

A portentous and telltale ‘All Parties’ conference

Islamabad; February 1, 2017: The vernacular press reported at great length proceedings of an All Parties Namus Risalat (honour of the prophet) Conference held in Dreamland Hotel of Islamabad. The conference was organized by the anti-Ahmadiyya Aalami Majlis Tahaffuze Khatme Nabuwwat. However, the top invitees to the conference were primarily political clerics; a sprinkling from some political parties was also in the recipe.

Those who attended included Fazlur Rahman (JUI), Samiul Haq (JUI-S), Siraj ul Haq (JI), Zafarul Haq (PML-N), Fazlur Rehman Khalil (Ansar ul Ummah), Abul Khair Zubair (JUP), Kafil Bokhari (Ahrar Islam), Tariq Cheema (PML-Q), Ejaz ul Haq (ML-Zia) etc. Only mulla Allah Wasaya, a second line cleric of the KN, was present to represent the sponsors. Apparently the stage was handed over to politico-religious leadership to sell their ware in the name of Honour of the Prophet and the End of Prophethood. The ‘church’ and the ‘state’ came out, hand in hand, to exploit each other to the full. The proceedings reported in the press made that very clear.

Maulvi Fazl Ur Rahman of JUI-F was given the lead role and he read out ‘the declaration’. In this he started off with telling the authorities not to meddle with the blasphemy law 295-C, but then quickly fired all the broadsides on Ahmadiyya targets. He demanded, *inter alia*:

- Qadiani (TV) channels should be banned for their anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan transmissions.
- The decision to change the name of the QA University’s Centre for Physics to Dr Abdul Salam Qadiani should be withdrawn.
- Innocent accused Muslims of Dulmial (riot) should be released and action should be taken against officials who were partial against the wronged (*Mazloom*) Muslims.
- Desist from returning to Qadianis the nationalized educational institutions.

The Conference, having made these demands, conveyed that these were not empty words to be soon forgotten, but will be pursued with further action if they were not implemented within deadline of one month. A 15-member committee was formed to plan and implement future course of action. The committee comprised leaders of the participating parties as members, while Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman would head the committee.



Raja Zafar ul Haq, a PMN-N leader seated next to JUI and JI leaders at the stage

Most of the participating leaders addressed the conference. What they said is noteworthy. Siraj ul Haq of Jamaat Islami stated: “Pakistan is the citadel of Islam. If the honour of the Prophet is not upheld here, we have no right to be alive.” He stated that registration of blasphemy cases should be made easier; otherwise people tend take law in their hand. Protection of ‘end of prophethood’ should be a part of school syllabus. With reference to Hafiz Saeed, he said, “There is no police case against him nor is he under trial in any court. He has been targeted on the call of Modi and Trump. I would like to ask: If tomorrow Modi or Trump press on Pakistan, would the rulers close down Madrassa Akora Khattak, and thereafter shut down Mansura? We’ll sacrifice our lives for the defense of Makka and Madina. Trump will have to remain within his limits.”

Fazlur Rahman Khalil stated that the National Action Plan (NAP) was a conspiracy against religious parties and madrassahs.

Following opinions were aired in the conference and reported in the press (for instance the dailies *Ausaf* and *Islam* of February 2, 2017):

- Trump has come out openly against Muslims. There is need to unite against him.
- The government proceeds to hang Mumtaz Qadri overnight, but fails to implement court’s verdict on Aasia Masih.
- Police cases should be registered against bloggers.
- The disbelievers (*Kafir*) have given the name ‘terrorism’ to Jihad.

- We may have our differences with Hafiz Saeed but the government's treatment of him is not appropriate. We are all one on religious issues.
- Qadianis have dug in abroad against Pakistan. They have never been deprived of basic rights here.
- An APC should be called on Chakwal (Ahmadiyya mosque) issue to raise voice in support of wronged Muslims.
- Foreign powers attempt to change (school) syllabi; we'll have to play our role.
- 'End of Prophethood' day should be celebrated every year officially.
- Religious and political parties should jointly resist international pressure.
- Religious parties should launch the Nizam Mustafa campaign.
- All religious parties should stand on one platform to contest the next election.
- Any effort to change the blasphemy law will result in violent chaos (*fasaad*).
- Qadianis are active against the country.
- The rulers avail of our reaction (to suit their interest).

Raja Zafarul Haq (President PML-N) represented his party in this conference of questionable merit. He took the liberty of speaking for the prime minister: "PM Nawaz Sharif is of the same opinion as the religious parties and the people on the issue of Qadianism and Honour of the Prophet. Qadianis were declared non-Muslims in 1974 but further legislation was delayed till 1984. If Qadianis think that I am responsible for that, I don't care. The Ulama no longer talk about Qadianis. The new generation should be informed of our beliefs. Organized efforts are under way against Muslims; these are supported by foreign powers. Regardless of our party, the honour of the Prophet is dearer (to us) than any temporal gain. Foreign powers try to change our school syllabi; we'll have to play our role...."

During the same week, Mr. Latif Cheema, Convener of the Joint KN Committee welcomed the statements of federal ministers Ishaq Dar (Finance) and Muhammad Yusuf (Religious Affairs) wherein they reconfirmed government stand that no change will be made to the blasphemy law.

At about the same time a group of leading mullas wrote a letter to the President on the Ahmadi issue and urged him to ensure 'Islamic identity of the Pakistani state and implementation of Islamic provisions of the Constitution and the law, and also to send them a reply stating his own opinion and the follow-up.' (*The daily Pakistan; February 6, 2017*)

As a follow-up of the February 1 conference, the Milli Yakjehti Council, that claims to be a federation of 25 religious and political parties decided to hold protest rallies on 10 and 17 February. This was to express their displeasure on the detention of Hafiz Saeed, and their demand for protection of Islamic laws. (*The daily Express; February 9, 2017*)

The daily Jinnah reported on February 3, that Sheikh Abdur Rahman, Imam Kaba (Saudi Arabia) received Saeed Inayatullah of End of Prophethood (Pakistan) and gave him good news that Seerat Chairs will be established in Makka and Medina whereby permanent arrangements will be made to arrange lectures on KN. Sheikh Rahman congratulated Saeed Inayatullah over his elevation to Amir of International

Khatme Nabuwwat Movement. This teaming up of the Saudi and Pakistani dignitaries, in the name of End of Prophethood, is noteworthy. It facilitates mutual support in many ways.

The All Parties Namus Risalat Conference organized by the Aalami Majlis Tahaffuz Khatme Nabuwwat (AMTKN) was indeed a big affair with all the right-wing top brass assembled in the Dreamland Hotel in Islamabad. It must have cost a fortune. Where do the finances come from? Are any accounts kept and audited? Could they also end up in wrong hands? Arguably under the fair umbrella of End of Prophethood, it is the Deobandi, Salafi and Wahabi national and international political agenda that is promoted.