

Eid-e-Miladunnabi

Remembering the holy prophet (SAW)

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PROPHET Muhammad (SAW) was born on 22 April 570 AD, and according to the prevalent calendar of that time, on the 12th Rabiu-Awal (the third month of the year). He received his first revelation from Allah, the Merciful Creator, through the Angel Jibril on 12th February 610 AD. On the occasion of the 12th Rabiu Awal of the current Hijri year, we will profit by spending some time thinking of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and evaluating him. A very difficult task, because the personality is monumental, the records are plenty and our ability is questionable. The famous book, 'The 100A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History' by Michael J Hart published in 1987 begins with the short biography of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The author began by saying 'My choice of Muhammad (SAW) to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. Of humble origin, Muhammad (SAW), founded and promulgated one of the world's great religions, and became an immensely effective political leader. Today thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive'.

Indeed, as a Muslim I will submit that Muhammad (SAW) did not found and promulgated, but preached and gave the final shape to a 'deen' -- meaning code of life -- which was ordained by the Creator Allah for man, slowly and gradually, over centuries, through many Prophets. Indeed, according to Allah, Allah is the 'Rabb Alameen' (sustainer of the entire creation or universe) and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was designated as 'Rahmatullah Alameen' (welfare and mercy for the entire creation or universe). Therefore, the onus is on us, the people of the world who believe in the Creator Allah, in particular the Muslims, to realise as to how and in what many ways is this 'welfare' to be effective. This will call for constant and routine study of the life and teachings of the Prophet (SAW).

Rasul-Allah (SAW) was the miracle on earth from the very day Allah sent him to this universe ... from his very childhood ... his early days with his foster mother when his chest was opened by his Creator for the highest purification ... the days of his youth ... as a business man ... when Allah comforted him by shading him with moving clouds. Wherever Muhammad (SAW) travelled in the sizzling desert, Allah comforted him by lowering the branches of the trees where he sat for a while. Allah would not have created the Universe unless he had sent his beloved Rasul Muhammad (SAW). Allah created his beloved's RUH before the creation of this Universe. Our Rasul was an 'Ummi' Prophet which means illiterate. Although being such a

person yet he was the best of human kind, the friend of Allah, our creator's messenger and ambassador sent to this Universe. Is there any way we can measure the miracle of our Lord behind it?

Being Allah's servant we will be able to evaluate Rasul-Allah, only if Allah purifies our soul, and Allah uplifts us to that spiritual level to understand the entire life of our Holy Prophet. May Allah be kind enough to forgive our insincerity, impurity, and thoughtlessness while accomplishing this task.

To be a devoted believer, a sincere servant of Allah, a successful 'Ummat' of Rasul, we are to read the Quran and follow his Sunnah. But what crosses our mind is, if it is enough, then why we the Muslim Ummah are submerging in darkness, why are we cornered, why are we suppressed, why are we unable to set a track in front of our next generations, in front of all other races, of the rest of the world ... when the 'NOOR' of Muhammad (SAW), the DIVINE LIGHT of spirit is in front of us!!

It is all about the FAITH, the IMAN, the EMOTION, the LOVE of our CREATOR, for our beloved RASUL. Are we not meant to strive hard to stick to the highest level of FAITH in our life on earth? That's the TEST we have to face. Life is a TEST and the result is the AKHIRAT; FAITH is the base of all

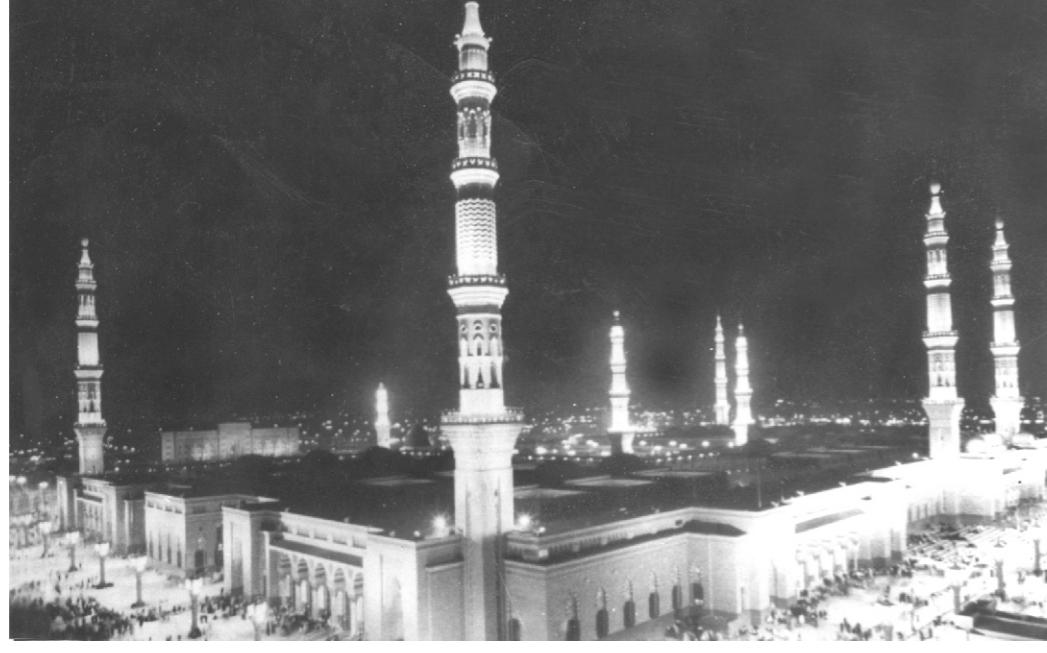
be with us in our tenure in this world. Rasul-Allah (SAW) will be waiting there at the end of the eternal tunnel for his beloved 'Ummah', to pursue his MASTER to reward his followers, May Allah bless him.

A model which can serve for every class of the people acting under different circumstances and states of human emotions will be found in the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). If you are RICH, there is the example of the tradesman of Mecca and the master of Bahrain's treasure. If you are POOR you can follow the emigrants of Medina. If you are a KING, watch the actions of the ruler of Arabia. If you are a CONQUEROR, lay your eyes on the victory of Badr and Hunayn. If you have suffered a DEFEAT, take a lesson from the one discomfited at Uhud. If you are a TEACHER, learn from the holy mentor of the school of Suffah. If you are a STUDENT, look at the learner who sat before Gabriel. If you are a SERMONER, direct your eyes to the discourses delivering lectures in the mosque of Medina. If you are a PREACHER to preach the truth and mercy to your prosecutors, observe the helpless preacher explaining the message of Allah to the pagans of Mecca. If you have brought your ENEMY to the knees, look at the conqueror of Mecca. If you want to ADMINISTER your lands and

eyes the poor and the rich were alike. If you are a HUSBAND, study the behaviour of the husband of Khadija and Ayesha. If you are a FATHER, go through the biography of Fatima's father and the grandfather of Hasan and Hussain ... Just name it ... name the human virtues ... that was all our Rasul-Allah (SAW) ... words are not rich enough, mere adjectives are powerless to describe him He was the man of the LIGHT ... the ETERNAL LIGHT ... the divine spirit just think of him, think of our Rasul-Allah (SAW). Keep him with you you will be blessed with the ETERNAL LIGHT, you will be purified with the divine spirit.

In Islamic terminology, the battles or other war-like expeditions in which Prophet Muhammad (SAW) personally participated, and naturally commanded, is called 'gazwa'. Out of the total 81 encounters that the Muslims had with the enemies during the Medina period, the Prophet (SAW) personally took part in 27. The first one was the Battle of Badar. Badar and the rest of the battles, were all defensive, and the Prophet (SAW) acted only when attacked. In a troublesome world it is a very strong indicator in favour of peace.

Not only the Muslims, the believers of different faiths have



The Mosque of the holy Prophet at Madinah

successes; say it worldly or spiritual.

Our Prophet Muhammad (SAW)'s life was the unconquerable fort of IMAN, castle of FAITH. How much can we grasp from his life by discussing, by evaluating his life? It depends upon our ILM or knowledge, upon our purity of faith. Those whose faith is unshakable, whose love for Rasul-Allah (SAW) is the purest of all love (Allah knows better), will be able to glimpse his NOOR, will have the essence of his life; his blessings will

properties, discover how the lands and groves of Bani-an-Nadir, Khaybar and Fadak were managed. If you are an ORPHAN, do not forget the child of Amina and Abdullah left to the tender mercy of Halima. If you are YOUNG, see the character of Mecca's shepherd. If you have a TRAVELING business, cast a glance at the leader of the caravan under way to Busra. If you are a JUDGE or a ARBITER, look at the umpire entering the holy sanctuary before the peep of dawn and installing Hajr Aswad in the Kaba, or the justice of peace in whose

also evaluated Prophet Mohammad (SAW). We began by quoting Hart. It is not a must to quote authors to praise our Prophet; but it is a respect to the authors for their views.

R.V.C. Bodley has written in his book, MESSENGER, "Mohammad (SAW) never accepted defeat. He was wounded, he bled, he was extremely tired to move himself, at the age of 56, still we see him chasing the enemy on the back of his stallion.....

...with immense spirit. Not a

single existence will be found....such a compassionate commandant, an extremely proficient war planner who was the best stimulant to his soldiers at the point of utter frustration". The famous English writer Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) invented a new theory in his book "On Heroes: Hero Worship and the Heroines in History". He said that the history of this world is actually the history of the greatest people. He discovered the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the best and the most sincere leader ever. He said "I want to use all n o b l e w o r d s a b o u t him.....as much as I am able to use". European historian Johanns Dallinger said, "Muhammad (SAW)'s religious, moral and political influence on human life is totally unparalleled from the beginning of this Universe till today".

Let us conclude by a final prayer:

"Oh ALLAH, forgive us, bless us, enlighten us with Muhammad (SAW)'s divine light, enable us to follow his footsteps in every sphere of this troublesome worldly life. Ease our life, purify our desires with the glow of his LIGHT, with the essence of his divine spirit. Sanctify our personal, official, social-cultural, political, national activities, sanctify our spirit, our inner most thoughts, our religious thoughts with Muhammad (SAW)'s teaching,with Muhammad (SAW)'s knowledge, with Muhammad (SAW)'s legacy, with Muhammad (SAW)'s divine inspiration.

We are hopefully fortunate to enter the twenty-first century, of course, with hopes, but also with despair, and some areas of moral degradation for lack of right mindfulness. And without peace and right mindfulness of people the future is certainly bleak. A sense of uncertainty and destruction is stalking the mankind as well as nature. A peaceful world precludes proper management of the nature and all living beings. Declared or undeclared wars here and there are destroying innocent lives, civilization and the flora and fauna of the nature. The concept of global village, open market economy and all nations and peoples' protection under the umbrella of United Nation needs proper care and attention by all, who are at the helm of statecraft across the world.

Buddha Purnima

'Let all beings be happy'

UDAYAN BARUA

BUDDHA Purnima, i.e. a full moon day of Baishakha, the first month of the year in Bengali calendar appears as a reminder of a superman, who ardently and religiously wished 'Let all beings be happy'. On this day, Goutama, son of king Suddhodana in Nepal was born. Attained wisdom (Buddhata) and passed on to 'nirvana', i.e. put an end to sorrow and passions. The Buddhist community all over the world observes this day with festivity and prayer for the well being of all.

The Buddha's first message to his disciples is "Go on to all fronts for the welfare and well-being of many". He asked all to conquer the heart of the enemy with compassion and equanimity. The preaching and spread of Buddhism has never been tainted by any bloodshed. The Buddha in 'Sutta Nipata' said, "Think not of the outward appearance of sense. Give up latent pride. Thus eradicating pride, you shall fare on in perfect place." The Buddha's last message before passing on to 'Nirvana' (last breath) was, "Morality, concentration, wisdom and deliverance supreme". This write-up is only a microscopic glow of what the Buddha thought of and left behind for the forlorn mankind.

We are hopefully fortunate to enter the twenty-first century, of course, with hopes, but also with despair, and some areas of moral degradation for lack of right mindfulness. And without peace and right mindfulness of people the future is certainly bleak. A sense of uncertainty and destruction is stalking the mankind as well as nature. A peaceful world precludes proper management of the nature and all living beings. Declared or undeclared wars here and there are destroying innocent lives, civilization and the flora and fauna of the nature. The concept of global village, open market economy and all nations and peoples' protection under the umbrella of United Nation needs proper care and attention by all, who are at the helm of statecraft across the world.

This article is not intended to malign any nation, country and people of any faith or religious or ethnic affiliation. The humble thought on this sacred day is what concerns all. On this solemn day, the appeal to the conqueror and the vanquished is to come to terms of peace of mind and embrace each other for relinquishing arms, hatred and war in order to save the mankind as well as the nature around. Let all religious leaders of all countries come to a platform and decide that all human beings have the right to live together in peace despite their different respective religious and other affiliations. Let religious leaders decide a day in a year to be the day of all religions when all religious leaders shall sit, eat, think and pray together for peace and happiness of all. People of all ranks and affilia-

tion shall join this day across the world for purifying their minds of ills so far vitiating us for poor culture of ignorance and fanaticism.

On this auspicious day of Buddha Purnima, if this humble appeal at all touches the hearts of benign people at different places and positions, who are responsible for shaping the future of the world, this piece of prayer may be fulfilled for the noble cause of a prosperous and peaceful mankind.

Conclusively, "Let all beings be happy". In fine, I would conclude quoting from Dhammayada as under,

"Rare is birth as human beings
Hand is the life of mortals,
Do not let slip this opportunity."

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A great harbinger of peace and amity

KAZI AULAD HOSSAIN

SINCE IT IS NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE TO PRESENT HERE A COMPLETE PICTURE COVERING ALL THE ASPECTS OF THE EVENTFUL AND CHEQUERED LIFE OF OUR HOLY PROPHET HAZRAT MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM) IN SUCH A SHORT SPACE I WOULD LIKE TO DWELL ONLY ON ONE PARTICULAR BUT VERY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF HIS LIFE AS REFERRED TO ABOVE.

What was the social condition of Arabia at the time when the prince among men, the greatest of all men of all times, emancipator of mankind and friend of Allah came to this mundane world in Mecca some more than fourteen hundred years ago from now? The people were mostly idol worshippers and there were more than 300 idols carefully placed inside the Ka'ba which the Meccans and other people worshipped. The concept of Unity of Allah, that is, Allah is One and only One was something quite unknown to them. There was complete lawlessness in the soci-

ety. Bloodshed on a flimsy ground, strife, rape, murder, arson etc were order of the day. There were tribal feuds and people practised polygamy, polyandry, and usury. In short, there was no peace in the society and everywhere peace was the first casualty. And last but not the least, the Arabs, particularly the men folk, were fond of "war, wine and women".

When such a dreadful and unhappy situation was prevailing in Arabia, the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh), son of Hazrat Abdullah was born in Mecca on 29th August 570 AD, and he came to this world as harbinger of peace and the religion he founded after. Merciful Allah -- the Lord of the worlds ("Rabbul Alameen") -- was graciously pleased to reveal unto him the Holy Qur'an and bestow prophethood on him for the guidance of the whole of mankind -- "Islam" the religion of peace. Since the term "salam" means peace and being the root

word it has a great bearing on the significance and connotation of the word "Islam". So, Islam stands for peace and it champions the cause of peace. Islam was founded, preached and propounded by the holy Prophet (pbuh) at a time when there was no peace in Arabia, when there was complete lawlessness, chaos, and confusion. As a great harbinger of peace he brought peace to strife-torn Arabia through Islam. And in the language of the Holy Qur'an Islam is also the "chosen religion of Almighty Allah".

Of many concrete and shining examples of the holy Prophet's great love and anxiety for peace I may cite just three example:

(1) Because of the flagrant violation of the historic Hudaibya Treaty by the Meccan Quraish and finding no other alternative the holy Prophet (pbuh) was obliged to invade Mecca with 10,000 soldiers in 630 AD. While on his way to Mecca the holy Prophet made a halt at a place and here the leader of the Meccan Quraish Abu Sufyan (a cousin and an arch enemy of the holy Prophet and his message) came out of Mecca with his two companions and tried to observe (as a spy) from distance the position of the military camp of the Prophet (pbuh). And while doing so he was arrested by Hazrat Omar Farooq and brought before the

holy Prophet (pbuh). But it was the holy Prophet's magnanimity that he forgave his long-time bitter enemy and the enemy of Islam. And Abu Sufyan was so overwhelmed and impressed by the holy Prophet's such unexpected behaviour that he embraced Islam instantly. Such example of forgiveness is very rare in history.

(2) The holy Prophet (pbuh) resumed his onward march towards Mecca with his 10,000 soldiers and the unbelieving Meccan Quraish did not dare oppose the holy Prophet's army this time and he entered the city of his birth after long eight years unopposed. In history this conquest is known as "conquest of Mecca" and this was the conquest without any bloodshed which is rare in human history. The victor forgave the vanquished -- the unbelieving Meccan Quraish who oppressed the holy Prophet and his companions for long thirteen years during their stay in Mecca and before their migration ("Hijrat") to Medina. He forgave all their past misdeeds. The kind-hearted Prophet (pbuh) was graciously pleased to declare general amnesty to all people of Mecca and this kind and noble gesture of the holy Prophet (pbuh) is again rare in human history. According to renowned historian

Moor "the holy Prophet's magnanimity for the people of Mecca who abandoned him so long scornfully is indeed praiseworthy". In this connection we may also recall what another noted historian Syed Amer Ali says. He has aptly observed: "But in the hour of triumph every evil suffered was forgotten, every injury inflicted was forgiven, and a general amnesty was extended to the population of Mecca".

(3) As a young boy of 12 years only, the holy Prophet (pbuh) endeavoured to establish peace in the society. In the lunar month of Zilqad warfare was prohibited in Arabia but unfortunately war broke out between the leaders of different tribes in 582 AD while participating in a fair known as "Ukaz Fair" and many people died in this sacrilegious war. Since the Hashemites of the Quraish tribe were also a party to this suicidal war the holy Prophet's uncle Abu Talib also took a side being a member of the Hashemite family. This war ached the tender hearted young Muhammad (pbuh) and with a view to bringing peace and amity among the fighting leaders of different tribes he formed a peace committee under the style "Hilf-ul-Fazul" with the help of his another uncle (young Zubair) and in accordance with the names of its four important members viz: Fazal, Fazal, Fazael and Mufazzel. And the members of this Peace Committee took oath in the name of Almighty Allah saying: We will help the helpless and the needy; We will vehemently resist the oppressor and help the oppressed; We will maintain peace and discipline in the country and We will endeavour to establish amity among the different tribes.

So, the holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) devoted his whole life right from his boyhood till his demise, to the cause of peace. This is the holy month of Rabi-ul-Awal, the month in which the holy Prophet (pbuh) was born. Let there be peace and amity everywhere in this world where people are yearning for peace day-in and day-out, yes peace for which the holy Prophet (pbuh) devoted his whole life.

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