

Mr. Abdul Aziz Kashmiri
Editor, The Daily “Roshni”, Srinagar, Kashmir

Mr. Abdul Aziz Kashmiri was born on 10th June, 1919 in Srinagar, Kashmir. He joined the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in 1932 and became regular subscriber to the weeklies “The Paigham-i Sulh and “The Light”, Lahore. Started his career as a journalist by joining the staff of weekly “Al-Barq” in 1938. It was edited by Maulvi Muhammad Ayub Sabir, son of the late Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah, a well-known advocate of Srinagar. He also worked for sometime in the weekly “Khalsa Gazette” owned by Sardar Gaur Poorab Singh. Impressed by his journalistic capabilities, Pundit Prem Nath Bazaz, a well-known journalist and writer and also editor of daily “Vatasta” appointed Mr. Aziz as secretary of the Kashmir Press Conference. Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, president of All-India Muslim League, visited Srinagar in 1944. On the instructions of Pundit Bazaz, Mr. Aziz invited Mr. Jinnah to meet journalists of the Kashmir Press Conference. Mr. Jinnah accepted the invitation and wrote the following in reply:

Kooshik, Near Nishat
Srinagar
20th May, 1944.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of May 16th, and I shall certainly be glad to meet the local journalists as desired by you. If you would care to come to this place, which is no doubt very far from Srinagar city, and is convenient to you all. I shall be pleased to receive you all on Tuesday, May 23rd, at 11 a.m. at the above address.

Yours faithfully
Sd. M. A. Jinnah

The delegation consisting of leading journalists of Srinagar met Mr. Jinnah at his residence and various questions were asked to him. Mr. Aziz asked him as to who can be a member of the All-India Muslim League? At this point Mr. M. A. Sabir, editor of “Al-Barq” explained that the reason for asking the question was that Ahmadis had been debarred from becoming members of the Kashmir Muslim Conference, a political organisation of the Muslims of Kashmir. Mr. Jinnah smiled and replied as follows:

“I have been asked a vexed question regarding who, from among the Muslims, can be a member of the All-India Muslim League?. My reply is that as far as the constitution of the All-India Muslim League is concerned, it is clearly mentioned that every Muslim irrespective of his belief or sect can become a member of the Muslim League, provided he agrees with its beliefs, policy and programme, fills in and signs the membership form and pays the subscription of Ans. 2.00 . I appeal to the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir that they should not raise such sectarian questions and should gather together on one platform and under one flag. The success of Muslims lies in unity and this is the only effective way of making progress in political, social and economic fields. And this is how Muslims of Kashmir state and for that matter all other nations can also progress.”

In spite of this clear statement, Mr. Sabir insisted that Qadianis should be declared as out of the pale of Islam and tried his level best to win over Mr. Jinnah to his point of view. But Mr. Jinnah held on to his stand and said: What right I have to declare a person as a non-Muslim when he claims to be a Muslim.”

Proceedings of this meeting written by Mr. Aziz were sent to all the newspapers in the Kashmir State and also to leading newspapers of Lahore such as “Inqilab”, “Shahbaz”, “Zamindar”, “Siyasat” etc. It was also published in the fortnightly “Roshni”. Mr. Aziz sent two copies of the issue to Mr. Jinnah. He kindly acknowledged the receipt of the copies in a letter dated 29th May, 1944 which follows:

“Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your letter dated May 22nd with two copies of your journal “Roshni”, and I thank you for them. I shall certainly read them with very great interest.

Yours faithfully

Sd. M. A. Jinnah

Mr. Aziz started his own paper “Roshni” in February 1943 as a fortnightly. Then it became a weekly and since May 1977 it is being published as a daily.

Mr. Aziz has been serving the cause of the Muslims in Kashmir with commendable zeal and devotion.. Through columns of his paper he has rendered invaluable service in creating political awareness and promoting Urdu literature by providing balanced views and healthy criticism. But he is more known for his special interest in the research about Jesus’ visit to Kashmir and the mausoleum of Yuz Asaf in Mohalla Khanyar, Srinagar.

In early forties he accompanied Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, a well-known lawyer of Lahore to various places of historical and archaeological importance in connection with the visit of prophet Jesus to Kashmir. The former went through innumerable important books of history and documents found extant in various libraries and archives in Kashmir. Khwaja Nazir Ahmad published his research in the well-known book “Jesus in Heaven on Earth” from Lahore in 1952. But Mr. Aziz continued his research after Khwaja Nazir Ahmad left Kashmir in 1947 when situation in Kashmir at the verge of Partition of India became imminent. He published brief account of his research in Urdu in a special edition of his paper “Roshni” in December, 1953. With the passage of time interest of journalists and research scholars towards the exciting discoveries about Jesus’ visit to Kashmir and the mausoleum of Yuz Asaf increased. In 1954 came out an interesting book in Urdu published by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i Islam, Qalamdanpura, Srinagar, Kashmir entitled “Hazrat Isa aur ‘Isaayyat” (Prophet Jesus and Christianity). It contained articles by Mr. Aziz published in the special edition of “The Roshni” and also articles by a Muslim scholar, Dr. Aziz Ahmad, M.A., Ph. D., refuting Christian beliefs about Divinity of Jesus, Trinity and Atonement in the light of the Bible and the Qur’an. By sixties international interest in the subject of Jesus’ visit to Kashmir and his reputed mausoleum in Srinagar tremendously increased due to Ahmadiyya publications and research of western scholars on this subject. Therefore Mr. Aziz decided to publish English translation of his research in the form of a book viz., “Christ in Kashmir”. It was published in

January 1968. So far seven editions of the book have been published, of course every time adding more information and discoveries which came forth on this subject. In 1980 came out an Urdu booklet “Maqbarah-i Masih” (Mausoleum of the Messiah) which was text of Mr. Abdul Aziz’s speech delivered at the Annual Gathering of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i Islam, Qalamdanpura, Srinagar, Kashmir in December 1979.

In 1983 Mr. Aziz was invited by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at-i Islam, Trinidad and Tobago to deliver a series of lectures about his research on Jesus’ visit to Kashmir and his mausoleum in Srinagar. His lectures roused great interest in the press and his interviews were published in some of the leading newspapers of Trinidad. In March 1988, Mr. Aziz was awarded a certificate of commendation by Jamna Devi Gian Devi Saraf Trust, Jammu for his meritorious services to journalism in Kashmir for forty long years. Mr. Aziz is frequently visited and interviewed by foreign journalists regarding Jesus’ life and his final death in Kashmir as he is known for his commendable research in this regard. It created so much interest in foreign countries that a German team became interested in doing further probe into the mystery and were ready to establish a research Centre at a cost of 20 million Rupees. But the project could not materialise due to vehement opposition of the local Muslims. (O. N. Kaul, editor weekly “Leader”, Jammu, 5th Nov. 1985, p.4).

Mr. Aziz, besides editing the daily “Roshni” has also been contributing articles to various journals in Kashmir. His other notable booklets are “Asri Taqazey” (Contemporary Challenges) and “Zahoor-i Imam Mahdi” (Appearance of Imam Mahdi) and *Nigarishat* in 2001.

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