



In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

..... The HOPE Bulletin

Health, Ongoing Projects, Education



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AAIIL Worldwide Edition

Editor: Akbar Abdullah

CALIFORNIA JAMA'AT PROJECT: APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL ANJUMAN, LAHORE

INTRODUCTION

Editor's Note

We draw your attention to the feature article, "Dealing with the Dictator" by Graham Davis, which appeared online in *The Australian*. The author is a Fiji-born Australian who has written an unbiased account of the coup in Fiji.

According to the author's assessment, the present Prime Minister, Commodore Bainimarama, and President Josefa Iloilo have decided to overturn the former brand of democracy led by the deposed regime of Qarase that makes second-class citizens of the 40 percent of Fiji's Indian population. They are bent upon changing the electoral system by 2014, that will allow one vote one person instead of the disproportionate allocation that favours indigenous Fijians as prevailed in the former regime of deposed Prime Minister Qarase.

When Bainimarama deposed the former PM Qarase and based his reasons on corruption and the anomaly in the electoral system to the great disadvantage of the Fiji Indian citizens, our Fiji *Jama'at*, Dr. Shaista Shameem, Chairperson of the Fiji Human Rights and Ombudsman, and the majority of Indians hailed the essence and the necessity of this coup. However, recently when President Iloilo scrapped the Constitution, Dr. Shaista Shameem voiced her dismay but expressed her satisfaction that the Fiji Bill of Rights is still intact.

We also draw your attention to the segment "All About Us" in which we carry the bio-sketch of Shaikh Rahmatullah. To locate the English descendents of Shaikh Sahib the translator requested the UK *Jama'at* to investigate their whereabouts. Interestingly enough, Dr. Zahid Aziz had done some groundwork and we urge you to read his account at the end of Shaikh Sahib's bio-sketch. Dr. Zahid Aziz's investigative research is commendable, and makes reading interesting. We have appreciated in the past his style of investigative research in the printing of various articles in *The Light* UK Edition.

Similarly, Captain Abdus Salam Khan related some very interesting accounts on the life-sketch of Maulana Aziz Buksh Sahib and is given in our "Commentary" segment.

JAMA'AT NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CENTER

A brief report by Amir Aziz on his visit to Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Holland

With the grace and blessings of Allah, I had the opportunity to visit the above mentioned *Jamaats* from the 10th of January to the 27th of February 2009. It was a very successful trip and a lot has been achieved for Central Anjuman. As Hazrat Ameer declared this year to be the Year of Contact, therefore, it proved to be a very fruitful trip.

Suriname

I stayed most of the time in Suriname and all arrangements were made by the SIV Board. All arrangements were to the best of my satisfaction. The SIV Board managed everything to make my stay comfortable and beneficial for the members of their *Jamaat*.

SIV is a progressive organization and is full of enthusiasm. President of the SIV, Hajji Abdul Majeed, who is also Regional Representative of Central Anjuman for the Caribbean, is doing a good job and has taken the task very seriously.

We appreciate the effort rendered by the late Rasheed Pierkhan, who served the *Jamaat* with utmost devotion, wisdom and great vision for twenty years.

The Secretary of the SIV Board, Brother James Lalmohammad, is a very efficient and devoted member and is running the board with diligence.

SIV has 10 branches and five sister organizations. It has 17 mosques and each mosque has an *Imam* and a *Naib Imam*.

I had the chance to visit almost all branches of the Suriname *Jamaat* and found the members very enthusiastic about the propagation of Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

The organization of *Imams* and *Naib Imams* is called *Jamaeat ul ULema* presently; Brother Saboer Ali is its president. This organization is working very well and they hold a meeting every month.

I had the opportunity to meet this organization twice and found it very efficient and active, playing a very positive role in the progress of the Suriname *Jamaat*.

The SIV has a very huge and beautiful orphanage building, which is being successfully run by a committee. Presently there are more than 40 orphan students studying and living in this orphanage. Their lodging, boarding and education are funded by the SIV.

Propagation programmes are being broadcast on radio and TV regularly. The late Rasheed Pierkhan's family is playing a good and noble role in providing the SIV with free facilities for radio and TV programmes.

The SIV has a large library adjacent to a big cultural Center.

The spectacular central mosque is the hub of all propagation activities. Tourists and students visit this mosque to learn Islam and Quranic teachings. I was fortunate that I was able to explain and preach Islam and Ahmadiyyat in this mosque to many tourists and students.

I had my lectures everywhere in Suriname. I delivered many lectures on TV and radio. The *Jamaat* also used the newspaper to propagate my lectures and my presence in Suriname.

I delivered a lecture in Nikeri, which is about three hours away from Paramaribo. This was broadcast on television. I also gave many Power Point Presentations in Suriname about Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

I had a very good and effective programme with the youth and women organization of AAIIIL Suriname. I responded to their very intelligent questions.

I was honoured with the *Sitar Ahmadiyyat* by the SIV Board and *Jamaat* for my services, which have made me feel to work with more vigour and enthusiasm.

I cannot forget the hospitality shown by the members of Suriname *Jamaat* and specially Mrs. Pierkhan, whose motherly treatment will be an asset for me.

Guyana

My visit to Guyana was brief but very beneficial. It was a very busy and tiring trip. We were welcomed by the president of AAIIIL Guyana, Brother Alim Shah, by Brother Mansoor Baksh, and Brother Farooq Amin at the airport.

On the very first day I had the opportunity to deliver a lecture on Islam in the Georgetown Mosque. It went very well and was covered by the media.

The Guyana Board has six mosques under its control and is working to establish these mosques and missions on firm footings.

I visited all branches of the Guyana *Jamaat*. We have four mosques in Berbice county, one in Georgetown and one in Vekname. We have some members in Essequibo.

I had my lectures in all branches, and the programmes in the Berbice area arranged by Mr. Alim Shah were very successful and fruitful.

I had the chance to attend a TV programme at New Amsterdam. It was a live programme and I had to respond to calls. It went for one hour and the response was very good. I had the chance to attend a programme on Guyana national TV which was arranged by Mr. Mansoor Baksh. It went very well too and the message of Islam and Ahmadiyyat went across Guyana.

The press published news of my visit and the reporter of a national newspaper interviewed me during my lecture at the Georgetown mosque.

I visited the Essequibo branch of AAIIIL and also Veiknam *Jamaat*. It was a very nice journey as we had to travel through a very rough river for two hours on a speed boat.

Mr. Farooq Amin and Mr. Mansoor Baksh accompanied us to these places. It was nice to meet all members of these *Jamaats*. We also visited Brother Farooq Amin's farmhouse and had a good time there.

The hospitality shown by members of the Guyana *Jamaat* is commendable.

Trinidad and Tobago

My visit to Trinidad was very successful and useful from the Center's point of view. We have seven mosques in Trinidad. All mosques are well established and well organized.

We were received by Brother Maulana Kemal Hydal and Brother Enayat Mohammed at the airport.

I had the opportunity to meet all members of AAIIIL Trinidad. I visited all mosques and met their *imams*.

The same night I had the opportunity to meet board officials and a member of AAIIIL. It was a very fruitful meeting.

A *jalsa* was arranged by AAIIIL Trinidad and I had the opportunity to deliver a speech and a Power Point Presentation about the life of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. It was appreciated by all. The programme was followed by a delicious dinner.

I delivered a speech at Gasparillo Mosque and had a Power Point Presentation about the differences between the two *Jamaats*. It was appreciated by all.

AAIIIL Trinidad is working very efficiently in the training and teaching of the youth. Maulana Kemal Hydal is giving classes regularly in various *Jamaats* and is doing a commendable job.

Maulana Kemal Hydal's son is also working for the propagation of Islam and Ahmadiyyat using sophisticated modern media. He has prepared an *Imamat* course for young *Imams*. This course is very beneficial for the training of young *Imams* and the whole course is well structured and well presented.

Members of the Trinidad *Jamaat* are very enthusiastic and active in the preaching of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. I had the opportunity to meet members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Literary Trust (AMLTL). Members gathered at the mosque and we had prayers in the mosque and then I had a brief presentation about the activities of the Central Anjuman. It was nice and pleasurable meeting. Brother Kalamazad Mohammed and Brother Enayat Mohammed are doing very good literary work, that is, translation and publication of literature. Brother Ashraf Ali and Sister Nafeesa are two very sincere and hospitable members of our *Jamaat*. They are playing a good role in the progress and prosperity of the *Jamaat*.

It was a memorable event of my life to meet all members of the Trinidad *jamaat*.

Holland

My visit to Holland was very short – four days – but was very beneficial from the Center's point of view.

I was received and welcomed by Mr. A.S Abdul Santoe and Mr. Nasrullah at Schipol Airport. It was very nice to meet my brothers there.

I was able to address members of two *Jamaats*, that is, AAIIILN The Hague, and the Stitching *Jamaat*.

AAIIILN The Hague *Jamaat* organized a well arranged programme. I delivered a speech and a Power Point Presentation to the audience, which was appreciated by all. It was followed a very interesting question and answer session.

I had a TV interview where I was asked about the situation of Ahmadiis in Pakistan.

I delivered four radio lectures in Rotterdam as well.

I had a good programme at AAIIIL Stitching where I had the opportunity to deliver a speech and Power Point Presentation about the claims of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. Brother A.S. Hoseni presented me with the first copy

of the Brail Holy Qur'an in Dutch. It's a unique work done by AAIIIL Stitching, which is much appreciated. I visited the library at Stitching. The programme was followed by a question and answer session.

The hospitality shown by A.S. Abdul Santoe Sahib and his wife, Aunty Sara, is highly commendable. May Allah help us all to work for the progress and prosperity of Islam and Ahmadiyya.

PRAYER & HEALTH NEWS

Request for *du'a-e-shifa* by Manfred Yahya of Germany for ailing father

My very dear brothers and sisters, *Salam Alejkum*.

I would have let you come a joyful message gladly rather, but that is sometimes doesn't live beautifully.

Since a total mental decay appears some weeks with my 83-year old father. He is the same like earlier no longer and his personality slowly however certainly aches to see me like itself dissolves. Still, we don't know exactly something he has, however there he as diabetics already for weeks and maybe months no longer measured and has splashed, also his whole life-rhythm is disturbed.

Still my wife Gabi, my son Matthias, who lives with us however no longer, could look after him, we can leave him alone in the house however no longer. I had already to cancel my trip for this reason to the Berlin Mosque and our dear brother Muhammad Ali in this week what has ached me very much. I pray to Allah, that we know CT and a neurological examination in approximately one week after one at least, say something he exactly has in order to be able to plan for the future. Then I hope and also pray to be able to travel in October to Berlin again at the latest.

Please have understanding for it, that I cannot take part unfortunately for these reasons in your Annual Meeting 2009 in England, although I had looked forward so very happy to it. Sometimes we don't understand ALLAH'S ways, but in the end they are in the interest of the people however. So I hope and pray to be able to visit you in the coming year maybe.

Please pray for my father and for my family that we can survive the coming hard times well.

I thank you of whole hugs and sends dear greetings & *Wasalam*.

Yours Brother Manfred Yahya

P.S. Please excuse my very poor English in that moments, but my nerves will not spend me the times to take a look for each word!

[The members of our global "Prayer Circle" are urged to please include in their prayers the father of Br. Manfred Yahya of Germany and all other ailing persons in our worldwide Jama'at and to seek Allah's mercy on them with a grant of early *shifa* without any pain, discomfort or suffering. *Aameen*. – Editor]

COMMENTARY

Reminiscences of Captain Abdus Salam Khan, California, USA

SOME FOND MEMORIES OF MAULANA AZIZ BUKSH

[Apropos the article about Maulana Aziz Buksh Sahib of blessed memory by Masud Akhtar Choudary Sahib in the March 2009 issue of the *HOPE Bulletin*.]

The excellent article on Maulana Aziz Buksh Sahib by Masud Akhtar Choudry brought to mind some snippets of Hazrat Maulana's life that would be of interest to your readers.

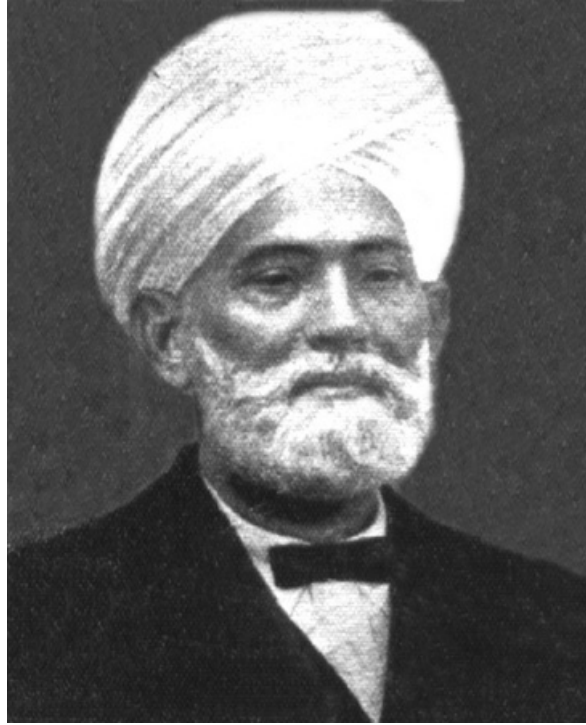
I was four years old when Maulana Aziz Buksh Sahib retired and settled in Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore in 1930. Since our cousin sister, Ruqayya Begum, Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali's eldest daughter, was Maulana's daughter-in-law, being married to his eldest son, Khan Sahib Rahim Bukhsh, we kids would often visit with them to play with her kids at Maulana's house. Maulana's British wife, affectionately known as "Tie" (an anglicized form of the Urdu word *ta-ee* or Taaya's wife) was an exceptionally affectionate and generous lady, who would always send for lemonade packed in glass bottles sealed with a marble from the grocery store down below and would offer it to us with ice. The way she had adapted to the oriental life-style was astounding. She remained devoted to her husband and family and managed the home, and when she did venture out to visit someone, she would be clad in a full *burqa*. She had difficulty hearing so Maulana used to communicate with her through writing on a blackboard. In the morning, before he left the house, he would write down the day's menu on the blackboard and she would faithfully carry out his instructions. I have rarely seen a more adjusted companionship than theirs. They fully negated Rudyard Kipling's "East is East, and the West is West... and the twain shall never meet." In their house East met West and flourished with love and affection. I believe she had been tossed about by the vagaries of World War I, and when she came to Maulana Muhammad Ali, who suggested his elder brother's match, she accepted and finally found a safe and secure haven after all her tribulations.

Another snippet concerns my dear friend Subedar Major Ghulam Nabi Sahib of blessed memory. He belonged to village Marhh Balowchaan near Sheikhpura, but was driven out in the 1930s along with his wife after they embraced Ahmadiyyat. They came to Lahore, destitute and penniless, and Maulana gave them shelter. Subedar Sahib's wife took over his kitchen and Subedar Sahib got a job in the Anjuman's office, where he started work under my father, who was editor of the *Light*. He went on to become a VCO in the Indian army during WWII, later a teacher at the Deaf and Dumb School, Lahore, and managed to raise an illustrious family of four sons and two daughters, finally settling down in Hamburg with his son, where he now lies buried. He always had fond memories of Maulana on how he had given him shelter at a crucial time.

Maulana's character and conviction are best illustrated on the occasion of the historic tea party that Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali hosted in Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's honour in the 1940s at his Muslim Town residence, a party during which the Quaid made a short speech eulogizing the eservices of the *Light* to the cause of the Indian Muslims. After his speech, Maulana stood up and, looking at the Quaid, spelled out to him what the Muslims of the sub-continent expected from him. It reminds one of the early days of Islam when the *Sahaaba* used to get up and admonish the Caliph.

Maulana Aziz Buksh was one of the spiritual luminaries produced by the Promised Messiah, a simple and pious man who never wavered in his convictions. May his soul rest in peace.

ALL ABOUT US



[Photo courtesy Dr. Zahid Aziz]

Life sketch of Hazrat Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib (d. March 1924)

(Based on the account in the compilation *Yad-i-Raftigaan*)

Translated and adapted by Akthar Masud Chaudary, Secretary, AAII, Hayward, CA, USA

Hazrat Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib was one of those persons who had pledged (taken *bai'at*) at the hands of the Promised Messiah in the early days of the latter's claim of being a *Mujaddid*, and thus was one of the earliest disciples of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib. And he was one of those who, in the face of great opposition and difficulties, rendered invaluable sacrifices and services to the cause of revival of Islam through Ahmadiyya Movement.

A scion of the Qanoon-go Shaikh family of Gujrat in Punjab, Shaikh Rahmatullah was one of the leading businessmen of Lahore. He had come to Lahore as a Government employee, drawing a monthly salary of ten rupees. Soon thereafter, he quit Government employment and opened a small shop in Anarkali Bazar, Lahore which, after some time, was expanded into a larger business under the name of Bombay House. By the grace of Allah and Shaikh Sahib's honest dealings and fair business practices, the business flourished so much that Shaikh Sahib rented a bungalow on the Mall, Lahore where he established his business under the name and style of "The English Warehouse".

How his business was flourishing can be assessed from the fact that in July 1903, when Sahibzada Abdul Lateef Shaheed was returning to Afghanistan, he, according to reports in *Al-Badr* etc., stayed in Lahore as a guest of Shaikh Rahmatullah, owner of Bombay House. The business in the Mall Road Bungalow was started some time after that date and by 1908 Shaikh Sahib had already purchased a commercial plot on the Mall Road where he had a plan to construct a two-storey building for his business. The Promised Messiah had promised to lay the foundation stone of the building when construction started. For some reason, the

construction could not be undertaken and the Promised Messiah passed away on 26th May, 1908. When the construction of the building commenced in 1912, Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din Sahib said:

“There are other newly constructed buildings around this building and yet more are under construction, but we have a special affiliation with this building, and this relationship is both personal as well as community based. Personal on account of the fact that the Promised Messiah had promised to lay the foundation stone of this building and a servant of Hazrat Sahib has fulfilled that promise today in his place, and community based relationship on account of the fact that our *Jamaat* has a share in the building, therefore, our members should pray from the depth of their hearts that its construction is completed in a goodly way and those who occupy this building may be righteous persons who love virtuous life. If they will be truthful, righteous, God fearing and believers, then Allah will multiply them and enhance their stature and as much business carried out in this building flourishes so much benefit our community will derive from it because there is a spiritual bond between the two” (*Badr*, Qadian, 17th June, 1912).

In fact, the business carried out in this building proved very beneficial for the *Jamaat*, as shall appear from the financial sacrifices made by the owner of this building and business.

As already stated, Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib had taken the *bai'at* of the Promised Messiah in the very early days of the latter's claim, after which he continued to render services to the cause of the Movement and always made generous donations in response to Hazrat Sahib's appeals for various projects initiated by him. Shaikh Sahib was a personal devotee of the Promised Messiah and as such was mindful of rendering all possible help to Hazrat Sahib in the discharge of his mission. Being cognizant of the fact that due to a large number of people visiting the Promised Messiah the household expenses of Hazrat Sahib were being spent on the guests, Shaikh Sahib used to regularly send one hundred rupees monthly to the Promised Messiah for his personal and household expenses. In addition to that, on every *Eid* or other special occasions Shaikh Sahib used to send the Promised Messiah a new set of clothes. He continued this practice with the Promised Messiah's family even after the passing away of the Promised Messiah, so much so that even after the division of the *Jamaat* into two sections in 1914 he used to send some money for the family. Some years later, Mirza Basheeruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Head of the Qadian group, refused to accept it.

When the Promised Messiah made an appeal in 1903 for the construction of Bait-ud-Dua adjacent to Darul Dhikar in the *Masjid*, Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib had borne all the expenses for its construction. He was always a willing and large hearted donor for the cause of Islam and many times his donations were in the thousands of rupees. According to Maulana Muhammad Ali, Shaikh Sahib's donations exceeded one hundred thousand rupees. After the split and the formation of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore in 1914, it was the generous donations by Shaikh Rahmatullah, along with Dr. Syed Muhammad Husain Shah Sahib and Dr. Mirza Yaqub Beg Sahib, that made it possible to run the new Lahore *Jamaat* financially.

For his personal devotion to the Promised Messiah, his dedication to the success of the Promised Messiah's mission, and for his piety and righteousness, Shaikh Rahmatullah was held in great esteem by the Promised Messiah. Whenever Shaikh Sahib visited the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Sahib would rise to receive him. The Promised Messiah once made the following observations about him:

“Shaikh Rahmatullah is a young, righteous and straight-forward person. He has a natural aptitude for true and sincere following and entertaining good opinion to such a great extent that through the blessing of this nature he can make great strides in this path. By temperament he is extremely humble and respectful, and signs of virtuousness are manifested in his appearance. He remains busy in service to his best. May Allah grant him a great share of taste of Divine love by saving him from the distractions of abominable things. *Ameen*, again *Ameen*” (*Izala-i-Auham*, 1891, page 808).

When the Promised Messiah wrote *Al-Wasiyat* (The Will) in 1905 and established the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya Qadian, he nominated Shaikh Sahib as a member of its Majlis-I Mutmideen (Council of

Trustees) and thereafter Shaikh Sahib remained a member of that body till 1914, practically participating in the affairs of that Anjuman. In 1914, due to the split of the *Jamaat* into two sections, Shaikh Sahib became one of the founders of teh Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore and was elected its vice-president, the position he held until his death. On account of his vast experience and wisdom of decision making as an entrepreneur, Shaikh Sahib had the ability of reaching to the heart of the matter quite quickly and solving complicated problems in a goodly way. The Anjuman benefited greatly from his opinion in the matters of running its day to day affairs.

Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib was a highly devout and God fearing person to the extent that be it prosperity or distress, grief or comfort, he never forgot to remember Allah. In addition to regularly offering obligatory prayers he used to offer *Tahajjud* and *Ishraq* (a prayer which is offered after sunrise) prayers every day without fail, and also used to offer *Nafal* prayers (supererogatory prayers). Maulvi Dost Muhammad Sahib (Editor of *Paigham Sulah*), who had a chance once to travel for about a month in a ship to England with Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib and also observed Shaikh Sahib's daily routine in England for three months or so, wrote that it would not be an exaggeration to say that Shaikh Sahib remembered Allah much and his heart was ever inclined towards Him. He had a very strong belief and faith in Allah and as result of this strength of belief and in spite of great influence and wealth he never forgot Allah even for a moment, and his love and devoutness to Allah ever kept increasing.

He used to lay great emphasis on prayers, and during *salah* he used to pray for the prosperity, good health and long life of the members of the *Jamaat* by name, so much so that he included the names of some of those who had chosen to become disciples of Mirza Basheeruddin Mahmud Ahmad. He used to constantly pray for them and events proved that his prayers about them were granted.

In connection with his business, Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib used to visit England almost every year, and he may have visited England about seventeen or eighteen times. He had taken a wife in England, from whom he had two sons and two daughters. They were in addition to his five sons and one daughter from his wife in Lahore. His descendents from his sons in Lahore are doing well in business.

A few days before his passing away, Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib prepared a will whereby he declared his children in Lahore and England as his heirs, getting shares according to the Islamic law of inheritance. He also left a portion of his property as a gift to the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore. At the time of dictating his will he addressed his sons in these words:

“I accepted a deal from Allah and I reaped great profits and prosperity thereby. If you keep that relationship with Allah you too will benefit a lot from it.”

Shaikh Rahmatullah Sahib suffered from diabetes for many years and he used to take regular treatment for it, but ultimately the diabetes took its toll and became the cause of his death. A few days before his passing away Shaikh Sahib had difficulty urinating and then the urination stopped completely, as a result of which poison spread in his body. Even in such a great condition of discomfort Shaikh Sahib was so content that when asked how he felt and he would respond: “I have no discomfort and I do not know why I am lying in bed.”

Before his death he was semi-conscious for some time and his near ones and friends were reciting the Holy Quran by his side when he breathed his last in a state of complete calm and quiet. May Allah shower His choicest blessings on the soul of this servant of His religion and grant it rest it in His highest bliss. *Ameen*.

Note by Dr. Zahid Aziz

In August 2006 we received an e-mail as follows from a lady in Canada:

“Dear Sir,

Today I have visited your website and found photos of my grandfather Sheik Rahmatullah. I believe he died in 1919 and I can find no record of him in the U.K., only on your site. I am keen to find any family I may have in Lahore and to find out the date of his birth or death or any further information you may furnish me with about this upright gentleman. I would be most grateful. My father told me that he used to stay at the Mosque in Woking as a young boy when his father came from Lahore.
Susanne Kumar”

I replied:

“Dear Susanne

Your e-mail was forwarded to me. I maintain the website: <http://www.wokingmuslim.org/> about the history of the former Woking Muslim Mission, with which he was closely connected.

I myself had tried unsuccessfully in the past to find information about Shaikh Rahmatullah’s descendants in this country. So it was quite thrilling for me to see your e-mail.

For the moment I am attaching a couple of pages from ‘The Islamic Review’, April-May 1924 issue, carrying an obituary of your grandfather.

There is more information I can send you, which I will do later. I may also be able to get information from some sources that I know. So I will contact you later.”

It was after I received her e-mail that I thought of looking in old issues of *The Islamic Review* and found this obituary. Our old magazines contain much more information about our elders than is found in our books such as *Yad-i Raftigaan* or *Mujahid-i Kabir*. When I was revising the English translation of *Mujahid-i Kabir*, the biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali, I added further material from our old magazines. (At least I benefitted from the extra information that I found, even if no one else has taken any notice of those additions!)

Susanne Kumar also sent me a photograph of the English Ware House owned by Shaikh Rahmatullah, which is reproduced in this bulletin. I have kept in touch with her now and then.



In 2007 she wrote to me asking if I could get her a copy of *The Source of Christianity* by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din because she had found out that the Khwaja sahib had dedicated it to Shaikh Rahmatullah. I found for her an old edition available at a second hand book retailer on the Internet. This book was first published in May 1924, so I assume that it was dedicated to Shaikh Rahmatullah because he had just passed away.

Obituary announcement in the *Islamic Review*

Shaikh Rahmatullah

We record with the deepest sorrow the death of Shaikh Rahmatullah, Vice-President of [Ahmadiyya] Anjuman-i- Isha‘at-i-Islam, Lahore, who departed this life on the 2nd of March, 1924, at 12.45 p.m.

Shaikh Rahmatullah was among the most devout Muslims of our time, and the story of his career is full of instruction — as illustrating in a singularly striking manner how true religion and unswerving probity may yet go hand in hand with commercial prosperity. Starting with a salary of less than one pound per month, he gradually built up a colossal business, of which the cost of the premises alone ran into many thousands of pounds.

He was the founder of the now famous Bombay House and English Warehouse at Lahore, and of other outstanding industrial activities, and — what is particularly remarkable, and may be commended as a concrete example of the essential truth of the message of the Holy Quran — he never took interest, or employed usury in any shape or form in any of his dealings. This, with him, was an abiding principle which Allah, in His mercy, amply justified.

Shaikh Rahmatullah visited England on no fewer than eighteen occasions. Not only was he an ardent supporter of the [Woking Muslim] Mission, but it may almost be claimed for him that he should stand side by side with Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the Mission’s saintly founder; and while Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was doing all the work of the London office of the *Islamic Review*, from editor to clerk, address-writer and stamp-sticker, Shaikh Rahmatullah was working in a precisely similar manner in the office at Lahore.

Until quite recently he acted as Honorary Treasurer of the Woking Muslim Mission; and it was the burden of advancing years alone that at length compelled him to relinquish that onerous responsibility.

His last words of advice to his sons — we may say to us all — were: “I started ‘trading’ with God, and He made me successful; and if you also will do the same, He will make you successful.”

The outstanding feature in the noble life of Shaikh Rahmatullah was his sincerity. Simple in his habits, his religion and his daily life were one. He died respected by all — loved by all.

Source: The Islamic Review, April-May 1924, p. 130-131.

FEATURE ARTICLE (ON FIJI)

(Courtesy *The Australian*)

Dealing with the Dictator by Graham Davis

Like many military leaders before him, Frank Bainimarama can be autocratic, stubborn, wilful, obstinate and disdainful of the traditional nuances of civilian politics.

He may also be the best hope, albeit in five years’ time, of a democratic Fiji for all its citizens and not just the amply endowed indigenous majority.

If that seems a ludicrous proposition when constitutions are being abrogated and the media proscribed, it's time to consider some basic truths that seem to have been overlooked in the "good guy, bad guy" narrative that invariably passes for analysis in much of the Australian media.

The bad guys, of course, are held to be Bainimarama and his patron, Fiji's octogenarian President, Josefa Iloilo, who have defied the courts by ruling out any popular vote until they can change the electoral system. The good guys are those calling for an immediate election: a coalition of lawyers, human-rights activists and elements of the local media, plus the man Bainimarama deposed at gunpoint in 2006, former prime minister Laisenia Qarase.

It's time to dispense with this simplistic premise because a compelling argument can be made that, in fact, the reverse is true; that Bainimarama and Iloilo, for all their flaws, are embarked on the more worthy crusade. Or certainly more worthy than they're being given credit for by their burgeoning number of foreign opponents.

The Fiji saga, by its very nature, defies simplicity, yet stripped to its bare essentials presents the international community with a stark choice between upholding the principle of democracy now and sacrificing racial equality in the process. Wait five years - maybe less if some international agreement could be brokered - and we might get both.

Bainimarama and Iloilo have decided that the brand of democracy Qarase champions makes second-class citizens of the 40 per cent of Fiji's population who aren't indigenous, and is not conducive to the development of a thriving, modern state. Qarase and his ilk, they've determined, can only be kept at bay if the electoral system is changed from one that favours indigenous Fijians to one that gives every vote equal weight.

So that is what they intend to do before the country goes to the polls again in 2014, and no amount of hectoring or sanctions is likely to deter them.

In the meantime, the regime needs to embark on that electoral reform, behave less erratically, cease harassing the media, expelling publishers, hounding its opponents and put its case far more cogently than it has.

Australia, in turn, needs to listen, assist in the electoral reform process and do all it can to prevent the collapse of the Fiji economy, which will hurt everyone but the elite and bolster our immigration queues when we can least afford it.

Why are Australia and the rest of the international community insisting on an immediate expression of the public will when Fiji's electoral playing field is yet to be levelled? That's the question that not only frustrates and angers Bainimarama, and fuels his increasing petulance, but perplexes many Fiji-born Australians such as myself.

For all the voluble calls by Kevin Rudd and Foreign Minister Stephen Smith for "a return to democracy in Fiji," they seem oblivious to the fact that there's never been real democracy in Fiji. That's right, never.

Certainly not the brand of democracy taken for granted in Australia, New Zealand, the US and in the European Union, those now casting themselves as righteous crusaders against Bainimarama's supposedly despotic rule.

There's no one-man, one-vote in Fiji but a contorted, distorted electoral system along racial lines that was always designed, in practice, to ensure indigenous supremacy.

This was a parting gesture of the British at independence in 1970 to their loyal Fijian subjects, along with guaranteed indigenous ownership of more than 80 per cent of Fiji's land area. It's certainly in stark contrast with the colonial dispossession of the native populations of Australia and NZ, and may account for the fact that many homes in republican Fiji still sport photos of the Queen.

No non-indigenous Fiji citizen can become the country's president, and just one, Mahendra Chaudhry, made it to the prime minister's office before he was removed at gunpoint in 2000.

Nor is the president elected. He is chosen by an unelected hereditary body called the Great Council of Chiefs, the apex of a social order that insists indigenous rights are paramount.

Fiji citizens of Indian, European, mixed race or other island heritage are disadvantaged comparatively in everything from land rights to "positive discrimination" programs in employment and education that solely benefit the indigenous majority. They even have to suffer the apartheid-style humiliation of listing their race on immigration arrival documents.

Would Australians and New Zealanders accept this? Not on your nelly.

So why the chorus of regional disapproval when an indigenous Fijian, Bainimarama, finally decides enough is enough?

Forty per cent of the population not only lives daily with this disparity of rights but, in the main, accepts it. Why? Partly in the spirit of acknowledging the importance to indigenous Fijians of their *vanua* (land and traditional ties) but mainly as the price of ensuring racial harmony. It's this largely unspoken consensus that's underpinned whatever success Fiji has had as a functioning multiracial nation to date.

Yet it also depends on indigenous Fijians displaying their own generosity of spirit or, more pertinently, not being too greedy in sequestering all the spoils for themselves.

What Qarase, Bainimarama's chief political opponent, did before he was overthrown in the 2006 coup was to cross an important line.

By insisting that indigenous Fijians gain coastal rights as well as land rights, and be paid cash by other citizens to swim in, fish in and even cross their seas, he demanded more from the other races than many regarded as equitable and fair.

By doing so, he recklessly jeopardised the delicate consensus on which Fiji's future as a viable independent entity depends.

Just as bad, in Bainimarama's eyes, Qarase's coastal bill raised the spectre of envy and conflict between Fijians themselves, for those living in remote areas would never be able to glean the riches available, for instance, to those holding the tourist industry to ransom.

For all their comparative advantages, many ordinary indigenous Fijians still maintain a barely disguised sense of grievance against other races, perpetuating the myth of a threat to their way of life.

This was the big lie of Fiji's first coup in 1987, the preposterous spectre of then military strongman Sitiveni Rabuka claiming indigenous interests were threatened because an indigenous Fijian, Timoci Bavadra, was surrounded by a brace of Indian cabinet members.

Ordinary Fijians should be asking their own leaders why they're still disadvantaged, because if they are being fleeced, it must be by their own elite who have been in control since independence. The political instability of recent years is all part of a crude tug of war between competing Fijian chiefs, career politicians

and (mostly) wannabe business types for the spoils that come with government: patronage, leverage, the dispensing of contracts and the accumulation of wealth.

The apotheosis of this was the 2000 coup led by the strutting George Speight, who was merely a puppet for a gaggle of opportunistic chiefs and commoners who used the Indians as scapegoats in a sordid lunge for power.

In an obscene echo of their atavistic past, the Speight clique trashed the supposed citadel of local democracy, the parliament, took hostage then Prime Minister Chaudhry, and proceeded to engage in an eight-week orgy of drunkenness and sex.

Enter the hero of that hour, but the man Rudd and much of the international community now casts as a villain nine years on.

Bainimarama, as military chief, tricked Speight into surrendering, and turned him over to the courts to be dealt with for treason. He also had to contend with a bloody mutiny in his own ranks in which he barely escaped with his life. Yet no one seems to ask a simple question. If he really wanted to be Fiji's dictator, why didn't Bainimarama impose his will then, when a grateful nation would have strewn garlands at his feet?

Instead, history tells us, he handed over power to Qarase, a one-time merchant banker whom he trusted to stabilise the country, lay to rest the racial bogey once and for all and return Fiji to a semblance of democracy.

What did Qarase do? Not just extend indigenous supremacy but bring some of the key players in the 2000 coup, who Bainimarama wanted punished, into the heart of government. Qarase got plenty of warnings to back off but didn't. It was only a matter of time before Bainimarama's fiery temper snapped.

Qarase never believed one of his own would oppose him, but it was a grave miscalculation based on his own ignorance of Bainimarama's background and attitudes.

Most of the Fijian elite come from exclusively Fijian schools but Bainimarama grew up with other races at Suva's Marist Brothers College, where the emphasis was on multiracial tolerance and nation building. His friends say the relationships he forged there are real and enduring.

He's said to be gripped with a sense of destiny yet has some glaring blind spots, such as a tendency to shoot his mouth off when the occasion calls for at least a modicum of diplo-speak.

More serious for even Bainimarama's staunchest supporters are some appalling lapses of judgment, including the latest, muzzling the local media and expelling foreign journalists such as the ABC's Sean Dorney.

The most glaring was when he reinstated his brother-in-law, Francis Kean, as head of the navy after Kean spent nearly two months in jail for killing an uncle of the groom at the wedding of Bainimarama's daughter. "What's wrong with that?" Bainimarama has testily asked interlocutors. Plenty.

Yet for many Fijian citizens, the military chief remains their best hope for a meaningful stake in the future, and if he can deliver on his promise of equal rights, all will be forgiven.

It's certainly a striking paradox that having forged vibrant, multicultural nations from their own monocultural origins, Australia and NZ should be condemning Bainimarama for trying to do the same in Fiji.

[Graham Davis is a Fiji-born journalist who reported successive coups for the Nine Network's Sunday program and is now a principal of Grubstreet Media.]

PUBLICATION

Media marvel of “Virtual Mosque” UK in You Tube delivery managed by Shahid Aziz

When you click on the following link you will first observe Dr Mujahid Saeed delivering the *khutba* at Darus Salam, London Mosque on “Good Morals”. *Jazak Allah!* In this very link there are a host of other *khutbas* delivered by Shahid Aziz, Dr. Zahid Aziz, Nasir Ahmad, Mushtaq Ali and others. All the *khutbas* are in English and can be of valuable resources to *Jama'ats* around the globe.

Jazak Allah! This is a commendable effort of the AAAIL UK *jama'at*. May Allah (*swt*) reward the organizers for their noble efforts in taking full advantage of the latest publishing technology available to them.

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/video.php>

Documentary showing Jesus died and was buried in Kashmir (courtesy Shahid Aziz)

The BBC television network broadcasted a documentary depicting that Jesus (may Allah be pleased with him) escaped Palestine after crucifixion and settled in Srinagar, Kashmir where he is buried after dying at a ripe old age. The full details in the documentary may be viewed by clicking at the following link. In this very link you will observe other documentaries and theories about the burial place of Jesus.

Alhamdollillah, such publicity give credence to our Ahmadiyya belief and the prophesy of Hazrat Sahib that Jesus (may Allah be pleased with him) escaped from Jerusalem and travelled to Kashmir where he is buried after death at a ripe old age.

<http://www.illuminatiarchives.org/religion/jesus-in-kashmirindiabbc-documentry-1/>

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Encouragement from Riaz Ahmed Choudhary, AAAIL Jammu, India

It was very interesting and informative to read about the life of Maulana Aziz Baksh in the *Hope Bulletin* and the much-needed attempt to make available for readers the life and work of Ahmedis for the cause of Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement in spite of having high academic qualifications for worldly gains.

Thanks for timely email and may Almighty Allah double your strength to put more efforts and hard work to continue to bring out the hope bulletin with more articles for the readers.

Appreciation from Jalal Ud Dean, Suva, Fiji

... I have read the March *HOPE Bulletin* and as expected, it is full of admirable reporting over a broad scope of coverage.

We may be a comparatively smaller *Jama'at* but the volume and intensity of exemplary articles and research work would rarely be seen in much large bodies. That is the spirit of Ahmadiyya.

Many of our *Jama'at* members are not privileged with globe-trotting and perhaps a liberal use of digital photographs may help projecting a more defined picture of our affairs elsewhere and also help in building bridges of understanding between our far-flung members.

HOPE MEMBER SERVICE

Recipe of the Month

Butter Chicken

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken cut up
- 1 tbsp tandoori masala
- 1/2 tbsp garam masala (cloves, cinnamon and cardamom powdered)
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1/2 tsp cummin powder (zeera)
- 5 tbsp of yoghurt
- Salt

Curry

- 2 tomatoes puree in a blender
- 2 onions chopped
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 1/2 tbsp butter
- 3 tbsp cream
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- Oil

Method of Preparation

- Marinate the chicken in the marinade for 1 hour.
- Heat oil in a non-stick pan and fry the chicken for 10 minutes.
- Remove the chicken and keep it aside.
- In the remaining oil fry the chopped onions till golden, then add the ginger-garlic paste and fry, sprinkle little water now and then, till the oil separates.
- Add the chilli powder, tomato paste and cook for 10 minutes.
- Add the butter, cream and the chicken.
- Mix well and cook till done.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION

Amazing electronic Holy Qur'an in Arabic

When you click on the link below you will observe an absolutely amazing display of the Holy Qur'an in Arabic with multiple functions. With the help of the mouse, the cover and each individual page can be flipped over. There is a page locator and any of the pages can be enlarged to make reading easier. Kindly open the link and see for yourself.

We dearly wish that an electronic version of Maulana Muhammad Ali's English translation and commentary of the Holy Qur'an can also be produced.

<http://www.quranflash.com/en/quranflash.html>

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