

The Turkish offensive against Kurdish groups

BY: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Since 2015 Kurdish fighters in Northern Syria were a crucial US ally in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The Kurdish People's Protection Unit, or YPG, joined with Arab groups and created the Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF. The United States, Britain, France, and other countries gave military support to the SDF. Kurds were at the forefront of the alliance. The growing influence of the Kurds was seen with caution and fear by Turkey. The leadership believed that such an influence might empower



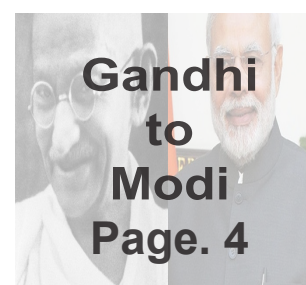
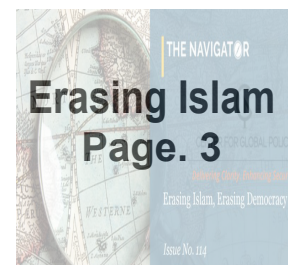
Kurds to create a country of their own with the support of the West. Turks have been fighting the Kurdish movement

of greater autonomy and freedom for the last 100 years or even during the Ottoman Caliphate.

Turkey has its own

problem and one of the problems stems from the Kurdish movement of au-

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Mahjabin Haque is the First Bangladeshi Woman to Join NASA

By: Aysha Qamar

Graduate of Wayne State University and Bangladeshi American Mahjabin Haque has been recruited as a software engineer at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). This position gives her the title as the first Bangladeshi woman to join NASA.

Haque graduated with her bachelor's degree in



Computer Science and Engineering from Wayne State in Michigan earlier this year.

While studying, Haque was an intern at two departments of NASA. She

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Ethiopian Prime Minister wins Nobel Peace Prize

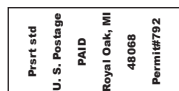


By TMO Staff

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed won 2019 The Nobel Peace

Prize for his sweeping reforms and bold action in bringing to an end of a

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Muslim Woman Denied Employment over Prayer Break

By TMO staff

In September 2018, Shahin Indorewala applied for a junior management position at Fast Track Management Inc., a marketing company in Virginia.

Indorewala states in a press conference in Falls Church, Virginia that she was brought back for the second interview to discuss logistics of her employment by an assistant manager. During the second meeting, the assistant manager informed her of what her daily schedule would look like such as a two-hour lunch break.

Hearing that she was allotted a two-hour lunch break, Indorewala said, "that's kind of a long lunch break, but is it possible for me to take a shorter lunch break and instead take five minutes throughout the day to pray." After she requested short breaks for prayer, she met the CEO of the company, Ramses Gavilondo.



Indorewala claims that he pointed to her headscarf and became very loud with various hand movements. Indorewala recalls Gavilondo remarks, "He was just like 'Religion, we don't want that here. We don't want these religious shenanigans here.'" Indorewala

said that this event took place in front of other employees and other interviewees.

"I felt very humiliated, but first I was just shocked ... am I really being made fun of because of my religion in public? I was pretty

hurt and pretty embarrassed," Indorewala said in during a press conference.

Gavilondo has responded to the allegations against him and stated that Indorewala "wanted to preach her religion" and that in his company

"we ask people to keep religion to themselves." He has also stated that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigated Indorewala's claims of discrimination and did not find anything wrong. However, this claim has not been confirmed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and there are no available records of a completed investigation.

If it is found that Gavilondo is in violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, then there will be repercussions that could harm the company overall.

Indorewala is working with her lawyers to prove that two five-minute breaks would not have delayed or halted any work at Fast Track and Gavilondo's claims are false. While she continues her case, Indorewala is currently working as a counselor for autistic children.

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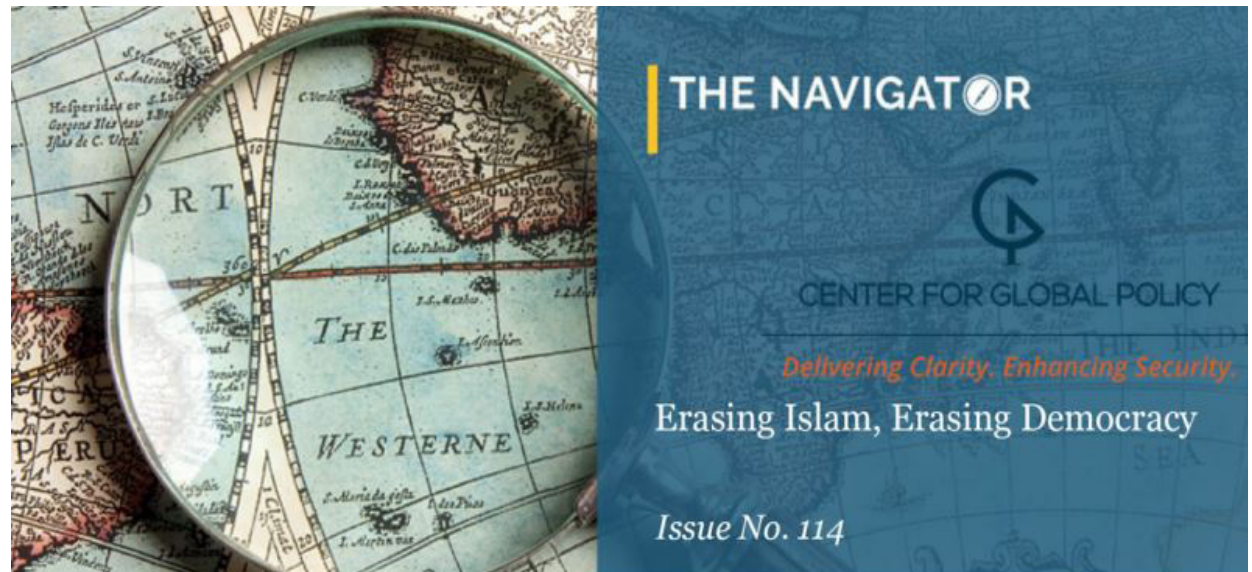
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Erasing Islam, Erasing Democracy



By: Muqtedar Khan

Several democracies seem determined to erase the Islamic presence and heritage from both their present and their past. While these countries may not succeed in their efforts against Islam, what they might achieve in this futile process is damaging democracy by unleashing a rabid form of Orwellian negative nationalism.

Israel's second election in 2019 resulted in a deadlock, without giving any party or coalition a clear governing majority. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu first refused to accept the result, because this was not the time, in his view, for Israel to not have a Zionist government. Then he proposed that no ruling coalition should include the Arab List that represents 18% of Israelis who are Muslims and 2% who are Christians. The Arab List happens to be the third largest party in the parliament. Both his refusal to accept the outcome and his insistence that Arab List members, who are Israeli citizens, must be excluded from the governing coalition damages democracy and reduces Arabs to second-class citizen status. Excluding Muslims and Christians (Christians are a small minority — make no mistake, this is about excluding Muslim voices and votes) from governance erases their right as citizens to play the same role in the Israeli democracy that Jewish Israelis enjoy.

The electoral uncertainty is forcing Israel to choose between democracy and Zionism. Ironically, George Orwell, in spite of his latent anti-Semitism, had used Zionism as an example of positive nationalism and anti-Semitism as an example of negative nationalism. Positive nationalism, in his view, is a strong sentiment

in favor of one's own country or people, and negative nationalism is antipathy toward another group. Netanyahu and the Israeli right wing's contempt for Israeli Arabs is moving Zionism from the positive nationalism column to the negative nationalism column, and by seeking to erase Arab citizenship to defend Zionism, it is moving Israel out of the democracy column.

While some will be tempted to argue that Netanyahu's defeat will save Israeli democracy, remember that much of Netanyahu's anti-Arabism resonates among a large segment of the Israeli population. There is very little ideological difference between Likud and its alternative, Kahol Lavan.

Meanwhile, in India, which prides itself on being the world's largest democracy, a rabid form of Hindu nationalism is playing from the same script as it tries to erase the presence of Islam and Muslims. Since coming to power in 2014 and again in 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have resorted to an openly hostile approach to Muslim minorities.

Hoodlums protected by members of Modi's party lynch Muslims publicly, often without any consequence. Police officers rape Muslim women, and politicians incite mobs to massacre Muslims. The government itself has undertaken elaborate long-term initiatives to disenfranchise Muslims and take away their citizenship, previewed in the campaign in the northeastern Indian province of Assam. Detention camps are being built in India to indefinitely imprison those whose citizenship has been nullified. Hindu ideologues are calling for the National Register of Citizens to be developed

nationwide to either expel minorities or at least keep them from voting.

The latest and the most egregious effort to erase Muslims was in the elimination of the statehood of Kashmir, thereby ending Muslim representative governance in the only state in India with a Muslim majority. For decades, India rejected multilateral interventions in the dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, insisting that the issue must be resolved only through bilateral means. Then, in a unilateral move, India eroded the special constitutional status of Kashmir, relegating it from the status of a state to that of a federal territory, and kept the entire population under lockdown at gunpoint for the past two months. Nearly 500,000 Indian security personnel today control the Kashmir valley, making it look like a major military occupation.

Renaming Muslim places is now routine in India. From changing names of cities and sports stadiums to questioning citizenship, the negative nationalism of BJP is trying to eliminate the deep Islamic presence and heritage in India. National Public Radio in the United States recently made note of this erosion of Muslim heritage. But in pursuit of this goal, Hindu nationalism has dealt several blows to India's democracy. The country's constitution, law enforcement agencies, and governing institutions have all been compromised and recruited in an effort to erase Muslims.

An illustrative case is that of Myanmar, which from 2012-2015 was rapidly moving up the charts of the freedom index. But in 2017, the country started an ethnic cleansing campaign against Rohingya

Cont. on page 15.

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From Mahatma Gandhi to Narendra Modi



By: Khalid Javed Rizvi

During his world forum speech at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA74), Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan disclosed the racist ideology of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He accused Modi of being a “life-long member” of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The assassin of Mahatma Gandhi, Nathuram Godse, was a member of Hindu nationalist group (RSS).

For the reader, it would be interesting to go through the historical fact and truth excerpt from the most authentic writer on the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi:

“On January 31, 1948, the world awoke to a shocking headline. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, commonly known as Mahatma Gandhi) the spiritual leader of India and the world’s most famous pacifist was dead. He had been shot and killed the day before at a prayer ceremony in Delhi, India. His assassin was Nathuram Godse, a member of the Hindu nationalist group (RSS). Godse was angered by what he saw as Gandhi’s, appeasement of India’s Muslim population.” (Darkness Everywhere: The Assassination of Mohandas Gandhi by Matt Doeden)

By 1947 the two-nation

solution had prevailed. Violence broke out as Hindus moved out of lands that would become Pakistan and Muslims moved out Hindu controlled India. An estimated five hundred thousand people died as a result of the violence. Gandhi was bitterly disappointed. “I have not convinced India (of my vision),” he had said then according to Doeden’s book. “There is violence all around us. I am a spent bullet “

Even so, Gandhi continued to speak out in favor of peace and cooperation among all Indians. On January 12, 1948, he began a five-day fast, vowing not to eat until greater unity among religious groups in India existed. This behavior enraged some Hindus, who believed that his sympathy for Muslims meant that he was turning his back on his own people.

To many, Gandhi represented everything good about humanity. He stood for peace, tolerance, self-sacrifice and unity. He fought oppression, not with guns or fists but with his mind and his heart. Gandhi was a key inspirational figure for the young American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. Other dynamic leaders who were touched and changed by Gandhi’s message include South Africa’s first

black president Nelson Mandela, Tibet’s Dalai Lama, Poland’s human rights activist Lech Walesa, Mexican American civil rights activist Cesar Chavez, musician John Lennon and U.S President Barack Obama.

It’s an irony that the assassins of Gandhi, Godse and his collaborator Narayan Apte were sentenced to death on February 10, 1949. Although they both were hung on November 15, 1949, the ideologue of “Hindutva” coined by V.D Savarkar had not been uprooted with present-day India being ruled by RSS /BJP.

Now, Modi is subjugating the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi as well as promoting the racist ideology of Hindutva. During Modi’s government, Godse temple was built where Godse is glorified and is worshipped.

Recently, Trump termed him as “Father of India at the Howdy, Modi event on Sept. 21. It’s a surprise that this was not even corrected by Modi’s administration but rather defended.

One nation with two fathers.

Over and above, it is shocking that Vicky Mittal, Indore BJP IT Cell in-charge demanded that in order to decide who is more popular in India, Gandhi or Godse, the pistol of Godse which was

used to murder Gandhi should be put on auction.

Modi has had built the statue of Sardar Patel as a statue of unity of 182 meters costing \$ 500 million approximately.

But why not Gandhi?

It was Patel who lifted the ban on RSS in July of 1949 and failed to punish the real brain behind Gandhi’s assassination.

Arundhati Roy, a critic of Modi and writer of The Ministry of Utmost Happiness, said there are elements of fascism in the Indian Prime Minister’s politics.

“If you look at the games that have been played, the false flag attacks, the trail of deaths, of murders, of lynchings, you see fascism,” Roy told Aljazeera.

Muslims were massacred in the Indian state of Gujarat, where Modi was the chief minister and head of the RSS/BJP coalition. The official death toll exceeded 1,000, though some say the figures are higher. In 2005, the United States declined to issue him a diplomatic visa on the grounds that he was responsible for the 2002 riots and the United Kingdom also criticized his role in 2002.

On August 5 Modi abrogated Article 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution making Kashmir a part of India and granted resident rights and

privileges respectively. By dissolution of article 35A, it is an attempt to include Israeli-style settlements and Tibet-style population transfers.

“The Indian government has confined about seven million Kashmiris to their homes and imposed a complete communications blackout,” Roy wrote in an article, Silence is the Loudest Sound, published by the New York Times Aug 15. “The whole world needs to turn its attention to Kashmir because we are in a very, very dangerous situation there,” she added.

On another occasion, Roy responded to a question put forth by BBC show Newsnight host, Evan Davis, with “Modi is worse than Trump because he enjoys the support of all the elite institutions in India in his extremist propaganda, including the judiciary and the media.”

In Modi’s India, Hindutva has more acceptability and validity than the constitution.

It is feared that the constitution of India originally designed with Gandhi’s philosophy of nonviolence, democracy and a secular country could be transformed into the ideology of Hindutva of RSS.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness: You Are Not Alone

By: TMO Contributor

I came to know this month that around 40,000 people die every year from suicide in the U.S, with 47,173 Americans dying from suicide in 2017. As September, Suicide Awareness Month comes to an end, I cannot overlook the importance of awareness regarding these statistics.

I recently met with someone who had a family member commit suicide a few years ago. The individual mentioned how even over the years since the incidence "you never get over it or just move on".

However, she mentioned that for her the only way to decrease the pain of the loss was to realize that the person was suffering a disease just like any other disease. "I have come to accept that I was not aware of how much her mental illness, her depression, was tormenting her," she explained. "The suffering



Suicide Awareness and Prevention

was to the point where she was not thinking about how her suicide will affect me."

Mental illnesses that lead to suicide do not discriminate based on age, gender, ethnicity or religion. Suicide deaths have increased across every demographic in almost every state in the past few years. People from all backgrounds fall victim to it, whether they are young or older, rich or poor, whether it is someone we personally

know or a famous media figure such as just last year we learned about the tragic death of designer Kate Spade.

The reasons for suicide have been discussed many times. According to Patrick J, Skerrett's Harvard health blog, "Every suicide, like every person, is different." Although in his article, he goes on to point out some situations that put an individual at higher risks in the short term such as an episode of

depression, a significant loss, illness or medication that triggers a change in mood, etc.

Suicide often does not have a warning. Most people are not aware of suffering individuals' internal battles. Individuals that are suffering and considering suicide must know they can receive help and support. Getting help is the answer. Suicide is not. Perhaps that is the reason why most religions and countries prohibit suicide.

Loved ones of these individuals need to recognize the individual's need for support and understanding. Coming across anyone who seems to be suffering and considering suicide, we should not be afraid to assist with support in discouraging suicide.

We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. 1-800-273-8255

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States.

The Lifeline is available for everyone, is free, and confidential. See below for additional crisis services and hotlines.

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Kashmir should be free

by Tariq A. Al-Maeena

October 27th, 1948, is forever scarred in the collective minds of the Kashmiri people as the day they became occupied. And more recently the arbitrary abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution by the BJP government which gave special status to the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir signaled the tightening of the armed occupation of a people and stands as a collective affront to freedom, justice and honorable people throughout the world.

The historical dilemma began in 1846 with the illegal, immoral and inhumane sale of the historic state of Jammu and Kashmir to a non-Kashmiri Dogra family for services rendered to the British Raj. From that point, onwards, Kashmiri's have long for self-determination.



Yet, tragically, their legitimate aspirations were crushed with the grotesque, irregular and illegal ascension, by the brutal foreign ruler Maharaja Hari Singh who did not have the consent of the people. With the arrival of Indian soldiers – the historic Black Day of Occupation begins its most recent and insidious manifestation.

Historically, the Kashmir dispute is a fall-out

of the Partition of India. The Muslim-majority parts of British India became Pakistan, and the Hindu-majority regions became the Dominion of India. There were, at that time, some 575 princely states in India under indirect British rule. Lord Mountbatten gave them the choice of joining either India or Pakistan and instructed that their choice must be guided by the religious

composition of their populace as well as by the borders they might share with either India or Pakistan.

Since more than 85% of the population of the state at that time were Muslims; the major rivers in the state flowed into Pakistan; the state shared a border of over 750 kilometers with Pakistan; the only road connecting Kashmir with the outside world

throughout the year passed from Srinagar to Rawalpindi; and the majority of the people of the state had cultural and historical ties with the people of Pakistan, it was a natural assumption that the area would accede to Pakistan.

On October 26, 1947, the Hindu ruler of Kashmir said his Muslim-majority kingdom would accede to India and not join newly created Islamic Pakistan. Kashmir has since been claimed by both India and Pakistan, and roiled with violence, involving Indian troops and Muslim militants. So far 43,000 people have been killed, officials say, but human rights groups put the toll at 60,000

However, in October 1947 the Indian Army entered the state introducing the intrusion of Indian forces. Kashmir has since been

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AFMI's 29th Annual Convention Calls for Preserving the Plural Values of India



By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

About three hundred fifty to Four Hundred people from Columbus, OH, and neighboring cities attended the 29th annual convention of the American Federation of Muslims of Indian origin, (AFMI) held on September 28, at the prestigious Renaissance Hotel with Padma Bhushan Moosa Raza and Dr. Angana Chatterjee as keynote speakers.

Chennai-based Indian Moosa is a former I.A.S. officer who served as principal secretary to the chief minister of Gujarat and chief secretary of Jammu & Kashmir government and as an advisor to the UP governor, secretary to the government of India the cabinet secretariat and the ministry of steels. He was awarded the prestigious Padma Bhushan by the President of India. He supervises several educational institutions in India and is fluent in Persian, Urdu, Arabic, and Gujarati apart from English and his mother tongue Tamil.

Angana P. Chatterji is an Indian anthropologist, activist, and feminist historian. She focuses mainly on India and she has studied majoritarianism, gendered violence and human rights in Kashmir and communal violence in Odisha. She

co-founded and was a co-convenor of the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Kashmir from April 2008 to 2012. In November 2010, Chatterji's husband, Richard Shapiro, was denied entry to India by immigration authorities at the Delhi airport and was forced to return to the United States. Though no official reason was given to Shapiro for the denial of entry, many suspects that he had been denied due to Chatterji's work on human rights issues in Kashmir. Chatterji co-edited, with Thomas Bloom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot, the 2019 book Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism is Changing India, in which contributors discussed how Hindu nationalism

has influenced Indian government bodies and social sectors since 2014.

The other speakers included, Dr. Nakadar, the founder of the American Federation of Muslims of Indian origin, Siraj Thakur, the current President of the organization, Dr. Akbar Muhammad, the incoming President, Dr. Sanaullah Khan, the President-elect,

Professor Muqtedar Khan, a renowned Muslim scholar teaching at the University of Delaware, Dr. Mike Ghose, a well-known Washington based activist, Mr. Ghalib Begg, an author of Indian origin, Dr. Iqbal Ahmed, Dr. Razia Ahmed

Dr. Hussain Nagamia, Dr. Qutbuddin, Dr. Mubin Syed. Saeed

Patel, Babu Khalfan, Shafi Lokhandwala, Arif Motorwala, Ayub Khan, Dr. Azeem Uddin, and many others.

Welcoming the guest, Dr. Nakadar shared a brief history of the organization and its work in the field of education. He said that through honoring the high achievements in higher and higher secondary schools, the organization motivated millions of students to compete and achieve higher grades and go to higher education. AFMI has honored more than 3,000 students at its annual national conventions held in India and thousands more at the regional conventions held in different cities and districts of the country. This year's annual convention would be held in Bhubaneswar in

Odisha on December 23 and 24.

Dr. Chatterjee explained the dangers of Hindu nationalists are posing to the secular and plural culture of India. She said that the constitution was at risk and if the people who uphold pluralism as the defining principle of the nation do not come together and work to preserve the constitution, India would be in the hands of a majority that does not value the human life of every Indian equal. She urged the people to stand for human rights and dignity.

Moosa Raza focused on the struggles of Muslims in India and asked the community to strengthen its institutions for better status and future. He said the gloom and doom scenario should not



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Cont. from page 7.
AFMI

prevent Muslims from working hard to preserve the Indian constitution and secular and plural ethos.

During the whole day conference, speakers focused on the contribution of Indian Muslims in India and the world. Dr. Aslam Abdullah talked about the cultural heritage of Muslims and mentioned the contribution of Indian Muslims

in the development of intellectual thoughts of Muslims all over the world. Dr. Ghouse, the author of American Muslim Agenda, focused on pluralism and secular ethos of India and Dr. Nagamia talked about the contribution of Muslims in science and technology.

Dr. Qutbuddin who moderated the first-morning session highlighted the struggles of Muslims in the independence movement. Ghalib Baig the author of My Muslim Neighbors introduced his book and described his interaction

with his fellow citizens and encouraged the audience to be part of the outreach programs

Dr. Sanaullah who moderated the second session talked about the challenges Muslims in India have been facing with the appeal that hopelessness must not prevail.

Dr. Muqtadar Khan introduced his book. Ihsan and Good Governance in Islam. He highlighted three major contributions of Muslim Indians in facing the challenges of the time. He said one group of Muslims sought refuge in traditions to overcome its decline, the other focused on organizing the political empowerment and the third concentrated on ijtihad or reasoning in overcoming the challenges of modernity. He gave a detailed explanation of "Ihsan" that he equated with excellence and beautification.

Dr. Mubin Syed, a physician of Indian origin in the US talked about Indian Muslim legends in science and medicine in the contemporary world. He listed the names of several Indian Muslim inventors in the field of



science and medicine who have helped millions of people recover from the health conditions they were confronting.

Mr. Moosa Raza in his remarks gave a refreshing Tafseer of the Quran chapter known as Al-Asr or the Time.

The response of the audience was overwhelming. They appreciated the depth of the ideas and applauded speakers for their candid thoughts. The convention was the first for Muslims of Indian origin in Columbus and Dr. Akbar Muhammad's family and friends, especially Mrs. Praveen, Dr. Mutahher, I Mohammed, Iman Khan, Dr. Khan, and Dr. Rafat Shareef and many others deserve appreciation for their untiring work.

Here is the Banquet

program schedule, conducted by Dr. Aslam Abdullah,

Keynote speakers

Padma Bhushan Masood Reza

Dr. Angana Chatterjee

Dr. A R Nakadar

The Day session speakers were;

Dr. Qutub Uddin, moderator

Dr. Aslam Abdullah – contributions of Indian Muslims to world architectural heritage,

Dr. Hussain Nagamia, the contribution of Muslim physicians to the world

Dr. Mike Ghouse, India's pluralistic heritage & Values, "respecting otherness of others"

Mr. Victor Ghalib, India's interfaith values, especially when applied in

America.

Dr. Sana Ullah Khan, was the moderator of the next session.

Dr. Muqtadar Khan, the Islamic principle of Ihsan

Padma Bhushan Moosa Raza, Islamic contribution in Indian literature

Dr. Mubin Syed, Indian Muslim legends in medicine.

All the speakers were inspirational, including the dinner speeches by Padma Bhushan Moosa Raza, Dr. Angana Chatterjee, and Dr. AR Nakadar.

Four new books were talked about:

Padma Bhushan Moosa Raza – Nawabs and nightingale by

Dr. Muqtadar Khan – Islam and good governance

Dr. Mike Ghouse –

American Muslim Agenda

Dr. Victor Beg – Our Muslim neighbors

AFMI recognized 13 individuals for their outstanding work in their chosen field. Moosa Raza and Angana Chatterjee were given Pride of India award, Dr. Muqtadar Khan, Mike Ghouse, Victor Begg, Imam Mustafa, AG Islam, and Pastor Dr. Carol Ruby, an Interfaith leader, received excellence award. While the following individuals received Appreciation Awards. Dr. Mariam Hussain Dr. Shareef Khan, Mr. Romin Iqbal, the director of CAIR, and Dr. Mutahher I Mohammed for his exemplarity youth services.

The program was followed by musical evening.

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Farhana Khera Calls for the Passage of No Ban Act in Congressional Hearing on Muslim Ban

By TMO Staff

Farhana Khera, President and executive director of Muslim Advocates in a powerful testimony given to congressional committee appraised the nation of the heavy toll the Muslim ban has heaped on the nation and the Muslim community. The House Committee on the Judiciary led by Jerrold Nadler heard.

Democratic congresspersons called the ban inhuman and unnecessary and questioned the logic of banning Muslims from countries who were not even part of the 9/11 attack on the US. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar described Andrew Arther's Center for Immigration Studies a hate group that promoted Islamophobic propaganda as reported by many studies.

Mr. Edward Ramotowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Ms. Elizabeth



Neumann, Assistant Secretary for Threat Prevention and Security Policy, Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Mr. Todd Hoffman, Executive Director, Admissions and Passenger Programs, Office of Field Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Mr. Abdollah Dehzan-

gi, Baltimore, MD, Mr. Ismail Ahmed Hezam Alghazali

Brooklyn, NY, Ms. Farhana Khera, President, and Executive Director, Muslim Advocates and Andrew R. Arthur, Resident Fellow in Law and Policy, Center for Immigration Studies

In her written statement Khera said that in 2018, the first year the Ban was in full effect, the

State Department rejected approximately 37,000 visa applications from the banned countries. In 2017, fewer than 1,000 were rejected. During the first month of the Ban, the State Department approved only 2 out of 6,555 eligible applicants.

She added that the real-world consequences of the Ban are jarring. The Muslim Ban has

needlessly separated countless families. Children?including U.S. citizens?have been denied the love and comfort of and access to their parents and grandparents. Gravely ill family members have been denied access to lifesaving medical treatments. Parents, children, brothers, sisters, and grandparents have missed the

Cont. on page 12.

Howdy Modi: Bypassing Travails Being Faced by India

This article was first published on NewsClick.in

by Dr. Ram Puniyani

In Houston, America, a grand spectacle was created with Narendra Modi in the presence of Donald Trump. The massive rally of nearly 50,000 people cheered both the leaders. Both these leaders praised each other and criticized 'Islamic Terrorism' and Pakistan. It is true that the South Asia, West Asia have been suffering the cancer of terror, what is forgotten in the hysteria created in the name of 'Islamic terrorism' is the fact that the seeds of this terrorism were sown by the American policy, which not only had designed the syllabus for brainwashing of Muslim youth, using the retrograde version of Islam, the whole exercise was funded by America to the tune of 8000 million dollars and seven thousand tons of armaments.



The dreaded activity was programmed to fight the Russian army which was occupying Afghanistan. America in a shrewd manner deployed the products of terror training to its benefit and now is trying to wash its hands off the whole thing. As Hillary Clinton had pointed out "let them come from Saudi Arabia and other countries, importing their Wahabi brand of Islam so that we can go beat the Soviet Union."

There are many side-lights of the gala event. The media is full of the massive response to the Modi event, while what was equally important and has been hidden. The protests by different groups, protests against policies of Modi in India have been ignored by media. In America, while a substantial number of those from Indian origin are supporters of Hindu nationalism and many are Modi Bhakts too, there is a good number of

those who are concerned about the state of human rights and health of democracy back home. Right from America, Bernie Sanders, the Democrat leader tweeted about Trump endorsing Modi overlooking the violation of the norms of freedom of religion and violation of human rights here in India. Sanders in a tweet said, "When Donald Trump stays silent in the face of religious persecution, repression, and brutality, the dangerous

message this sends to autocratic leaders around the world is: "Go ahead, you can get away with it." In his long speech, the central point of what Modi said was that 'all is well' in India.

Modi can say so despite the gross violation of basic citizen's rights of a large number of Indians, including those in Kashmir. His primary constituency is away from the 'last man', to focus on whom 'father of our nation' Gandhi had suggested for us. While the large section in the audience lapped everything which Modi said, a large number of protesters outside the stadium did draw attention to the reality of Indian situation under Modi rule.

From among the protesters, the aptest comment came from the Coalition of groups 'Alliance for Justice and Accountability'. Sunita Vishwana-

Cont. on page 12.

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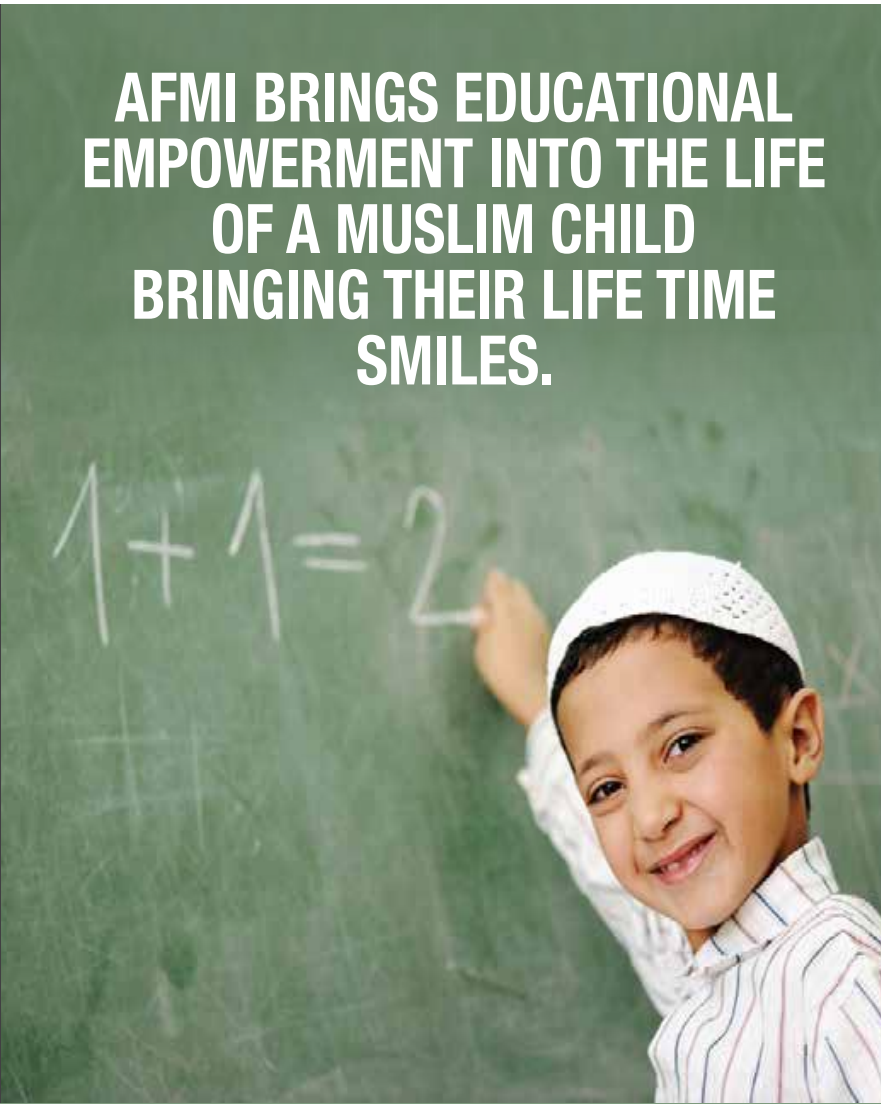


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AN APPEAL

to strengthen your media-your voice



Islamophobia is a major obstacle for peace and religious harmony in our world. If it is not countered properly and effectively, it has the potential to create havoc all over the world. Gruesome terrorism in Christchurch, New Zealand, causing 51 murders is a glimpse of the future.



This bogey of Islamophobia is raising its ugly head worldwide. We recently saw the most gruesome terrorist attack on the innocent congregation gathered for Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Islamophobia has its roots in the US and Europe among those who believe in the concepts of supremacy on the basis of race, religion and ethnicity. Only through a long process of dialogue, discussions and education, this menace that is spreading fast can be checked effectively.



We need to invest in our younger generation to be able to counter constant attacks on Islam and Muslims. We want them to be skillful communicators, excellent writers and objective researchers. Only through bringing out facts and demolishing myths and stereotypes, our young journalists can challenge the narratives spread by Islamophobes.

TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES:

- We must prepare** a strong team of our own reporters and communicators that will report objectively.
- We must support** students willing to do accurate and balanced research on the issues that impact Muslims and other fellow citizens in America.
- We must fund** Internship with State and Federal Law makers by providing living expense stipends for Muslim students,
- We must provide** Education on the political process and facilitate Muslim participation in local and federal government.

We need your help in carrying out this strategy that will prepare a strong contingent of our own reporters to effectively convey our message.

We are together in our movement to achieve these objectives. Many of our past interns and writers are now part of the main stream media.

Our interns and writers with the help of researchers have carried out following research projects in the past.

Here are the examples:

- 1) Demographic survey of Michigan Muslims and its political impact on Congressional districts,
- 2) Safeguarding Muslim civil right in America,
- 3) States that have passed Halal laws
- 4) How cities with high Muslim concentration have effectively used their positions to gain access to local councils or other legislative bodies,
- 5) And a Muslim perspective on Obama health care, etc.

We want our next research project to focus on the sources of Islamophobia and hatred incited to pitch communities against each other. We need at least \$50,000 for this project. Please fund this project and donate generously. Your donations are tax deductible.

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Cont. from page 9.
No Ban Act

births, deaths, weddings, and funerals of their loved ones. According to the Cato Institute, the Muslim Ban has kept out nearly 4,000 spouses or fiancés and has also barred nearly 6,000 adopted children of U.S. citizens.

The Yemeni born Ismail Ahmed Hezam Al-Ghazali whose wife was denied a visa to join him described the ordeal during her visa interview :

“But, the interview did not go as expected. Our meeting did not even last five minutes. They returned Hend’s passport and said that her visa had been denied because of the Muslim Ban and that even though Hend

was my wife, we were not eligible for a waiver. We were stuck in Djibouti. I was not able to work there, and the money I had borrowed from friends to make the trip was running out. I was not sure what to do next. Hend went into labor late one night. For most couples, this is a happy occasion. For us, it was the most frightening experience in my life. It took me 30 minutes to find a cab while my wife was in pain. Hend’s contractions were coming faster and faster. We were 5 minutes away from the hospital but there was no time left. Hend gave birth to our son, Khaled, in the back of that cab. I’ll never forget that night and how hopeless I felt. I hated that I had

to go back to New York again without them but I had no choice but to provide for my family. And in April of this year, my wife gave birth to our daughter Rahf in Yemen and it broke my heart that I wasn’t there for her. Now, I have been asked to come back and reinterview for the waiver. I still have hope that we will be together again as a family here. I will show my family in New York City. Hend will become a nurse. My son and daughter will go to school and pursue their own dreams. I pray that you will find it in your hearts to allow families like mine to be together. Please end this ban.”

Mr. Abdollah Dehzangi, whose wife was denied visa even though she

holds a Norwegian passport said in his testimony “I want to reiterate that we are not a threat to the United States, but I know, this is already well-known. No one can be found to be a threat-based upon their nationality or religion. Threats must be determined based upon facts and evidence—there are no such facts about my wife. As I finish this testimony, filled with sorrow, despair, and sadness, looking at all we did to be of worth to our society, family, and community, and cleaning tears from my eyes, I wish to leave you with the knowledge that this unfair and xenophobic ban is destroying our lives and bond. We do not know what is going to happen and how long

we have to wait. We do not know when or where we can be united. We do not know why the America we have dreamed of has put us in this situation.”

Khera’s Muslim Advocates? along with a diverse coalition of over 400 civil rights, faith, national security, and community organizations? has endorsed the NO BAN Act as she urged Congress to pass the NO BAN Act swiftly and remove the scourge of religious bigotry from our immigration system. She also urged the administration to make good on its promise to issue family-based and humanitarian waivers immediately and without further delay.

Cont. from page 9.
Howdy Modi

than, part of the alliance and member of ‘Hindus for Human Rights’, hit the nail on the head, when she stated “We are horrified that our religion, which teaches Vasudaiva Kutumbakam, (whole World is my family) is being hijacked by extremists and nationalists who are lynching Muslims, trampling democracy and law and order and arresting, if not murdering, those who are speaking out,...We are especially appalled by the most recent nightmare of the Kashmiri people and the situation of 1.9 million people in India who are rendered stateless due to the imposition of the travesty called the National Register of

Citizens.”

One is at loss to understand the direction which India as a nation is taking at present, more so from last few years. While our Prime Minister is celebrating and addressing the rallies in America the Indian economy is taking a nosedive. Lakhs of workers are being retrenched; the average people are feeling the pinch of the policies being pursued by the Government in power. These policies do not want to solve the problems average people of the country. As such last few years have seen a total change in the pattern of issues being brought to fore by BJP led Government. It has gone on to give importance to issues like abolition of triple talaq, abrogation

of Article 370, focusing on NRC in Assam while there is talk the air that NRC will be extended to the whole of the country and Uniform Civil Code will be, implemented.

The central focus of the policymaking and concerns of the ruling Government has seen a drastic change. In the initial years of the republic, solid foundations of industries, Universities, and irrigation system were laid. The idea was this is what the nation needs; focus on issues related to livelihood. There were many weaknesses in the planning and implementation of these policies, but the direction was right. This did lead to an improvement in levels of literacy, health-related indices, economic growth, agri-

cultural production, milk production to list the few.

The identity issues like Ram Temple or Holy Cow-beef, Conversions, love jihad were on the margins. Not influencing the direction of the policymaking. With such a focus on infrastructure, India became a global economic power. Now the nation’s track has been shifted away from the role of India as a guardian state focusing on basic issues of people, to the one which just makes claims to have welfare schemes, but in reality, is withdrawing from responsibility in the areas which are the dire need of the vast sections of society.

After the launch of Ram Temple campaign BJP

started emerging and claimed that it is ‘Party with a difference’. It is true. This is the party guided by the agenda of Hindu nationalism. Such Religious nationalism thrives on issues related to identity, hatred for religious minorities. It creates violence and polarization. It is this polarization which gives electoral strength to religious nationalist parties all over, BJP, in case of India. In the din of hysteria created by Howdy Modi type events how to bring the national focus back to the problems faced by average people of the society is the question staring us in our face.

Cont. from page 6.
Kashmir.

claimed by both India and Pakistan, and roiled with violence, involving Indian troops and Muslim militants. So far some 100,000 lives have been lost in the struggle for freedom.

India itself took the issue of Kashmir to the United Nations, which passed some eighteen resolutions related to Kashmir, recognizing the status of the state as disputed and calling for a resolution of the conflict based on the will of the people of

the state, which the first Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, himself also publicly promised. Today, all that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are saying is that India should live up to this promise that it made of holding a plebiscite in accordance with the UN resolutions.

Voices in India today are calling for the same. A Hindustani Times survey late last year discovered that 87% of the Kashmiris want Azadi (freedom). Mr. Swaminathan Aiyar of The Times of

India wrote in one of his columns, “We promised Kashmiris a plebiscite six decades ago. Let us hold one now”. And Vir Sanghvi of The Hindustan Times stated, “So, here’s my question: why are we still hanging on to Kashmir if the Kashmiris don’t want to have anything to do with us?”

So, what do the people of Kashmir want? The right of self-determination is a fundamental human right and is highly valued in all societies. Kashmiris demand the right of self-determina-

tion as guaranteed to them under the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Although the majority of them have expressed an alliance with Pakistan, the UN resolutions calling for a plebiscite to be held must take place.

Kashmir today stands poised to be the trigger for an all-out nuclear war between two nations. Both India and Pakistan have much to gain if there is peace, stability and economic cooperation in South Asia. Economic interests and other inter-

nal and external forces are pushing both countries towards a common goal and that is to have peace and economic cooperation in South Asia.

Whether the 8 million Kashmiris choose to align themselves with Pakistan or India should be best left for them to choose. Kashmir and only Kashmiris should be free to decide.

The author is a Saudi socio/political commentator. He can be reached at talmaeena@aol.com, His Twitter account is @talmaeena

CONTINUED STORY

Cont. from page 1.
Kurdish groups

tonomy. Kurdish groups have used both violent and peaceful methods in their pursuit of autonomy, but by and large, they are known as terrorist groups in Turkey. According to independent experts ‘estimates, the Kurdish challenge to Turkish security has cost the country close to \$500 billion over the years. Turkey has a huge refugee presence. Turkey believes that the Syrian refugee problem can be resolved, partly, if at least a million Syrian refugees are sent to areas that are currently under Kurdish control provided

the Kurdish groups are drive out. Turkey also believes that the safe zones that would host Syrian refugees would serve as a buffer zone between Turkey and the Kurdish fighters. Kurds are estimated to be 30 million in Turkey, Armenia, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. They speak Kurdish, which is closer to Persian. In the agreement known as the Treaty of Sèvres, in the 1920s, Kurds were promised a homeland. But the treaty never came to be honored and Kurds became a divided people hem Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. Of the 30 million, half of them are in Turkey. Iraq is the

only country in the region to have established an autonomous Kurdish region, known as Iraqi Kurdistan, inside its borders. Its parliament was founded in 1992. Kurds believe that they have suffered discrimination and violence in the states they have been living in. They also feel that Turks, in particular, have denied them their ethnic identity and linguistic rights. America’s relations with the Kurdish people date back to World War I when President Woodrow Wilson and the Allied Nations supported the idea of an independent state for Kurds after the fall of the Ottoman

Empire. The Kurds were given a small homeland when the Treaty of Sevres, which broke up the Ottoman Empire, was signed on August 10th, 1920. However, when the Treaty of Lausanne, which redrew the borders of Turkey, was signed in 1923, this small homeland ceased to exist. The United States supported Kurdish guerilla factions in an attempt to overthrow Iraq’s Ba’ath party in the 1970s, it abruptly broke off relations in the early 1980s, which eventually led to Saddam Hussein’s brutal repression of the Kurds. When the Turks denied the United States passage into Iraq for the

Iraqi Invasion of 2003, Iraqi Kurds took the opportunity to help the United States overthrow Saddam, finally. The Kurds also turned to American-led airstrikes to help repel the threat of ISIS in 2014. The Kurds have received US military and humanitarian aid. However, President Trump’s decision to allow Turkey to launch a new offensive against Kurdish groups in its northeastern border has added a new chapter in the ongoing conflicts in the region.

Cont. from page 1.
Mahjabin Haque, NASA

first started working as a data analyst at NASA’s Johnson Space Center in Houston Texas later to move into the Mission Control Center.

She worked in programming support, software design, testing, and maintenance at the center. Born in Bangladesh, Haque immigrated with her family to the US in 2009 and always

dreamed of working at NASA. She gives credit for a lot of her success to her mother Ferdousi Chowdhury, who raised both her and her brother while her father stayed back in Bangladesh due to his profession.

According to Haque, her mother always inspired and encouraged her to follow her dreams. Haque’s role at NASA is a win for South Asian and Muslim girls across the country. It allows for them to imagine taking

on such prestigious roles more realistically with immigrant role models such as Haque there to look up to. We congratulate Haque and look forward to seeing the work she does at NASA

Cont. from page 1.
Nobel Peace Prize

bitter decades-old conflict with neighboring Eritrea. Abiy, told the Nobel committee he was humbled and thrilled to receive its 100th peace prize, calling peace “a rare commodity in our region.” He hoped the award would encourage other African leaders to work for peace. So far this week, 11 Nobel laureates have been named. The others received their awards for their achievements in medicine, physics, chemistry, and literature. The prize carries cash award, a gold medal, and a diploma. The award would be given on December 10 in Oslo, the death anniversary of Alfred Nobel. His country celebrated saying. “We are proud as a nation!!!” his office said. The 43-year-old prime minister believes in unity and inclusivity Born of a Muslim and an Orthodox Christian, and of mixed ethnic heritage, Abiy is leading a country with some 80 ethnic groups of 110 million people. “No doubt some people will think this year’s prize is being awarded

too early,” the Nobel committee said. But “it is now that Abiy Ahmed’s efforts deserve recognition and need encouragement.” Abiy took office in early 2018 after widespread protests. Within weeks, Africa’s youngest leader made a peace deal with Eritrea ending a 20-year border war that saw some 80,000 people killed. He suddenly ended the world’s longest-running conflict. Eritrean president, Isaias Afwerki, visited Addis Ababa and restored diplomatic, communications and transport links and for the first time in two decades, the divided families were united. The Nobel committee cited that peacemaking in awarding Abiy the prize and acknowledged that “peace does not arise from the actions of one party alone.” When Abiy “reached out his hand, President Afwerki grasped it.” The Nobel committee said it hoped the award would bring positive change for all in both countries. It also noted Abiy’s other efforts toward reconciliation in the region — between Eritrea and Djibouti, be-

tween Kenya and Somalia, and in Sudan. At home, Abiy released tens of thousands of prisoners, welcomed home once-banned opposition groups and acknowledged past abuses. He lifted restrictions placed on the media and announced that Ethiopia would hold free and fair elections in 2020. He included women in his Cabinet and appointed a female as president of the country.. The progress has been “incredible,” the United States said Friday. The prime minister also opened-up Ethiopia’s tightly controlled economy and invited the private sector to invest in the country. The Nobel committee acknowledged that “many challenges remain unresolved.” And human rights and humanitarian groups moved quickly to urge Abiy to “continue to

be brave,” as the Norwegian Refugee Council said. “I have said often that winds of hope are blowing ever stronger across Africa. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is one of the main reasons why,” United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. Abiyii Ahimad Alii, often shortened to Abiy Ahmed or just Abiy was born 15 August 1976 in the town of Beshasha in the historic Kaffa province. His deceased father, Ahmed Ali, was Muslim while his deceased mother, Tezeta Wolde was an Orthodox Christian Amhara. He is the 13th child of his polygamous father and the sixth and youngest child of his mother. Abiy went to the local primary school and later continued his studies at secondary schools in Agaro town. Abiy, according to several personal reports,

was always very interested in his own education. Abiy received his first degree in computer engineering from the Microlink Information Technology College in Addis Ababa in 2001. He holds a Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership. He also hold a second Master in Business Administration. He also completed his Ph.D. in 2017. The title of his thesis is “Social Capital and its Role in Traditional Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia: The Case of Inter-Religious Conflict. He married Zinash Tayachew, during their service in the Ethiopian Defense Forces.[23] They are the parents of three daughters and one recently adopted son. He is a devout Evangelical Pentecostal Christian of the Full Believers Church.

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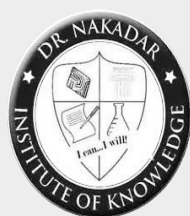
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Cont. from page 3.
Erasing Islam

Muslims, expelling over 670,000 into exile as refugees. Now it is firmly entrenched in the authoritarian column of the index.

The United States, the oldest democracy in the world and the leader of the free world too, has been sliding in this category. The so-called Muslim ban and the ris-

ing hate crimes against Muslims in the United States continue to chip away at the human rights safeguards in the country, and sadly, the global guardian of democracy is now unable to defend its ideals at home. The United States is now rated as a flawed democracy, with 24 nations rated above it.

The nation that is ostracizing Muslims on an industrial scale today

is China. China is not a democracy, nor does it aspire to be one. But democracies are not doing much to prevent the oppression or hold China accountable.

One measure of the quality of any democracy is its respect for the rights of its minorities. By unleashing negative variants of nationalism that target minorities, democracies are damaging the political institutions

that guarantee inclusivity, rule of law and good governance. The rise of populism and oppression of minorities globally corresponds with the decline of democracy.

Muslims constitute nearly 25% of the world's population. They are either the largest or the second largest religious community on every continent and in nearly every nation. Violating their basic rights is not in the interest of either democracy or national and international security. It is time for all nations to wake up and counter the ideologues and the purveyors of

negative nationalism. Israel may have begun the process with Netanyahu. The hope is that the rest follow suit.

Dr. Muqtadar Khan is a professor at the University of Delaware and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Global Policy. From 2017-2019 he was the Academic Director of the State Department's National Security Institute and from 2019 onwards he is the Academic Director of the State Department's American Foreign Policy Institute. He is the author of a new book Islam and Good Governance: A Political Philosophy of Ihsan.



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