knowledge and learning leading the entire world - that were those shining era, popularly known as the Golden Age of Islam.

Syed Ahmad Khan's imagination touched upon that spirit of renaissance and awakening. And thereafter he embarked upon this road of "reconstruction of a new modern Muslamaan" with the knowledge of Quran in one hand, while the knowledge of modern disciplines in his other hand. This "ad-mix" was his answer - resulting in the establishment of Mohammad Anglo Oriental college, which later became the Aligarh Muslim University. This institution became the springboard for educating the Indian Muslim youths.

Approximately same time, two lesser but equally powerful educational movements also sprang in the West-South India and in the East-India - while in the Western-Southern India, it was led by Badruddin Tayyabji - later resulting in hundreds of Anjuman-e-Islam schools and professional colleges; and in the Eastern part, led by Justice Ameer Ali under his Mohammadan Education Conference educating Bengali and Assamees Muslims.

These movements were the first of their kind to change the landscape of Muslims' education. They had hoped that later generations will take these models to replicate elsewhere, invest in education and sciences so that they excel and compete with other communities on equal terms.

But, tragically, post- Syed Ahmad, Justice Ameer Ali, Badruddin Tayyabji, most of the leadership of Muslims paid less and less attention on investing in the educational uplift of vast poor Muslim masses, in female education, in skill development, in social reform, etc. - rather than in all this, their focus mostly remained in identity and community politics, in Hindu-Muslim issues, into political discourses, pursuit of power. Educational uplift of entire two-generations was totally lost at this alter of feudal upper-class Muslim politics resulting in devastating consequences for the vast majority of the middle, lower-middle, and poor Muslims.

In post-Independent India too, more or less the same trend was followed - we invested our precious emotional, mental, financial pool more and more into secondary matters than investing into education and skills.

Unfortunately, in absence of any reservations for our disadvantaged class, community's non-investment in education/skill development, governments' bias and difference -altogether - has made us to be what we are now - at the lowest leg of the ladder.

If this one hundred-fifty years tell us anything -it is simply this; communities are built with heavy investment in them - with the single-most focus on their educational uplift, their skill development, in making them excel and compete. A minority, world over, which excels has learned this same magic hard way. We know what we have to do, but we lack the will to do, we

lack vision to proceed, we lack collective spirit to come together for our own redemption.

In poet Allama Iqbal's words;

“Naqsh haiN sub na-tamaam, khoon-e-jigar ke be-ghair
naghma hai sauda-e-khaam, khoon-e-jigar ke be-ghair”

**Dr. Razi Raziuddin, Scientist and community activist, Frederick, Maryland, USA*



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2022 AAAA Activities and Event Photographs



Top to Bottom: Row 1- AAAA Members with Visiting Indian Journalist Arfa Khanum Sherwani. Row 2 & 3—Eid Milan Picnic

2022 AAAA Activities and Event Photographs (Cont'd)



Top to Bottom: Eid-ul-Adha Dinner with Sukhan (A Pune-Based Ghazal & Sufi Music Group) at Legacy Theater, Alpharetta, GA

2022 AAAA Activities and Event Photos (Cont'd)



Top to Bottom: Row 1, 2, 3 & 4 Left Eid Milan Picnic at Pinckneyville Park, GA. Row 4 Right 2022 FAAA Annual Convention

2022 AAAA Activities and Event Photographs (Cont'd)



Top to Bottom: Eid Milan Picnic at Pinckneyville Park, GA

2022 AAAA Activities and Event Photographs (Cont'd)



Top to Bottom: Eid-ul-Adha Dinner with Sukhan (A Pune-Based Ghazal & Sufi Music Group) at Legacy Theater, Alpharetta, GA

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ROLE OF ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY IN MY LIFE

WASI M. SIDDIQUI, M.SC.(ALIG), Ph.D. (RUTGERS), Atlanta

*Yeh Mera Chaman Hai Mera Chaman
Mein Apne Chaman Ka Bulbul Hoon!*

Yes, I am a proud alumnus of Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh, India who was a gold medalist in M.Sc. Botany in 1959.

When Dr Rasheed Ahmad approached me about my experiences at Aligarh, I was reluctant, first thinking that some may interpret it as self-praise. Since they are true facts and I wanted to touch the younger generation, I ventured to put my thoughts and experiences back to almost sixty years.

It was a time of great upheaval, just 10 years earlier India became independent from Britain and the Pakistan partition had occurred. Everything was new, and choices for a young man and what direction to take was both unclear and exciting. I decided to attend Aligarh Muslim University. AMU has been part of our family going back to my father and grandfather graduating in Education and Law respectively. My late grandfather was roommate of Late Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan. A man known for his extreme honesty that helped establish the State of Pakistan. They lived in S.S West of Sir Syed Hall.

My life at AMU started at Morrison Court to Mumtaz Hostel and finally to single seated room in Aftab Hostel. I had the pleasure of living in Aftab with well-known luminaries like former Vice President of India Mr Hamid Ansari and Dr Abidullah Ghazi, who I met later at Harvard where he and his wife were Ph.D. scholars in Islamic Studies and who authored numerous Islamic books in Urdu.

In 1958, I was selected as the University Badminton Captain and participated in inter-university matches in Jaipur. I was later appointed as Gymnasium Secretary, which had seven clubs under it.

I was fortunate to have Late Dr Abrar Mustafa Khan as my Advisor and Mentor in Plant Pathology. In July 1959, a leave vacancy for Science Lecturer at University Tibbiya College got me employed. Six months later, I was appointed as Assistant Professor in Botany Department of AMU. Responsibilities kept coming my way.

Captain Hameed, Provost of NRSC (Non-Resident Students Club) appointed me as President of NRSC-B. Later I became President of NRSC-A. Syed Waseem Ahmed was the table tennis captain. He and his wife Rukhsana are our good family friends for over forty years. During the summer I was selected for NCC (ROTC) officer's training in Rajasthan where I was selected as Best Cadet and Parade Commander with a rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

In the Botany Department, I was teaching three classes: Pre University, M.Sc. First year and First year Botany for Women's College. Abdullah Hall students came to the department for my lecture and labs. For a bachelor young man, it was a pleasant experience. During this time, I was given a place to stay in Warden's Room of Jubilee Hostel in VM Hall free of cost. Proctorial duties during Aligarh Exhibition were also given to me to work on.

During 1959-61, I played a role of eligible Bachelor to my advantage. Finally, on October 26, 1962 I was married to Kamla Yahya, d/o Late Mohammad Yahya ADM posted in Bijnore. After my marriage, Kamla moved with me and my sister Zeenat to our house Falak Numa on Marris Road Aligarh. Our first child Shahid (Bobby) Siddiqui was born on November 14, 1963 same as Nehru's Birthday celebrated all over India as Children's Day.

During 1957-61 a retired ICS officer Mr. Badruddin Tayyabji took over as Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University. He had an imposing personality who used to ride around the campus on his motorcycle. He would pay surprise visits to early morning classes to check in for on-time instructions. Many professors with old habits were called on the carpet and taken to task. Naturally he was not very popular with the faculty but was lovingly admired by the students because of his help in their legitimate complaints. The District Magistrate of Aligarh was an IAS Officer much junior in seniority and rode around on VC's motorcycle on his back seat.

University Union elections played an important role with lots of speeches & pamphlets, both pro and anti, slogans and the like. The winning party used to take a Janaza procession of the vanquished as a playful taunting celebration. Abidullah Ghazi, who was my Aftab Hostel mate, ran for Union Presidentship with eloquent, thoughtful speeches. His victory was widely celebrated when he was elected President of the Student Union.

Annual Aligarh Exhibition plays important role in the social calendar of AMU students. Eating halwa pratha, kababs and the like, plus hot teas loitering around exhibition grounds chasing Abdullah Hall students popularly known as "work marna" was a favorite pastime of young university male students. An exchange of smile was considered as a big reward for the effort.

It may not be out of place to mention the sacrifices made by my parents and the help we got from AMU. My late father Mohammad Zaki was serving the UP Education Department as District Inspector of Schools, earning a meagre salary of

Rs 800 per month. During 1958-1961 I was studying at AMU for my M.Sc. along with my younger brothers Razi Siddiqi and Fasih Siddiqi studying for their degrees in Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering respectively. My father used to send me Rs. 400 each month for fee and needs of the three of us. It was difficult for us to imagine how our parents managed to live with four of our younger siblings on the remaining salary. It has been a real blessing that AMU was able to provide a good education at much lower fee than anywhere else in India. Aligarh has been a SAVIOR for Muslim Ummah as promised by our founder Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

My parents not only supported education of their own children but had children of relatives complete their education by living with us. There were at least seven others in this category. In view of the lifelong dedication of our parents to higher education all siblings pooled their resources to appeals from former Vice Chancellor Lieut. General Zameeruddin Shah for dedicating a fully computerized Auditorium in Education Department in the name of Mohammad Zaki and Raisa Zaki Auditorium. During the past five years the facility has been a source of inspiration and benefit to the graduates.

In addition to providing excellent education, AMU taught me some important rules of disciplined life. Being NCC Lieutenant made me punctual and on time. Captainship of Badminton and Gymnasium Clubs helped me reach balanced judgement in solving conflicts. Presidentship of NRSC A & B made me decisive and maintain control of mischief mongers. All the above have enabled me to control my emotions and be cool. Basically keep calm and carry on at the job at hand.

Everyone loves their own alma-mater. The feeling of being an Aligarian is very different. As soon as you meet an Aligarh Alumnus, there is a feeling of great affinity, brotherhood or sisterhood and the unique love of the institution, Namak Paray, Barfi, and Café De Phoons. This love and nostalgia is more evident in older alumni however.

At the University, in addition to teaching and my extra-curricular activities, I was doing research with Dr Abrar M Khan. I received a few scholarships for research abroad including University of Paris in France. My father did not want me to go there, so I accepted an opportunity as a Research Assistant at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

So finally, AMU granted me leave for research abroad. I departed for Rutgers University on January 15 1965 leaving my wife and our now two year son with my parents in India. Unfortunately, it was my last meeting with my father. He passed away on April 14, 1966 when I was preparing for oral examination defending my Ph.D. thesis.

In closing, I may add that Aligarh Muslim University plays a role of panacea for young men and women especially belonging to Muslim Ummah providing the life, culture, and

traditions of Muslim families in giving full freedom to those desiring to be the best they can be.

**Dr. Wasi Siddiqui is one of the founders of AAAA and served its first President in 1984. Dr. Siddiqui and his late wife Mrs. Kamala Siddiqui have been among the constant patrons of AAAA. Dr. Siddiqui has been AAAA BOT Chairman from 2012-214.*

AAAA Presidents

No.	Term	Name
1	1984	Dr. Wasi Siddiqui
2	1985	S. Hasan Kamal
3	1986	Khursheed Ahmad
4	1987	Sarwat Weston
5	1988	Mushir Siddiqui
6	1989	Rukhsana Waseem
7	1990	Dr. Fazlur Rahman
8	1991-92	Afzar Haque
9	1993-95	M. Abdul Qayum
10	1996-97	Dr. Jalal Zuberi
11	1998-01	Siraj Karatela
12	2002-03	M. Inamullah
13	2004-06	Dr. Farzana Bharmal
14	2007-09	Dr. Rasheed Ahmad
15	2010-11	Sadaf Farooqui
16	2011-2013	Yasir Nomani
17	2014-2019	Dr. Asif Taufiq
18	2019-2021	Dr. Shoeb Ahmad
19	2022-	Shahid Ali



AMU: A Youth's Perspective

Saad Tanzeem*, Atlanta

I first volunteered at the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta knowing very little. Sure, I have heard things about the Association from my father who went to the University and always spoke good things about it, but I was curious about the strong message and values the Association promotes. I was especially curious about the people. When I went to my first couple events and got to know the people on the board, I found they were very humble, kind, and understanding despite the generation gap. I had great conversations with all of them and was left with quite the favorable first impression. In each and every subsequent event I participated in, I was consistently treated with kindness and respect. A particular incident I recall was when I was walking into the building of one of the conventions in which I invited a friend to help set up the decorations. He was politely welcomed by the board and encouraged to continue coming to the events despite not directly being related to the organization.

I remember how I used to help sell Urdu poetry books for the wonderful poets invited to the Aligarh conferences. During the FAAA federation event, I was a cameraman. With this role set for me, I was given the opportunity to capture many exciting moments that were realized by the people. Although it was not something I was entirely used to, I did greatly enjoy the experience. I especially remember the outstanding turnout at the event with many new people from all walks of life who I got to meet and who welcomed me. The board acknowledged me for my volunteering efforts for the Association, demonstrated by when I actually received a letter and gift, which made me ecstatic. This proves that one of the greatest parts of the organization is the people who represent it. I have met through the Association many people who have helped guide me and mentor me throughout my teenage years. There were doctors, researchers, and other professionals I met that gave me advice on my medical journey and encouraged me to reach out whenever I needed to. Something worth noting is that my father is the kindest person I have ever known, so any organization he actively participates in is likely to instill that same sense of kindness in its people.

I eventually became a recurring volunteer at the Association working on and setting up multiple events. As a 19-year-old youth that has worked with Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta for many years now, I have really seen the community flourish. I feel as though the community has been growing over time with different people and especially more of the youth (around my same age) being involved over time. This has allowed for more bonding between people with similar interests and values.

This is the true spirit of Aligarh. This is the spirit to establish a sense of community that invites people to learn more about it. Whether it is Urdu poetry or debate or music, many aspects of the culture are shared with others. Political issues are addressed in a way to raise awareness (for instance, protesting for rights in Kashmir). Fundraisers are also initiated in order to actually make a difference in people's lives. I have heard of money raised being used to help with the education of people overseas who cannot afford to do so on their own. Since education is so valuable in modern society, this is a crucial effort that demonstrates generosity by the Association. I can also sense the advocacy of freedom of people despite religion or race.

During COVID-19, I saw how the organization continued to stay strong despite the difficulties. In fact, it was in the midst of the pandemic (after vaccines were prevalent) that the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta experienced some of its strongest growth. This was seen in the IN the Eid picnic held in 2022 where many people came, those from Aligarh and not related to Aligarh alike, including politicians running for office supporting the Muslim presence. This was a wonderful event with great food and stalls with activities. I recall taking videos of the wonderful singing and pictures of the people and treats we enjoyed.

In the future, I feel as though the Aligarh Alumni Association of Atlanta has even more potential. There can be more plans for the youth to continue to integrate, as eventually the youth are the ones who will take over the Association and lead it to new heights. I believe we have only reached the tip of the iceberg. From the main part of the Association, which is the community of people who run it as well as those who come to the events for fundraising or entertainment, there is growth yet to come. Truly, it reminds me of the Aligarh Muslim University anthem:

*Jo abr yahañ se utthega, wo sarey jahañ par barsega
Har jooy-e-rawaah par barsega, har koh-e-garaah par
barsega Har sarw-o-saman par barsega, har dasht-o-
daman par barsega*

The cloud rising up from here
Will rain down on the whole world
It will rain on every rivulet and stream And on every
mountain heavysset
It will rain down on every cypress

**Saad Tanzeem is a pre-med Cell and Molecular Biology major student of the 7-year BS/MD program at Augusta University graduating in 2028 from the Medical College of Georgia.*



ALIG: Support a School

Saad Hashmi*, Malmö, Sweden

“When a nation becomes devoid of arts and learning, it invites poverty. And, when poverty comes, it brings in its wake, a thousand crimes.” - Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

ALIG, A Literacy Initiative Group, formed in 2008 by alumni of the Aligarh Muslim University, considered the above, one of many gems that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan left for us to be guided with, as a guiding principle for the change it wanted to set in motion. A movement to provide the much-needed initiative in education, an effort enabling work on measures to alleviate poverty through education & training, a drive to make our nation among the best in the world.

We organize means, pool resources, and synergize assets to enable our nation's march toward being a global force to reckon with. With the vision to provide quality education as our mainstay, we have conceptualized on having **‘business acumen’ in ‘philanthropic activities’**. The idea is to develop a well-managed, professional & sustainable organization. We believe strongly that a synergy of business insight, professionalism & philanthropy reaps rich dividends over a long-term horizon. ALIG operates under verticals of Education, Health & Skill. Our flagship program under the education head is called, **Support A Government School Program**.

Provision of education, almost immediately, elicits a reaction to start schools to teach and institutions to train. These, however, entail huge expenses and tedious development processes including infrastructure. ALIG approached the issue differently, drawing inspiration from the analogy of a computer's hardware & software. The Indian government has schools established in most municipal localities throughout the country. Analogous to the computer, the hardware - government schools & infrastructure - already exists. It required a nudge to improve the software - the quality of education - which completes the loop. ALIG utilizes this concept and works to help improve education standards in existing schools.

A need was seen to alleviate education standards in government schools, requiring intervention at local levels. ALIG initiated the idea of providing teachers as an additional resource to the government schools in consultation with and with collaboration of the government machinery and school principals. It introduced programs supplementing the educational syllabus, providing support to the existing ‘software’ infrastructure, helping improve school attendance & pupil retention.

Government data shows that states of Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh & West Bengal constitute about 40% of the country's

population and their performance on indicators of education, workforce inclusion, health, etc. is not at par with private education. Data based facts made it a simple choice of where to work and thus the intervention in the above-mentioned states.

The question of who to attract, had a ready answer. Students going to government schools felt deprived of quality education resulting in reduced enrolment, lower attendance and often, discontinuation of education. Children came only for the mid-day meal and lacked interest in education. Addressing this problem, ALIG made education interesting and involving, creating a pull for students. It made students look forward to coming to school rather than avoiding it.

To make education ‘interesting’ and ‘engaging’, ALIG endeavored to make the school a lively place where students come to be educated, to become aware and to be groomed. ALIG introduced different activities like sports, clubs and events engaging children in activities apart from the syllabus. **‘ECO-CLUBS’** provide exposure to children on environmental issues and **‘DIVA-CLUBS’** - for girls - encourages them to come forward and express their opinions on social, health, and menstrual hygiene related challenges. There are events like science fests (where children make practical models and do experiments) and other literary & cultural events. To make children ‘future-ready’, we introduced digital literacy in almost all schools we work with.

Typically, we start with a short survey of the school assessing the strength of the school, resources available, and areas where ALIG can help through its intervention. Thereafter, we seek permission from the relevant government authorities and school principals. Once through with the formalities, we chalk out tailor-made programs for schools to ensure we are best able to help the school's children and maximize our contribution. Alongside the above mentioned, we work on secondary, related issues, like adult literacy, sanitation etc. through our programs.

ALIG implements technology heavily in all aspects including the adopt a government school program. Children's attendance collected, the lessons imparted, tools of teaching, all goes into the system through laptops and digital tablets provided to teachers and students.

Currently, we cover approximately 40 schools covering about 11,000 students enrolled in the districts of Jamshedpur, Lucknow, Barabanki, Moradabad, Aligarh and Kolkata.

The interventions are supported by Public and private organizations under their CSR initiative, Old-boy

associations of the Aligarh Muslim University and Individual contributions made by members of the civil society

As part of our accountability and transparency, all accounts are audited annually. ALIG has the required and relevant government certifications like 12A, 80G & FCRA which help us to receive financial support.

ALIG recognizes that while aspiring to be a global leader, India needs to work on fundamental building blocks like

education which can provide a sustained, positive change. We also realize that the 'impact' needs to be scaled to more schools and cities for which we need more financial support from donors.

'Giving is not just about making a donation, it is about making a difference'.

**Saad Hashmi is an AMU alumnus (1991-1998).*



**Top to Bottom: Class activity of English Learning Enhancement Program in RazaNagar Primary School, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India
Awareness session on Female Hygiene in UMS Khakripara, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India**



The Secret of Teaching Chemistry to the Disadvantaged “How I grew to love chemistry”

Sardar Yaqub Khan Yousufzai*, Ph.D., Augusta, GA

In India, I grew up in the town of Amroha UP, about 100 miles from New Delhi. From the influences of my family, especially my father, who obtained an M.A., LLB in 1924, and my two brothers and my youngest sister who received a Ph.D. from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), while my second brother, also an Aligarian, earned a Ph.D. from Indore University, MP, I developed a great passion for education and had a desire also to study at AMU. I should say that every third person in my family is an Aligarian.

I earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Agra university and a post-graduate degree in microbiology and organic chemistry in 1969 from Pantnagar Agricultural University in Pantnagar, UP, and a Master of Philosophy and a doctorate in biochemistry from AMU in 1975 and 1977, respectively. All my Ph.D. research work has been published in six papers and a review at the time of the submission of my thesis. After working as a part-time lecturer in the biochemistry department in 1978, I won a fellowship to join as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Physiology and Nutrition at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. There from 1978-1981, I published six more papers. I transitioned to an assistant research scientist and then a research scientist in the Department of Biochemistry at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta. Till 2002, I published thirty papers and five book chapters. Due to health reasons, I preferred to join a teaching position as an assistant professor in Biochemistry in the Department of Science and Technology at Paine College, Augusta, GA. I have continued teaching chemistry and biochemistry now as an adjunct professor in the same college.

Approximately 19 years ago, one of my friends asked me to visit the Richmond County, Georgia public school system to render an assessment of its classrooms after observing classes in session. One of the fifth-grade science teachers asked me to give a talk to the students about my career, what I do today as a chemistry professor at Paine College and my work as a researcher in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Medical College of Georgia. For those talks, I visited their middle and high schools. When I asked middle-school students about their future career goals, I was amazed that most of the students wanted to pursue careers in professional football, music, television, and film, even as weather channel broadcasters, but very few of them chose professions in teaching, education and absolutely none of them preferred science, medicine engineering, and technology. I have made similar observations for one of the high schools in a similar neighborhood in the same county.

Those school visits and class observations motivated me. I started taking interest in teaching and engaging with young people at Paine college, particularly for those students who primarily came from minority and socio-disadvantaged groups. I set a goal to educate minority students. After serious consideration, this became the starting idea for teaching them, which would end up as a series of free summer chemistry programs.

It started around 2006. This year, 2022, this program "Learn Free Basic Chemistry," marks the 16th anniversary of my summer chemistry course, which covers the basic concepts of Chemistry through instruction and demonstration for middle and high school students. For the past 16 years, I dedicated these summers to helping students in the Central Savannah Regional Area to better prepare and excel in middle and high school chemistry classes. During this period, the number of participants grew from a meager two, to over 120 students in 2015 and 210 in 2019, respectively.

I want to share my experiences in teaching chemistry to minority students. Generally, chemistry at that level is not very interesting and a kind of boring; students don't like it and always say that important formulas and significant equations are too complicated, even they blame the teacher. One of my goals for their education was to offer a Summer Chemistry course to help students find chemistry more attractive and approachable. Most of the time, I correlated chemistry with their day-to-day use of chemicals. I prefer to teach by writing on a blackboard instead of using PowerPoint explanations, especially for formulas, equations, and calculations. My teaching method has had a positive effect not only on their grades but also has demystified the subject.

In summer class, I concentrate only on the fundamental concepts of chemistry. For example, focusing on the arrangement of elements in the Periodic table by their location and properties, properties of matter, and by understanding formulas, equations, and mathematical conversions. I encourage students to eat nutritious foods by explaining the chemical components of various foods.

I have served as chairperson of the Savannah River Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) for more than ten years and in that capacity too I visited local middle and high schools to familiarize their students with chemistry concepts including demonstrations. In those years, I kept some records of the students who attended my summer chemistry program and saw how they later performed in their respective schools after receiving instructions from me. I feel good when some

teachers and parents tell me that my son/daughter is more interested in science and now doing better than the average student.

This program has proved its worth over the years, with many participants pursuing careers in science-related fields – including dental, medical school, technology, and education.

Apart from teaching activities, I also regularly participate in social and educational programs, and I have also organized conferences and programs for the Islamic Society of Augusta since we moved to Augusta. I also deliver Friday sermons in Muslim Community Center of Augusta for the last four years.

**Dr. Sardar Yaqub Khan Yousufzai currently serves as adjunct professor at Paine College, Augusta, GA*



2017 Summer Chemistry Group with Dr. Yousufzai, Augusta, GA



Fun Chemistry Experiments at Islamic Society of Augusta (ISA), GA

With Best Compliments From

Mr. and Mrs. Shahid and Shalina Ali Family

2668 Bridle Ridge Way

Buford, GA 30519

In Memoriam

Dr. Afroz Rahman and Dr. Fazlur Rahman*



To my beautiful friend, Dr. Afroz Rahman,

Life moves on
But memories don't
You may have gone but
Our friendship won't

I knew this person for more than 40 years. I met her in the Dekalb Farmer's Market for the first time and that's where our friendship started.

Dr. Afroz is the name of truly a beautiful soul. She was a great friend, a helper to any person in need, thoughtful, kind and compassionate. She helped so many as a doctor – her goodness has a profound impact on the Atlanta community.

September 2022 was heartbreaking for the Rahman family. After constant visits to the hospital, hopelessly hopeless that things will get better, Dr Afroz and her husband, Janab Fazlur Rahman Sahab, both departed this world – only one week apart – to reunite with Allah Almighty.

Afroz lived for others more than herself. Being a wonderful mother, her priority was always her four girls, Salma, Saira, Soofie, and Shahnaz. Their education, their needs, their wellbeing, and their happiness were always at the forefront of everything that Afroz did. She worked tirelessly to create a better world for them every day that she was on this earth. The day before her death, my husband Waseem and I went to visit her in the hospital, and her last request of me was, "Please continue to check on my kids when I am gone." Until the very end, despite being ill and tired, all she thought about were her children.

Speaking of motherhood, she was also an amazing daughter herself and made her parents proud. I personally witnessed that myself. She took care of her parents, through thick and thin, throughout their life and till their death, without any "oof", just like Allah SWT told us to do.

Best of all, she was a great friend with a sweet, simple smile. Her simplicity was her biggest grace, her authenticity didn't have a trace of anything other than honest gentility. You would find her polite, humble, kind, a good listener, and a big jokester. All of these qualities made her a complete package when it comes to a friend and fully equipped to win anybody over on her side. I miss you a lot, Afroz. I still shed a tear when I think about you because there was so much left unsaid. When you lose your loved ones, you realize that we should live in the moment more, appreciate life more, be kind, and hold the upper hand in forgiveness more. Tell your friends and loved ones how much they mean to you, how unique and special they are, and tell them those things often.

I was so happy to have spent time with her before her passing and consider myself incredibly lucky to have spent so much time with her in this life as her friend. For every trouble she helped ease, every sickness she helped cure, every smile she provoked with a joke, for every good deed she did that was seen and for everyone she did that wasn't, may Allah SWT elevate her *darjah* and bless her with the highest *muqam* in Jannah (Ameen).

Even though you are gone, my heart won't let you go but thank you so much for everything you did while you were here.

*Tumsa koi pyara, koi masoom nahi hai
Kiya cheez thiN tum, khud tumhe maloom nahi hai*

Love,

Rukhsana Waseem

*Dr. Fazlur Rahman served as AAAA President in 1990.

امریکہ میں سماجی کاموں میں پیش پیش رہتی تھیں، جب یونیا کے مسلمان نئے نئے اٹلانا آئے تو ہر ہفتہ اُن کی مدد کرنے جاتی تھیں اس درمیان عالم فاضل کا کورس بھی مکمل کر لیا اور کافی وقت درس و تدریس میں گزرنے لگا۔

پھر اچانک میری چھوٹی خالہ کو سرطان جسے مرض نے دبوچ لیا۔ اماں پاکستان واپس گئیں اور ایک سال تک سہیلہ خالہ کی دن رات تیمارداری کی اور اُن کے انتقال کے بعد پھر واپس امریکہ آ گئیں۔ ابھی تک اُن کے دماغ میں سہیلہ خالہ کی اثاثی کی پکار گونجتی تھی، یاد رہے یہ وہی سہیلہ خالہ تھی جن کو اماں نے 9 سال کی عمر سے پالہ تھا، کیوں کہ والد صاحب خود صاحب دیوان تھے لہذا والدہ صاحبہ نے بھی طبع آزمائی کی اور آمینہ فکر، موج فکر، دعوت فکر جیسی کتابیں شائع ہوئیں سب سے بڑا احسان میری والدہ کا مجھ پر ہے کہ میرے چاروں بچوں کو قرآن ختم کروایا اور نماز پڑھنا سکھائی، ایک کتاب "A BASIC & HANDBOOK ABOUT ISLAM" تخلیق کی تاکہ وہ لوگوں کو دیا ر غیر میں ہیں خصوصاً نوجوان وہ کم از کم اپنے مذہب سے بنیادی طور پر واقف رہیں، اُس کے علاوہ انگلش اُردو میں آسان نورانی قاعدہ ہے جسے تمام امریکہ میں بٹوایا۔ مرتے دم تک نادار طلبہ کے وظیفے باندھے ہوئے تھے جس میں میڈیکل کالج کی فیس بھی تھیں۔

جج اور عمرے بھی کر لیے تھے ماشاء اللہ ایمان اتنا پکا تھا کہ خود کہتی ہیں۔

موت زندگی کی اٹل حقیقت ہے
جب بھی آئے تو فوری جانا ہے
ہر انسان کی ایک کہانی ہے
پڑھ لو میرا بھی یہ فسانہ ہے

عمر کے آخری حصہ میں بیمار رہنے لگی تھیں پھر بھی نماز نہیں چھوڑی، ہمیشہ محبت، ایمان داری، محنت، خودداری اور تعلیم کی حصولی کا درس دیتی تھیں۔

پھر ایک دن جولائی ایک جمعہ مبارک 2022 کو اچانک اپنے خالق حقیقی سے جا ملیں۔

انا للہ وانا الیہ راجعون۔

یا اللہ ان کی مغفرت فرما اور رحمت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا فرما آمین۔

ہزاروں سال نرگس اپنی بے نوری پہ روتی ہے

بڑی مشکل سے ہوتا ہے چمن میں دیدہ و پر پیدا

(اقبال)

نعیم فاطمہ توفیق (علیگ)

(1929-2022)



مسز توفیق، ممائی جاں اور اثا جی کے نام سے پہچانی والی یہ خاتون بریلی میں پیدا ہوئیں۔ کیوں کہ انگریزوں کا زمانہ تھا، ان کے خاندان میں لوگ انگریزوں کی ملازمت پسند نہیں کرتے تھے، لہذا والد صاحب وکالت کرتے تھے، محترمہ نے خود علیگڑہ مسلم یونیورسٹی سے پڑھا، اور ناز اس بات پر تھا کہ ان کے والدہ کے سگے ماموں زین العابدین تھے جو سرسید کے دست راست تھے اور ان کے برابر والی قبر میں دفن ہیں۔ ابھی بھی والدہ کے خاندان والے بنگالی کوٹھی علیگڑہ میں رہتے ہیں۔ ان کی والدہ کا سرطان میں جلدی انتقال ہو گیا تھا، لہذا سب سے چھوٹی بہن جو ابھی نو سال کی تھیں جو ان کو "اثا جی" کہہ کر بلاتی تھیں، ان کے پالنے کی ذمہ داری خود لے لی تھی، ویسے تو ماشاء اللہ سے دو بھائی اور چار بہنیں تھیں، لیکن دو بہنوں کی شادی والدہ کے انتقال سے پہلے ہو چکی تھی، بھائی پڑھایوں میں مصروف تھے۔

1947 میں بٹوارا ہوا، لہذا بھائی بہنوں کے ساتھ راولپنڈی (پاکستان) آئیں اور گارڈن کالج میں مزید پڑھائی کی۔ اور کراچی یونیورسٹی سے ایم اے کیا، بلا آخر شادی کے بعد پی آئی بی کالونی کراچی میں گرلز اسکول کی ہیڈ ماسٹرس رہیں، اور سارے محلّہ میں ممائی جان کے نام سے مشہور ہو گئیں، تمام محلّہ کی لڑکیاں اماں کے اسکول میں پڑھنے جاتی تھیں اور اماں (ممائی جان) گھر گھر جا کر تعلیم نسواں کا درس دیتی تھیں،

میرے والد اور میری والدہ کے مجازی خدا توفیق محمد خان صاحب نے عثمانیہ یونیورسٹی سے معشیات میں BA کیا اور پھر پاکستان میں بھی نوکری کے درمیاں پی ایچ ڈی کرنے امریکہ گئے۔ ستم ظریفی یہ دیکھیے کہ والد صاحب کی چھوٹی بہن جو انیس سال کی عمر میں بیوہ ہو چکی تھیں انہی کی دو چھوٹی چھوٹی بچیاں ہمارے دادا، والد اور والدہ کے دو کمرے، ایک صحن کے گھر میں ساتھ رہتے تھے۔

ہماری پھوپھی کو پڑھنا لکھنا نہیں آتا تھا، لہذا جب والد صاحب امریکہ گئے تو والدہ نے ہماری پھوپھی کو تعلیم بالحاں اسکول میں داخلہ دلایا اور ایک سال میں اس قابل کرادیا کہ وہ اخبار اور قرآن شریف پڑھ لیا کرتی تھیں۔

جب والد صاحب کا تبادلہ جاپان ہوا تو والدہ اور والد نے پاکستان ایسوسی ایٹ میں ہفتہ وار اردو اسکول شروع کیا تا کہ بچے اپنی مادری زبان سیکھ سکیں، والد کے ریٹائرمنٹ کے بعد 7 سال پاکستان میں رہیں اور پھر والد کے ساتھ ایک اور دفعہ امریکہ ہجرت کی اور اپنے چار بچوں کے ساتھ ہنسی خوشی زندگی گزارنے لگیں۔

قدوائی صاحب نے میری خاموشی کو محسوس کیا۔

کیوں آپ اتنے خاموش کیوں ہیں؟

میں نے عرض کیا کہ سر آپ اس یونیورسٹی کے ایک استاد ہیں اور میں اس یونیورسٹی کا ایک طالب علم۔ اس رشتہ سے آپ بہر حال میرے استادوں میں شامل ہیں۔ ہڑتال کے دن ہم نے کچھ شوخ گفتاری کی تھی۔ آج احساس ہو رہا ہے کہ وہ بدتمیزی تھی۔ ناروا حرکت تھی۔ آپ سے شرمندہ ہوں۔

قدوائی صاحب میری طرف پلٹے۔

”ہاں، تم لوگوں کی ہڑتال ایک امتحان تھی۔ اس پر شرمندگی کی ضرورت نہیں۔ چند دن کی چھٹی منظور کرنا کوئی ٹیڑھا مسئلہ نہ تھی۔ مگر ہم چاہتے تھے کہ تم لوگ ہڑتال کرو۔“ مجھے حیرت ہوئی۔ میں نے پوچھا آپ کیوں چاہتے تھے کہ ہم ہڑتال کریں؟

”یہ یونیورسٹی صرف تعلیم گاہ نہیں ہے۔ یہ تربیت گاہ ہے۔ کون جانے جوکل یہاں سے فارغ ہونے کے بعد تم طالب علم لیڈروں میں کوئی ٹریڈ یونین اور لیبر لیڈر بن جائے اور اس وقت اس کے سامنے کوئی ایسا مسئلہ آجائے جس پر ہڑتال ناگزیر ہو جائے تو اس وقت کے لئے تمہیں آج تیار ہونا چاہئے۔ تم لوگوں کو مذاکرات اور منظم پرامن ہڑتال کروانے کا عملی تجربہ ہونا چاہیے۔ تم لوگوں کو اسی عملی تجربہ کا موقعہ دینا ہمارا مقصد تھا۔ اس روز تم لوگوں نے ایک کامیاب اور نہایت پرامن ہڑتال کا تجربہ کیا۔ یہ سبق تمہاری عملی زندگی میں کام آئے گا۔“

”تو سر، آپ تسلیم کرتے ہیں کہ ہماری ہڑتال کامیاب ہوئی تھی؟“

”بے شک۔ ہماری توقعات کے مطابق تمہاری ہڑتال نظم و ضبط کے اعتبار سے مکمل اور کامیاب تھی۔ تمہاری قیادت نے ہمیں مایوس نہیں کیا۔“

ان کی آنکھوں میں ایک شوخ اور شرمسار طالب علم کے لئے شفقت تھی۔

”سر، میں خود سے شرمندہ تھا۔ آپ نے وہ شرمندگی دور کر دی۔“

قدوائی صاحب نے اپنے دونوں ہاتھ میرے کندھوں پر رکھ دیئے۔

”جب اولاد باپ کے قد کے برابر آجائے اور اسے لجائے بغیر اپنی بات دلائل کے ساتھ پیش کرنے کا سلیقہ آجائے تو باپ کا سیدہ فخر سے چوڑا ہو جاتا ہے۔ مجھے تم پر فخر ہے۔ ہمیں تم سب پر فخر ہے۔“

کچھ دیر بعد اس دن وائس چانسلر بشیر حسین زیدی نے مجھے مباحثوں کے کئی انعامات دیئے تھے۔ اور اس روز کا سب سے بڑا انعام پروفیسر اخلاق الرحمن قدوائی نے دیا تھا۔ یہ انعام آج بھی میرے سیدہ کا تمغہ ہے۔

تو یہ تھے علی گڑھ کے طلبہ۔ دیگر یونیورسٹیوں کے طلبہ سے مختلف۔ تو کیا ۱۹۹۰ میں وہ تشخص، وہ امتیاز باقی نہیں رہا تھا؟

لوگوں کو اس حادثہ کی خبر کیوں نہ ہوئی، اور پتا نہیں سٹوڈنٹس یونین کے جو حرماں نصیب ذمہ دار اس دن وائس چانسلر کے دفتر کے باہر آنکھوں میں اداسی لئے بیٹھے تھے ان میں کوئی صدر قاضی جمال الدین احمد، نائب صدر تصور علی خان، سیکریٹری بصیر احمد خان جیسے بھی تھے جو آنکھوں میں آنکھیں ڈال کر اپنے بزرگوں سے مدلل گفتگو کرنا جانتے ہوں اور جن کے بزرگ انہیں ملک و ملت کا مستقبل سمجھتے بھی ہوں اور بناتے بھی ہوں۔

■ ■

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برادری پر گرے گا اس سے محفوظ رہنے کی تدابیر ہم تھیں۔ البتہ مسئلہ یہ تھا کہ اگر اندیشوں کا خیال کر کے یونین کی کابینہ یونیورسٹی انتظامیہ کے موقف کے حق میں اور ہڑتال کی مخالفت کا فیصلہ کرتی ہے تو وہ ایوان عام کا اعتماد کھودے گی جس کے نتیجے میں طلبہ کی قیادت مفقود ہو جائے گی اور طلبہ میں انتشار پھیل جائے گا۔ انہیں سنبھالنے والا کوئی نہ ہوگا۔ یہ صورت خطرناک تھی۔ اس سے بچنے کی ایک ہی صورت تھی کہ ہڑتال کی تجویز منظور کی جائے تاکہ حالات پر گہری نظر اور قابو رکھنے کے لئے طلبہ کی قیادت میدان میں موجود رہے۔ چنانچہ کابینہ نے طلبہ کی ہڑتال کی حمایت میں اتفاق رائے سے تجویز منظور کر لی۔

فیصلہ بھی کیا گیا کہ ایوان عام سے ہڑتال کی منظوری لینے کے بعد طلبہ کا ایک نمائندہ وفد انتظامیہ کے بزرگوں سے جا کر ملے اور ہڑتال کی تجویز کی منظوری کا سرکاری پرچہ وائس چانسلر کو پیش کر دے اور اس بار طلبہ کے وفد میں کابینہ کے ساتھ ممتاز سینئر طلبہ بھی شامل ہوں۔ رات بھیگ رہی تھی اور دوسرے روز ہڑتال کے سلسلہ میں طلبہ کی سطح پر ضروری اقدامات کے لئے وقت درکار تھا۔

وائس چانسلر لاج میں تمام ذمہ دار پہلے سے موجود تھے۔ لگتا تھا انہیں پل پل کی خبر مل رہی تھی۔ کابینہ اور کئی سینئر طلبہ وہاں پہنچے۔ رات کا دوسرا پہر گزر رہا تھا تاریکی میں اداسی تھی۔ ہم اپنے علمی، تعلیمی، تدریسی، انتظامی بزرگوں کی بارگاہ میں ایک بار پھر حاضر ہوئے اور ایوان طلبہ کی متفقہ قرارداد کی ایک نقل شیخ الجامعہ بشیر حسین زیدی اور پروکٹر اخلاق الرحمن قدوائی کو دی۔ پھر طرفین کی بات چیت ہڑتال کے دوران امن و امان اور نظم ضبط برقرار رکھنے پر مرکوز ہو گئی۔ اس پوری مہم کے دوران انتظامیہ اور طلبہ کے مابین پہلی بار مکمل اتفاق رائے اور مکمل ہم آہنگی دیکھنے میں آئی۔

اس رات کوئی نہیں سویا تھا۔ دوسرے دن ہڑتال ہوئی جس کے دوران مختلف فیکلٹیوں میں ہڑتال کروانے پر متعین یونین کے عہدیداروں نے بزرگ اساتذہ اور خاص طور سے پروکٹر قدوائی صاحب کے ساتھ مہذب انداز میں کچھ شوخی بھی کی تھی۔ دوسرے اساتذہ کسی جملہ پر مسکرا دیتے تھے۔ قدوائی صاحب نے ان شوخیوں کا برا نہ مانا، مگر کسی بات پر مسکرائے بھی نہیں تھے۔ ان کے چہرہ پر سنجیدگی کی سنگینی تحریر تھی۔ البتہ ہم طلبہ کے لئے وہ دن کسی درجہ میں تفریحی ہو گیا تھا۔ کئی روز کی سنجیدگی، دکھ، مایوسی، ناکامی کا گودڑ ہم نے اتار کر پھینک دیا تھا۔ ہم تو دن رات ہنسنے بولنے والی خوش مزاج نسل کے افراد تھے۔ ضرورت سے زیادہ سنجیدگی اس عمر میں ہمارے مزاج اور کردار کا حصہ نہیں تھی۔ ہم تو کیف ڈی پھوس، کیف ڈی الف لیلہ، مدراس کیف، ٹی ہاؤس، تصویر محل، پیراڈائز میں چائے کی پیالیوں میں ڈوب کر، برنی اور نمک پاروں کے ٹکونے فقروں کی کاٹ کا لطف لے کر اور ہوشلوں میں باہم بے ضرر عملی مذاق (ایکٹوٹی-activity) اور جملہ بازی کے مقابلوں میں زندگی گزارنے کے عادی لوگ تھے۔ وقت کے ایک طوفان نے ہمیں پتھر پللی سنجیدگی کے بے رحم جزیرہ پر لاپھینکا تھا۔ ہماری ہڑتال وہ امدادی جہاز ثابت ہو رہی تھی جو قدرت نے ہمیں تہذیب کے براعظم میں واپس لانے کے لئے بھیجا تھا۔ اس جہاز پر ہمارا زادراہ شوخی و شوخ گفتاری کے سوا کچھ نہیں تھا۔ اس کی زد میں پروکٹر قدوائی صاحب سب سے زیادہ تھے جو پوری یونیورسٹی کے ایک ایک شعبہ کے حالات کا جائے لینے کے لئے طوفان کی طرح اپنی سرکاری کارروڑاتے پھر رہے تھے۔ ان کے سر پر تلوار لگی ہوئی تھی۔

سہ پہر میں ایک اور تعلیمی دن تمام ہوا۔ ہڑتال ختم ہوئی۔ دعوے دونوں طرف یکساں تھے۔ طلبہ کہتے تھے ہڑتال کامیاب ہوئی اور ۹۵ فی صدی طلبہ کلاسوں سے غیر حاضر رہے لہذا انتظامیہ اخلاقی طور پر چھٹی کا مطالبہ قبول کرنے کی پابندی مگر چھٹی نہیں ملی۔ انتظامیہ کا اصرار تھا کہ ہڑتال کامیاب نہیں ہوئی کیونکہ طلبہ چھٹی کا مطالبہ منوانے میں ناکام ہو گئے تھے۔ تمام دعووں سے قطع نظر بڑی تعداد میں طلبہ اور طالبات نے اپنے گھروں کی ٹرینیں بسیں پکڑیں اور ہفتہ بھر بعد ہی واپس آئے۔ دور دراز شہروں کے رہنے والے جو طلبہ یونیورسٹی میں رہ گئے تھے وہ کلاسوں میں جاتے رہے۔ مگر اساتذہ نئے سبق نہیں پڑھا رہے تھے تاکہ جو بچے گھروں کو چلے گئے تھے ان کا تعلیمی نقصان نہ ہو۔ یہی تو ہم چاہتے تھے اور اسی کے لئے تب ہمارے بزرگ آمادہ نہیں تھے۔ عجب معممہ تھا۔

نمائش کے ہنگاموں میں اس معممہ کا حل کسی نے نہ پوچھا یہاں تک کہ فروری کا مہینہ آ گیا۔ شہر کی سالانہ نمائش ختم ہوئی۔ امتحانات سر پر آ گئے اور پڑھنے مطالعہ کرنے کی راتیں جگمگائیں۔ انہی دنوں ایک اتوار کو سٹوڈنٹس یونین نے حسب روایت اپنا سالانہ جلسہ تقسیم انعامات رکھا جس میں وائس چانسلر زیدی صاحب، پرووائس چانسلر یوسف صاحب، پروکٹر قدوائی صاحب وغیرہ بھی مدعو تھے۔

کابینہ کے رکن کے طور پر مجھے معزز مہمانوں کا استقبال کرنے کی ذمہ داری دی گئی تھی۔ میں یونین کے لاونج (lounge) میں بیٹھا تھا کہ مختار نے اطلاع دی کہ پہلے بزرگ مہمان پروکٹر قدوائی صاحب تشریف لے آئے ہیں۔ میں نے کمرہ سے باہر آ کر ان کا استقبال کیا۔ انہیں لاونج میں لایا اور کرسی پیش کی۔ وہ بیٹھے نہیں۔ کمرہ کی چاروں دیواروں پر آویزاں برسہا برس پرانی تصویریں دیکھنے لگے اور اپنے طالب علمی کے دور کی یادیں تازہ کرتے رہے۔ وہ بولتے رہے۔ میں خاموش تھا۔

یونین کی کابینہ نے حالات کا جائزہ لیا اور محسوس کیا کہ آگے پیچھے سنیچر اتوار کے درمیان پانچ دن تعلیمی سلسلہ موقوف کر دیا جائے تو سرمائی چھٹی دی جاسکتی ہے تاکہ سینئر طلبہ کی دلیل کے مطابق لڑکے اور لڑکیاں اپنے گھروں سے سردی کے بستر تو شک لحاف، سویٹر اور گرم کپڑے وغیرہ لینے جاسکیں۔

کابینہ کے اجلاس میں یہ تجویز متفقہ طور پر منظور ہوئی اور اسے انتظامیہ کے سامنے پیش کرنے کے لئے کابینہ کا وفد وائس چانسلر کی خدمت میں دوبارہ حاضر ہوا جس بار بھی انتظامیہ کی جانب سے زیدی صاحب، یوسف صاحب اور قدوائی موجود تھے۔ چند بڑے پروفیسر بھی انتظامیہ کی جانب سے شریک ہوئے طلبہ کی جانب سے کوئی استاد گفتگو میں شریک نہ تھا۔ انہیں اپنا مقدمہ خود اپنے بل بوتے پر لڑنا تھا۔

انتظامیہ نے یونین کی اس تجویز کو بھی قبول کرنے سے انکار کر دیا اور دلیل یہ دی کہ چھٹی کی صورت میں طلبہ کا بڑا تدریسی نقصان ہوگا۔ مکمل نصاب نہیں پڑھایا جاسکے گا۔ امتحانات میں کئی نصابی تفصیلات پر سوالات نہیں پوچھے جاسکیں گے۔ طلبہ کی علمی ضرورت پوری نہیں ہوگی اور مستقبل میں ان کی پیشہ ورانہ لیاقت پر برا اثر پڑے گا۔

طلبہ کے وفد نے ذیلی تجویز رکھی کہ امتحانات کو پانچ دن موخر کر کے تدریس کے پانچ دن بڑھادئے جائیں۔ یہ دلیل کارگر نہ ہوئی کیونکہ بقول انتظامیہ کے اس طرح امتحانات کا وہ نظام نامہ بگڑ جائے گا جو مہینوں پہلے مرتب کر لیا جاتا ہے اور پھر پڑچوں کی جانچ اور نتائج کے اعلان کے سبب سے مدرسین اور انتظامی عملہ کا نظام العمل متاثر ہوگا۔ یعنی معاملہ صرف طلبہ کا اور چھٹی کا نہیں تھا بلکہ اس کے ذیل میں اساتذہ اور انتظامی عملہ کا نظام عمل بھی متاثر ہوتا۔ اس بار پروفیسر قدوائی صاحب انتظامیہ کے دلائل بڑی شد و مد سے پیش کر رہے تھے۔ فریقین متفق نہ ہو سکے اور مذاکرات کا دوسرا دور بھی بے نتیجہ رہ گیا۔

بظاہر انتظامیہ ہی نہیں بزرگ اساتذہ بھی طلبہ کی مخالف سمت میں کھڑے تھے۔ اس کے باوجود یونین کے وفد نے روایتی ادب و احترام کو ٹھیس نہ پہنچنے دی۔ انتظامی بڑوں کا رویہ بھی معاندانہ نہیں تھا بلکہ ان کے دلائل کا تمام تر زور طلبہ کے مفاد اور ان کے مستقبل پر تھا۔

اس ناکام ملاقات کے بعد مجلس عام کا ہنگامی اجلاس طلب کیا گیا۔ سکریٹری بصیر احمد خان نے ایوان کو تازہ ترین صورت حال سے آگاہ کیا اور صدر قاضی جمال الدین احمد نے اپنے تاثرات پیش کرنے کے بعد تبصروں اور مشوروں کے لئے ایوان کھول دیا۔ کئی سینئر طلبہ نے بڑی جذباتی تقریریں کیں۔ سب کی تقریروں کا لب لباب ہڑتال کا مطالبہ تھا۔ طلبہ اس پر سمجھوتے کے لئے تیار نہیں تھے۔

کابینہ کے لئے اس مطالبہ کی منظوری آسان نہیں تھی۔ اس موقع پر سکریٹری بصیر احمد خان کی معاملہ فہمی اور قائدانہ صلاحیت سامنے آئی۔ ایوان کے مباحثہ کے بعد بات کو سمیٹتے ہوئے بصیر نے اپنی اختتامی تقریر میں ایک تاریخی جملہ کہا تھا جو ساٹھ سال بعد بھی آج تک میرے کانوں میں گونجتا ہے۔

صرف دو ماہ قبل علی گڑھ اور مغربی اتر پردیش کے کئی شہروں میں مسلمانوں کے خلاف منصوبہ بند آتش فہر بھڑکی تھی۔ دو ماہ بعد اگرچہ ظاہری امن لوٹ آیا تھا مگر جذبات کی زیریں لہروں میں اضطراب پایا جاتا تھا۔ ایسے میں ذرا سی بے احتیاطی کے نتائج سنگین ہو سکتے تھے۔ کابینہ ہر پہلو سے معاملہ کا جائزہ لے رہی تھی۔ جو اس سال طالب علم رہنا بصیر احمد خان کے ذہن پر صورت حال آئینہ تھی اور وہ ایسے کسی اقدام کے حق میں نہیں تھے جس سے جذبات بھڑک اٹھیں اور حالات قابو سے باہر ہو جائیں۔ اس پس منظر میں بصیر نے اپنی اختتامی تقریر میں ایوان طلبہ کو تنبیہ کرتے ہوئے جو بات کہی تھی وہی آج بھی سچ ہے۔ ایک دائمی سچ۔

”آگ بھڑکا دینا آسان ہے۔ آگ بھڑک اٹھے تو اس کو بجھانا بہت مشکل ہوتا ہے۔“

بصیر احمد خان کے اس جملہ میں عصری آگہی بھی تھی اور تاریخ کا درد بھی۔

اجلاس کو ملتوی کرتے ہوئے صدر قاضی جمال نے ایوان کو اطلاع دی کہ کابینہ کسی نتیجے پر پہنچے گی اور اپنے فیصلہ سے ایوان طلبہ کو مطلع کرے گی۔ دم کے دم میں پوری کابینہ یونین کے پہلے منزلہ پر اپنے اجلاسوں کے کمرہ میں منتقل ہو گئی۔ ادھر ایوان طلبہ میں سے کوئی بھی یونین ہال سے باہر نہیں گیا۔ سب کو معلوم تھا کہ کابینہ کا ایجنڈا فقط ایک نکتہ پر مشتمل تھا اور زیادہ سے زیادہ ۳۰ منٹ میں ایوان کا نیا ہنگامی اجلاس طلب کر لیا جائے گا۔

طلبہ کی قیادت کو دکھ تھا۔ اپنی مایوسی کو وہ دلوں میں چھپائے ہوئے تھے۔ یونیورسٹی کے تمام ذمہ دار اپنے ہی بزرگ تھے، مگر نہ جانے کیوں ایسا لگتا تھا جیسے طلبہ سے وہ ہمدردی نہ دکھا رہے ہوں۔ انتظامیہ کی بظاہر جامد اور بے لچک پالیسی طالب علم قاندين کے لئے ناقابل فہم تھی۔ زیادہ سوہان روح یہ احساس تھا کہ طلبہ کے قائدین موثر انداز میں اپنا مقدمہ پیش کرنے میں ناکام ہو گئے تھے۔ تاہم بحرانی حالات کا تجزیہ کرنے کا وہ وقت نہیں تھا۔ وہ سنگین فیصلوں کا وقت تھا۔

ہڑتال کے مطالبہ پر تمام طلبہ متفق الرائے تھے۔ کابینہ رائے عامہ کے حق میں فیصلہ کرنے پر مجبور تھی، مگر ساتھ ہی پیش آمدہ حالات میں یونیورسٹی میں ہر قیمت پر امن کو بحال رکھنے کی ذمہ دار بھی اصولی طور پر وہی تھی۔ طلبہ کی قیادت کو اندازہ تھا کہ ذرا بھی بد نظمی اور بد امنی ہوئی تو اس کا سارا ملبہ کابینہ پر اور اس کے واسطے سے پوری طلبہ

ہم مختلف تھے جہاں میں

غالباً ۱۹۹۰ کی بات ہے، علی گڑھ کے ایک قیام کے دوران یونیورسٹی کے افسر رابطہ عامہ ڈاکٹر راحت ابرار نے وائس چانسلر نسیم فاروقی صاحب سے میری ملاقات طے کی۔ ملاقات کے معینہ دن اتفاق سے فاروقی صاحب کو کسی ہنگامی ضرورت سے چند روز کے لیے وطن جانا پڑا تو میری ملاقات کارگزار وائس چانسلر میڈیکل کالج کے ڈاکٹر اشوک بل سے ہوئی جو مدت عہدہ کے لحاظ سے اس وقت یونیورسٹی کے بزرگ ترین استاد تھے۔ اس وقت ذہن میں پروفیسر املیند وپوس، پروفیسر ہرنس لال شرما اور پروفیسر آراین بھرمر کی شخصیتیں ابھر آئیں۔

وائس چانسلر کے دفتر کے باہر انتظار گاہ میں چند شیروانی پوش طلبہ ملاقات کے امیدوار بیٹھے تھے۔ سب کے سروں پر ٹوپیاں تھیں۔ وہ نوجوان سٹوڈنٹس یونین کے صدر، سیکریٹری اور کابینہ کے چند ممبر تھے۔ طلبہ کے کسی مسئلہ پر عرض معروض کے لئے آئے تھے۔ طلبہ کے نمائندوں کے چہروں پر بیچارگی تھی تو کم کا مستقبل محرومی کا مرقع بنا ہوا تھا۔ ڈاکٹر اشوک بل سے بات کے دوران میں نے طلبہ کے ان نمائندوں کا ذکر بھی کیا۔ کارگزار وائس چانسلر طالب علم لیڈروں سے خوش نہیں تھے۔ شاید طلبہ کا کوئی مطالبہ قابل قبول نہیں تھا۔ شاید ہڑتال کا خدشہ تھا۔ میں نے عرض کیا ایسے معاملہ کو طالب علم رہنماؤں کے ساتھ بات چیت اور افہام تفہیم سے طے کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہی علی گڑھ کی روایت ہے۔ ڈاکٹر اشوک بل متفق نہ ہوئے۔ انہوں نے بے دلی سے فرمایا:

”سارے ملک میں طلبہ کا رخ جارحانہ ہے۔ علی گڑھ کے طلبہ بھی ملک کے باقی طلبہ کے جیسے ہی ہیں۔“

ایسے کب سے ہو گئے؟ میں نے سوچا۔ کارگزار وائس چانسلر صاحب کا غذات میں زیادہ دلچسپی رکھتے تھے۔ سعودی مملکت کے ایک انگریزی اخبار کے پہلے ہندوستانی مدیر منتظم سے ملاقات کے دوران وہ دفتری مسلیں ملاحظہ کرتے رہے۔ میں نے اپنی گھڑی دیکھی اور اجازت لے کر وائس چانسلر کے دفتر سے باہر چلا آیا۔ اس وقت مجھے تیس سال پہلے کا زمانہ یاد آگیا۔

اس سال طلبہ کی یونین کے عام انتخابات کو ملک کے ایک زور آور گروہ نے اپنا رنگ دے دیا تھا۔ یونیورسٹی اور شہر میں تو قہر پھوٹا ہی تھا، زہری اس لہر نے مغربی اتر پردیش کے اور بھی کئی شہروں میں قتل و غارت کی خواہش کو ایک مہم بنا دیا تھا۔ یونیورسٹی تین ہفتہ بند رہی تھی۔ جبری تعطل کے بعد یونیورسٹی دوبارہ کھلی تو قاضی جمال الدین احمد کی صدارت والی نئی منتخبہ کابینہ کے سامنے سب سے پہلے ایک ایسا عمومی مسئلہ آیا کہ بات طلبہ کی ہڑتال تک پہنچ گئی۔

ستمبر میں تین ہفتہ کی بندش کے تعلیمی نقصان کی تلافی کے پیش نظر یونیورسٹی کی انتظامیہ نے طے کیا کہ اس سال موسم سرما کی تعطیل کو منسوخ کر دیا جائے تاکہ ۱۸۰ دن کا سالانہ درسی دور مکمل ہو سکے۔ طلبہ کو چھٹی سے دلچسپی تھی۔ سینیئر طلبہ نے سٹوڈنٹس یونین سے مطالبہ کیا کہ انتظامیہ سے سرمائی تعطیل بحال کروائی جائے۔

یونین کی کابینہ نے اس مطالبہ کی حمایت کی اور وائس چانسلر بشیر حسین زیدی سے ملاقات کا فیصلہ کیا۔ زیدی صاحب نے پرووائس چانسلر ڈاکٹر یوسف حسین خان اور پروفیسر ڈاکٹر اخلاق الرحمان قدوائی کو بھی بلا لیا۔ انتظامیہ کے بزرگوں کے ساتھ طالب علم قائدین نے بڑے ادب سے طلبہ کا مطالبہ پیش کیا۔ طلبہ کی بات تحمل سے سنی گئی مگر انتظامیہ کو وہ مطالبہ ماننے میں دشواری تھی۔ تعلیمی ضابطوں کے مطابق ایک تعلیمی سال کو ۱۸۰ دن کا ہونا لازم تھا تاکہ ہر جماعت کی نصابی تدریسی ضرورت پوری ہو سکے۔ لہذا انتظامیہ نے طلبہ کی درخواست مسترد کر دی۔

میں اس کابینہ کا ایک رکن تھا اس لئے تمام معاملات کا عینی شاہد ہی نہیں طلبہ کے مطالبات کے جلسوں اور انتظامیہ سے مذاکرات کا عملی حصہ تھا۔ انتظامیہ اور اساتذہ سے طلبہ کی پہلی ملاقات کی ناکامی کے بعد واپس آ کر یونین کے صدر قاضی جمال الدین احمد اور سکریٹری بصیر احمد خان نے یونین کے ہنگامی اجلاس میں انتظامیہ کی مبینہ دشواریوں کا احوال پیش کیا اور آئندہ اقدام کے سلسلہ میں مشورہ مانگا۔ جنرل باڈی کا فیصلہ تھا کہ طلبہ اپنے مطالبہ پر قائم ہیں اور کابینہ کو ہدایت کی وہ مستقبل کی راہ عمل طے کر کے انتظامیہ کے ذمہ داروں سے مزید مذاکرات کرے اور چھٹی کے مطالبہ کو منظور کروائے۔

روزمرہ کی زندگی میں سادگی، شادی بیاہ میں سادگی اور بلاوجہ کے اخراجات میں کمی بھی اُن دنوں خوب دیکھنے کو ملی۔ اب تک شادیوں کے نام پر لاکھوں کروڑوں کا خرچ، جہیز کی لعنت اور سیکڑوں افراد کے کھانے کا ضائع ہونا عام بات تھی مگر لاک ڈاؤن کے دنوں میں جو شادیاں ہوئیں، ان میں گھر کے چار پانچ افراد جا کر سادگی سے نکاح کر کے دلہن لے آئے۔ کاش کورونا کے وبائی دور کے بعد بھی ہماری قوم کا مزاج ہی ایسا بن جائے کہ شادیوں کے نام پر لاکھوں خرچ کرنے والے حضرات یہ رقم تعلیم، صحت اور اصلاح معاشرہ پر خرچ کر کے اپنی اور اپنی قوم کے خوش گوار مستقبل کی راہیں ہموار کر سکیں۔ اپنی ضرورتوں کو کم سے کم کرنا، دوسروں کے دکھ درد میں شرکت اور اپنے گھر اور آس پاس کی صفائی اب الحمد للہ ہمارے لیے آسان ہو گئی ہے۔ بار بار ہاتھ دھونے کی سنت زندہ ہوئی ہے۔ گھر کے تمام افراد کا ایک ساتھ مل کر بیٹھنا ایک ساتھ کھانا کھانا، ایک دوسرے کے لئے وقت دینا، بڑوں کا احترام اور ان کو خاطر خواہ توجہ دینا، گھر کے مختلف امور میں ہاتھ بٹانا اور باہم شکر ہو کر زندگی گزارنے کی تمام اسلامی تعلیمات کو فروغ حاصل ہوا۔ لاک ڈاؤن نے مطالعے اور کتب بینی کا شوق دوبارہ زندہ کیا اور لوگوں نے اچھی اچھی کتابیں پڑھ کر اپنی علمی پیاس کو مزید جلا بخشی۔ لکھنے والوں نے بھی کورونا کی حالات، انسان کی بے بسی اور لاچاری، سائنس ٹکنالوجی اور طبی ترقی کے باوجود بھی انسان کی محتاجی پر قلم اٹھایا اور عمدہ نثر اور شاعری تخلیق کی جس بجا طور پر ”لاک ڈاؤن ادب“ (Lock down literature) سے تعبیر کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ بلاوجہ باہر نکلنا، باہر کا کھانا اور انتہائی نقصان دہ جنک فوڈ (Junk food) کا استعمال کم ہوا اور اس کا احساس سب کو ہوا کہ یہ سب چیزیں ہماری صحت کے لئے بے انتہا مضر ہیں۔ کاش یہ احساس اب ہماری عادت بن جائے کیونکہ کورونا نے ہمیں یہ تو اچھی طرح سمجھا ہی دیا ہے کہ گھر سے خوبصورت کوئی جگہ نہیں ہے، والدین اور افراد خانہ سے بڑھ کر کوئی دوست نہیں ہے، سادہ غذا کے آگے سونا چاندی اور ڈالر سب بے وقعت ہیں، کھانا پکانا اور دیگر گھریلو ذمہ داریاں صرف خواتین کا کام نہیں ہے بلکہ مرد حضرات بھی بخوبی اس کام میں مدد کر سکتے ہیں، ہمارے بچے جنک فوڈ کے بغیر بھی اچھی زندگی گزار سکتے ہیں، یورپ اور امریکہ گئے بغیر بھی ہم اپنی چھٹیاں بہت اچھی طرح گزار سکتے ہیں اور کوئی پادری، مولوی، پجاری یا جیوتشی مریض کو نہیں بچا سکتا سوائے اللہ کے۔ سائنس اور ٹکنالوجی اور طبی سہولیات میں ہم کتنے ہی ترقی یافتہ خود کو سمجھتے رہیں مگر طاقتور سب سے زیادہ اللہ کی ذات ہی ہے۔ ہم سب اسی کے محتاج ہیں اور اسی کی غلامی اور بندگی میں بالآخر ہماری فلاح و نجات ممکن ہے، دُنیوی اور اُخروی بھی۔

ڈاکٹر شارق عقیل

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نقصان پہنچانے والے ”حضرت انسان“ اُس وقت قید میں تھے۔ جس کی وجہ سے زمین آسانی سے سانس لے سکی اور تمام بحری اور بری مخلوقات بڑے سکون و اطمینان سے رہے۔ یوپی کے سہارنپور سے مسوری کی چوٹیاں آسانی سے دیکھی گئیں، یہاں تک کہ بجنور سے ۲۵۰ کلومیٹر کی دوری پر واقع بدری ناتھ کے سوا لک ریج (range) کی برف سے ڈھکی چوٹیاں اس طویل فاصلے کے باوجود آسانی سے دیکھی جاسکیں۔

جس فضائی آلودگی کو دور کرنے کے لیے ہم گزشتہ کئی برسوں سے کبھی آڈ اور ایون (Odd & even) فارمولا اپناتے تھے، کبھی درخت لگاتے، چھڑکاؤ کرتے، دیوالی پر گرین پٹاخے کی مہم چلاتے رہے، پھر بھی خاطر خواہ اثر نہ دیکھ پاتے تھے مگر قدرت نے ایک جھٹکے میں یہ سب کام آسان کر دیا۔ خوبصورت پہاڑ، حسین وادیاں، صاف و شفاف ندیاں اور صحت مند آب و ہوا، ایک نئی دنیا کا منظر نامہ پیش کر رہے تھے۔ سیاحتی مقامات اتنے دل کش نظر آئے جیسے قدرت نے تازہ تازہ غسلِ صحت کرایا ہو۔ غربت کیا ہوتی ہے؟ غریب کے رات دن کیسے گزرتے ہیں؟ کس مشقت سے وہ، دو وقت کی روٹی حاصل کرتا ہے؟ اس کا احساس امیروں کو غالباً پہلی بار اتنی شدت سے ہوا، چنانچہ مخیر حضرات جگہ جگہ شاہراہوں پر مزدوروں اور مسافروں کو پانی، بسکٹ، کیلے اور دیگر ضروری اشیاء تقسیم کرتے ہوئے نظر آئے۔ اس کو رونانے ہمیں حقوق العباد اور کمزوروں کی مدد کی طرف متوجہ کیا اور اس طرح ہم اپنے خالق سے قریب ہوئے۔ رمضان المبارک سے پہلے ہی زکوٰۃ کی ادائیگی، یتیم و یتیموں کا خیال اور ضرورت مندوں کی حاجت روائی کے دل سوز مناظر پہلی بار اس طرح دیکھنے کو ملے۔

وبائی بیماری اپنی جگہ اور انسانی ضروریات اپنی جگہ، جب ایک راستہ بند ہوتا ہے تو انسان فطرتاً دوسرا راستہ تلاش کر ہی لیتا ہے۔ ہر حال میں دو گز دوری بنائے رکھنے کی تلقین نے مجبور کیا کہ انسان درس و تدریس کا کوئی بہتر اور متبادل طریقہ ایجاد کرے، جس کا نتیجہ یہ نکلا کہ آن لائن تعلیم نے زور پکڑا اور تقریباً تمام تدریسی کام آن لائن موڈ (Mode) میں ہونے لگے۔ ہمارے گھروں میں کمپیوٹر کی جگہ، کلاس روم اور آفس میں تبدیل ہو گئی۔ طلباء، اساتذہ اور ملازمین کو گھر سے نکلنے کی ضرورت ہی نہ رہی اور گھر کی ایک چھوٹی سی جگہ یا کمپیوٹر ٹیبل اور لیپ ٹاپ ہی ان کا اسکول، کالج اور دفتر بن گیا۔ آمدورفت کے اخراجات بالکل ختم ہو گئے، بلا ضرورت باہر نکلتا یکسر ختم ہوا، اسکول، کالج اور آفس کو چلانے کے اخراجات بھی برائے نام رہ گئے۔ آن لائن تعلیم، آن لائن ہدایات، آن لائن مینٹگ، آن لائن سمینار، کانفرنس، مشاعرے اور سالانہ جلسے کا چلن عام ہو گیا، حتیٰ کہ میلاد کی محفلیں اور تعزیتی نشستیں بھی ان دنوں خوب آن لائن موڈ میں منعقد ہوئیں اور بالکل ایک نئی دنیا وجود میں آئی۔ کرونا تقریباً ختم ہو رہا ہے مگر اس نے دنیا کو ایک نئی تکنیک سے متعارف کرا کر بہت سی آسانیاں بھی پیدا کر دی ہیں۔ بڑے بڑے پروگراموں کے انعقاد میں ہونے والے لاکھوں کے اخراجات اور دیگر انتظامی صعوبتوں سے بھی منتظمین بچ گئے تو دوسری طرف شرکاء کی آمدورفت اور اس کے اخراجات کا بوجھ بھی معمولی سا رہ گیا۔ الغرض اس وبائی مرض کی کوکھ سے بہت سی آسانیاں بھی وجود میں آئیں۔ گھر سے کام (Work from home) کا کلچر لاک ڈاؤن کی وجہ سے اس قدر مقبول اور فائدہ مند ثابت ہوا کہ اب تو بہت سے دفاتر اور بڑی کمپنیاں اپنے ملازمین کو ہفتہ میں دو یا تین دن ہی آفس بلاتے ہیں اور باقی دنوں میں work from home کی ترغیب دی جا رہی ہے۔

کورونا اور لاک ڈاؤن کے ضمنی اثرات

نومبر ۲۰۱۹ء میں چین کے ووبان شہر سے شروع ہونے والی کورونا کی وبا نے جون ۲۰۲۰ء کے آتے آتے دنیا کے ۱۸۶ سے زائد ممالک کو متاثر کیا۔ ہلاکتوں کے اعتبار سے امریکہ، برازیل، فرانس، اٹلی، اسپین، جرمنی، روس، برطانیہ، ترکی، ایران، ہندوستان، پیراگوئے اور چین سب سے زیادہ متاثر ہوئے۔ تقریباً پوری دنیا لاک ڈاؤن کا شکار رہی اور کہا گیا کہ بار بار ہاتھ دھونا، سماجی دوری اور لاک ڈاؤن ہی سب سے زیادہ موثر احتیاطی تدابیر ہیں۔ بہر حال کورونا، اس کے باعث ہلاکتوں، عالمی معیشت پر اس کے منفی اثرات پر بہت کچھ لکھا اور کہا جا رہا ہے۔ مگر یہ بھر حقیقت ہے کہ ہر شرمیں کچھ نہ کچھ خیر کے پہلو بھی چھپے ہوتے ہیں اور گھنے کالے بادلوں کے درمیان سے ہی بجلی کی کوئی رقع پیدا ہو کر امید کی کرن بن کر ابھرتی ہے۔ آئیے دیکھیں کہ کورونا اور اس کے نتیجے میں ہوئے لاک ڈاؤن اور انسانوں کی نقل و حرکت میں آئی زبردست کمی سے دنیا نے کیا حاصل کیا؟

دنیا بھر میں روزانہ ۳۷۰۰ اور ہندوستان میں ۴۴۰ افراد کی جان سڑک حادثات میں چلی جاتی ہے۔ نقل و حرکت کی کمی کے باعث یہ ہلاکتیں ۸۰ فی صد کم ہو گئیں۔ ۴۰ فیصد فضائی آلودگی ٹریفک کے باعث اور باقی کارخانوں اور فیکٹریوں سے نکلنے والے دھوئیں کے باعث تھی۔ اس لاک ڈاؤن کے نتیجے میں دنیا بھر میں فضائی آلودگی میں حد درجہ کمی آئی۔ ہندوستان کے بڑے شہروں کا AQI Index (بالخصوص دہلی) جو ۴۰۰-۵۰۰ کی خطرناک حد تک پہنچ گیا تھا، کئی سالوں کے بعد صحت مندرجہ پر آ سکا۔ شہروں میں بھی چرند پرند اور دیگر نباتات میں زبردست مثبت تبدیلی دیکھی گئی۔ ہندوستان میں تو مختلف حکومتوں نے گڑگا اور جمنا کی صفائی اور آبی آلودگی کو دور کرنے کے لئے اربوں روپے صرف کرنے کے بعد بھی کچھ زیادہ حاصل نہیں کیا تھا مگر لاک ڈاؤن کے بعد ملک بھر میں دیگر ندیوں کے ساتھ ساتھ گڑگا اور جمنا کا پانی آسمان کی طرح صاف نظر آ رہا تھا اور ان کی نچلی سطح پر مچھلیوں کی نقل و حرکت آسانی سے دیکھی جاسکتی تھی۔ فضائی اور آبی آلودگی اُس وقت سب سے نچلی سطح پر تھی۔ اٹلی کے شہر Venice میں جھیلیں (Lakes) اتنی صاف و شفاف حالیہ تاریخ میں کبھی نہیں دیکھی گئیں۔ شمالی کیرولینا کے ساحلوں پر سمندری صدف کے انبار لگ گئے اور یہی حال دنیا بھر میں سمندری ساحلوں پر مختلف جگہوں پر دیکھنے کو ملا، جہاں پر رنگ برنگے سمندری صدف کی ایک ایک فٹ اونچی تہہ جمع ہو گئی اور قدرت نے حسین ترین مناظر پیش کیے۔ فضا میں چہچہاتے طیور اور سمندری جانوروں نے پہلی بار یہ محسوس کیا کہ یہ دنیا ان کے رہنے کی بھی جگہ ہے ورنہ ابھی تک تو انسانی حرکات (Human Activity) نے ان کا جینا دو بھر کر رکھا تھا۔ زمین کی ہلکی سی بھی حرکت یعنی معمولی نوعیت کے زلزلے بھی ریکٹر اسکیل پر آسانی سے ناپے جا رہے تھے۔ فضائی آلودگی میں خاطر خواہ کمی کے سبب Ozone Layer جو خطرناک قسم کی بیماریوں اور کینسر پیدا کرنے والی Ultra-violet rays کو روکتی ہے، بہتر اور صحت مند ہوئی۔ سُوکھا، باڑھ، زمین کھسنے کے واقعات اور اسی طرح کی دوسرے قدرتی آفات میں بڑی حد تک کمی دیکھی گئی۔ ۲۲ اپریل ۲۰۲۱ء کو دنیا کو یوم زمین (Earth Day) مناتے ہوئے ۵۲ برس مکمل ہوئے مگر ان ۵۲ برسوں میں پہلی مرتبہ زمین سب سے زیادہ پرسکون نظر آئی کیونکہ زمین کو سب سے زیادہ

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