

HUZOOR'S TOUR OF SCANDINAVIA

MAY 2016

PART 3

A Personal Account

By Abid Khan

Huzoor's meeting with guests in Stockholm

It was 18 May 2016 and Huzoor and the *Qafila* were in Stockholm and we had entered the final few days of Huzoor's tour to Scandinavia.

Later that day, the *Qafila* would travel to Gothenburg for the final stage of the tour, however prior to leaving Huzoor had a meeting with a number of Swedish guests and dignitaries at the hotel where we were staying.

The guests comprised Israel's *Ambassador* to Sweden, India's *Ambassador* to Sweden, a Priest from the *Lutheran Church* of Sweden, a representative of the Jewish community and various leading academics, researchers and a historian.

The guests asked various questions about the state of the world and about Islam.

The academics were particularly interested in the theological differences between Ahmadis and other Muslims and also about general Islamic doctrines. To each question, Huzoor gave detailed and clear answers.

One of the academics asked Huzoor about what authority he held as *Khalifatul Masih*.

Huzoor responded by saying:

"A Khalifa is a successor to a prophet and thus he has to discharge the duties entrusted to the prophet and continue his mission. These duties

are to bring man closer to His Creator, to make human beings realise their duties to their fellow beings and to spread the true teachings of Islam."

Huzoor continued by saying:

"Khalifatul Masih is a spiritual leader, and whilst he is also the administrative Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, he does not seek to lead any government or political entity. It is my belief that State and religion are separate and the role of the Khalifa is to spiritually guide."

Later, India's Ambassador to Sweden, *Mrs Banashri Harrison* took the opportunity to express her appreciation of the Jamaat.

Ambassador Banashri said:

"The Indian Government considers India to be enriched by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and your commitment to peace. We believe that religion is a means of peace."

Huzoor thanked her for her comment and said:

"Religion is a matter of the heart and the original teachings of all religions are of peace, love and compassion."

Thereafter, the Israeli Ambassador, *Isaac Bachman* said:

“We also have very good relations with your Community and so I wish to thank you on behalf of our Government for preaching and practicing peace.”

In response, Huzoor said:

“Our Ahmadi Muslims are those who are building bridges between the people of different religions and beliefs.”

One of the academics asked Huzoor about the relationship between our Jamaat and the *Lahori* Jamaat.

In response, Huzoor said:

“The Lahori Jamaat does not accept Khilafat, whereas we say that it is Khilafat that should follow Prophethood. This is the major difference between us and them. Otherwise we have good relations with them. A few years ago I visited the Lahori Mosque in Berlin and was welcomed by their Imam. Thus, certainly from our side there is no enmity or hatred towards them.”

One guest asked Huzoor what was the *“biggest spiritual challenge in the world today”*.

In response, Huzoor said:

“The biggest challenge in the world today is the growing distance between mankind and God Almighty. People are forgetting their duties towards their Creator and thus our biggest challenge is to bring mankind back towards God.”

In response to a question asking whether Ahmadi Muslims were permitted to do *Hajj*, Huzoor said:

“Some Ahmadis do go for Hajj but they do it discretely and sometimes face certain difficulties. My own elder brother did Hajj two years ago.”

Huzoor was then asked if Ahmadis had any ‘*alternate*’ place for pilgrimage.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Nothing can replace Hajj - it is a pillar of Islam and the place of pilgrimage. Of course we have certain sacred places such as Qadian, which was the home of the Promised Messiah (as) and where he is buried, but it does not, and cannot, have the same status as Makkah.”

Towards the end of the meeting, Huzoor was asked what his mission was.

Very beautifully, Huzoor responded by saying:

“Our mission and our desire is for every person to bow down before their Creator. We do not need or crave any power or to take over any

nation, rather we want mankind to fulfil their duties to one another. We want all people to increase in spirituality. I have no desire for any power in Sweden, Germany or anywhere else.”

Huzoor continued by saying:

“The Promised Messiah (as) said that he did not wish for any throne or crown and all he cared for was to please His Creator. Thus, worldly powers and governments have no need to fear us because we are an entirely spiritual organisation.”

Huzoor’s language etiquette

At one point, Huzoor turned to our young *Missionary*, Kashif Virk who is posted in Stockholm and asked him a question in Urdu.

Thereafter, Huzoor turned to the guests and said:

“Please accept my apologies as I was talking in my own language for a moment. I was asking Kashif how far his home was from here.”

The meeting lasted over an hour and perhaps for 30 seconds, Huzoor spoke in Urdu to Kashif sahib, yet Huzoor’s standard of conduct and etiquette is such that he apologised to the guests for this.

Huzoor even informed them what had been said so that they felt no anxiety or worry that perhaps something had been said about them. Certainly, it was an example for the rest of us.

Visit to home of local Missionary

Following the conclusion of the meeting we went back to our rooms for a few moments and gathered our luggage before returning to the hotel lobby.

After a few minutes, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*) came down from their room and the *Qafila* proceeded to the home of the local *Sadr Jamaat* of Stockholm Jamaat, Khalid Mahmood Cheema sahib.

The *Jamaat* had proposed for Huzoor and the *Qafila* members to have lunch at Sadr sahib's house and Huzoor had graciously approved this plan.

However, before lunch was served Huzoor returned to his car and the *Qafila* proceeded to the home of Kashif Virk sahib, a young *Missionary* who had graduated from the first class of *Jamia Ahmadiyya UK* and who was now posted back in Sweden where he had grown up.

The love Huzoor shows to *Waqf-e-Zindighis* (life devotees) is quite incredible. This was another example, where Huzoor especially took out half an hour to visit the home of a Missionary.

Afterwards, Kashif sahib and his family members expressed their emotions and joy at Huzoor's visit to their home.

Kashif sahib said:

"Huzoor's visit to our home was an immense honour and blessing for us. It is difficult to find words to describe our gratitude. I just wish to tell all

Ahmadi brothers and sisters around the world that we have a most loving and caring Khalifa, whose concern for us knows no limit.”

Kashif sahib’s wife, *Namood-e-Sahar* sahiba said:

“Alhamdolillah, today Allah blessed us so much and accepted our most earnest supplications. With such love and kindness our beloved Khalifa spent that time with us and so the feelings and emotions we are feeling are truly indescribable. We are nothing and so the blessings of today are a result only of the Grace and Mercy of Allah the Almighty.”

Kashif sahib’s father, *Mahmood Virk* sahib, also told me about Huzoor’s visit. It was interesting to me that Mahmood sahib did not call his son by his name but referred to him as ‘*Murrabi sahib*’.

Mahmood sahib said:

“It was my great honour to receive Huzoor today. During his visit, Huzoor graciously took some nuts that we presented. Thereafter, Huzoor discussed with Murrabi sahib some of the media coverage that the Jamaat had received during the tour. Huzoor also checked every room of the home and this was a means of great happiness to all of us but especially to my daughter-in-law.”

Impromptu visit to a home

Huzoor then returned to the home of Sadr sahib Stockholm where lunch had been arranged. However, just as Huzoor was about to enter Sadr

sahib's home another Ahmadi came rushing towards Huzoor and asked Huzoor to visit his home.

Despite the fact Huzoor had already exited his car, Huzoor accepted the request and returned to his car and the *Qafila* drove to the home of the Ahmadi. Huzoor spent a few minutes at his home, as the rest of us waited outside.

I remember thinking just how loving and kind Huzoor is. Time and time again, Huzoor is willing to set aside his own comfort and time for the sake of his Jamaat.

Lunch at home of local Sadr Jamaat

Upon returning again to Sadr sahib's home, Huzoor was escorted inside the house where lunch had been arranged for him and Khala Saboohi. The rest of us ate outside on the front lawn of Sadr sahib's home. The sun was shining and so it was very enjoyable to eat outside in the fresh air.

We were served lamb *karhai* and chicken *karhai* followed by ice cream.

I decided I would not eat the ice cream as I was full already, however when they placed a bowl in front of me, I decided to take one spoon of the pistachio and vanilla flavoured ice cream.

It was quite delicious, especially given the warm weather, and so spoon by spoon I ended up polishing off the entire bowl.

Visit to Baitul Aafiyat in Stockholm

Zuhr and *Asr* prayers had been arranged at the local Jamaat centre, *Baitul Aafiyat* which was a few minutes drive from Sadr sahib's home and so after finishing my lunch I headed towards the car.

As I was walking I saw Huzoor walking out from the residence. I think Huzoor came out a few minutes earlier than expected because most of the *Qafila* members were still doing *Wudhu*.

Upon seeing me, Huzoor asked if I had eaten lunch yet. Huzoor asked with great love and I could tell that if I had not eaten probably Huzoor would have told me to eat and even waited for a few more minutes.

I told Huzoor that I had already eaten and thereafter Huzoor entered his car and the *Qafila* proceeded to *Baitul Aafiyat*, where Huzoor led *Salat*.

An unfortunate incident

Khala Saboohi had stayed with *Lajna* members at Sadr sahib's home and so after *Salat* was completed the *Qafila* was to return to Sadr sahib's home.

The plan was that the *Qafila* would proceed from Sadr sahib's home onwards to Gothenburg, which was at a distance of over 400km.

The drive back to Sadr sahib's house should have taken only three or four minutes, however we had driven for around 10minutes and had still not arrived. I remember wondering why we were taking a longer route.

The journey to the Mosque had all been on small town roads but suddenly it seemed we were reaching the motorway. At that point a message came from Huzoor's car that Huzoor was asking if we were going the right way to Sadr sahib's home.

I remember hearing on the radio then that the Sweden Jamaat had forgotten that we were to return to Sadr sahib's home and were proceeding directly to Gothenburg!

It was actually one of those rare moments where I felt my jaw drop as I thought at how those guiding the *Qafila* had forgotten that Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*) remained at Sadr sahib's home and if Huzoor had not sent the message we would have been well on the way to Gothenburg.

Realising the mistake, the *Qafila* turned around immediately and returned to the residence of Sadr sahib.

In the years that I have had the honour of serving Khalifatul Masih, I have very rarely seen Huzoor angry and even less have I seen Huzoor publicly admonish or express his anger.

However, on this occasion Huzoor was very upset with the local administration and in particular with *Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* Sweden as it is his duty to organise the *Qafila* cars and to plan the routes.

Upon exiting his car, Huzoor called both Sadr sahib and Amir sahib Sweden.

By chance I was stood just behind and so I heard Huzoor say very firmly:

“It is only because I asked where we were going that the Qafila turned around otherwise you were taking us straight to Gothenburg. It is the height of carelessness.”

Huzoor added:

“In future the lead car (Sadr Khuddam’s car) will now drive at the back of the Qafila and will no longer lead the route.”

Huzoor then walked back towards the residence. I was a few metres away and as Huzoor was walking I heard him call out my name. Normally, whenever Huzoor calls for you it is a source of joy, but I have to admit that having witnessed the past few moments, I felt a surge or trepidation wondering if I too had made a mistake.

I looked up in Huzoor’s direction and was relieved to see a smile on his face. Huzoor said:

“Abid if you or anyone else wants to go to the bathroom then you have five minutes then we are leaving!”

I smiled towards Huzoor before running to the bathroom as the clock was ticking!

Thankfully, I was ready in time and in the end Huzoor graciously gave us around 10minutes.

During those moments, I thought to myself about the preceding few minutes. No doubt it was a very serious mistake, whereby those responsible for leading the *Qafila* had forgotten that Huzoor's respected wife remained at Sadr sahib's home.

An example of Huzoor's love and guidance

Our Khalifa is such that even where he is upset or even angry with someone, invariably his love, mercy and compassion soon becomes apparent.

Thus, later that day when the *Qafila* stopped at a service station Huzoor called *Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* towards him and with great love explained to him how he should conduct his duties in future.

During those moments, Huzoor said:

“As Sadr Majlis, you should always have a full record of the Qafila for each journey. You should have a list of each car and who is seated in each car and before starting any journey you should check that every person is safely seated in the car and only then should you give notification that the Qafila is ready to proceed.”

Huzoor himself pays great attention to the safety and security of his *Qafila*.

Huzoor has issued a general instruction that the final car in the *Qafila* during his tours should be a car with members of the local Jamaat so that if

any car with Huzoor's own *Qafila* members falls behind there is always a local car ready to guide them.

Furthermore, Huzoor regularly himself enquires what the position of the cars are and if they all remain together.

The next day, I spoke to *Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Mansoor Ahmed* about the incident. It was clear he still felt very guilty about the mistake but at the same time extremely grateful for Huzoor's gracious guidance.

Sadr sahib said:

"Of course, initially Huzoor was very upset because of our mistake but Huzoor is extremely loving, kind and forgiving and so later he affectionately called me towards him and gave me a lot of advice about how a Qafila should be arranged.

Further, Huzoor also said I should go to Germany and spend a week getting training from Germany's Hifazat-e-Khas (security) team as they have a lot of experience. Huzoor's love is extremely humbling and something that I am extremely undeserving of."

Stop at service station

The *Qafila* departed from Stockholm at 2.40pm and headed towards Gothenburg. The *Qafila* drove for around 3 hours before stopping a service station for 45 minutes.

Upon arrival at the service station, Huzoor called *Dr Athar Zubair*, who was travelling with the *Qafila* as the on-duty doctor, towards him.

Huzoor also called me and so I listened as Dr Zubair sahib told Huzoor about a *Member of Parliament* he had met at the Stockholm reception the previous night.

The *MP* had asked Huzoor a question during the private meeting some of the dignitaries had with Huzoor prior to the reception. She said to Dr sahib that she felt during that meeting Huzoor had not fully answered her question, however subsequently when she listened to Huzoor's formal speech he had very comprehensively answered her earlier question.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor said:

"Yes, I purposely gave her a brief answer because I knew that I would be covering that very topic in my address and so she would hear the answer then!"

Finding some crisps

Thereafter, I went to where Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*) was sitting and I was able to spend a few minutes in her company.

We discussed the previous evening's reception in Stockholm and she also asked me about Huzoor's meeting with guests earlier that morning.

It is always apparent that Khala Saboohi takes great interest in such matters and has a great passion herself for the true teachings of Islam to be spread far and wide.

As we were talking, Khala Saboohi's relative, Tariq Shah sahib brought a coffee for her but did not bring a coffee for Huzoor as he had not yet come to the table. We had learned our lesson from a couple of days previously when Khala Saboohi had told us that Huzoor's coffee should be served fresh when he arrives at the table.

After a few minutes, when Huzoor came to the table I presented a cappuccino to him in a paper coffee cup. On the way to Stockholm, Huzoor had told me that in such places he likes drinking from such cups.

I then went and sat with Major sahib and other members of the security team and we also enjoyed some coffee.

After a few minutes, I returned to where Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were seated and I asked if they needed anything.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Do they have any salty chips (crisps) here?”

I immediately went back to the restaurant where we had ordered the coffees from but unfortunately they did not have any crisps.

Thus, I and a local member of the local Jamaat rushed outside and ran to a petrol station shop which was a few hundred metres away.

As we entered I looked left and right and was delighted to see that there was a full range of crisps. We purchased two large bags and then ran back to the service station, where I took the crisps to Huzoor.

Upon seeing them, Huzoor said:

“Are they halal?”

I responded by saying:

“Yes Huzoor, one is plain ready salted and the other is sour cream flavour.”

Huzoor said:

“We will keep the ready salted and you can take the other flavour for the Qafila members.”

I walked back to where the other *Qafila* members were seated and felt relieved I had been able to find the crisps that Huzoor had requested. The other *Qafila* members also enjoyed the other bag in the knowledge that Huzoor had sent them.

I was very happy that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi had a few minutes to enjoy their coffees and to snack on some salty crisps!

Being caught in the play area!

A few metres from where Huzoor was sitting there was a large play area designed for kids. It was a covered area within the service station and after a few minutes both Major sahib and I went inside to have a look.

As we stood there, Major sahib told me to inform Huzoor that the cars were ready to depart whenever Huzoor was ready.

Just as I was about to go and inform him, Huzoor walked towards us.

Huzoor looked at us and asked where we were standing to which we replied that it was a kid's play area.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor said:

"It seems you and Major sahib were enjoying the play area together as you were standing right in the middle of it!"

I laughed out loud at Huzoor's comment and as I did, Huzoor also said to Khala Saboohi:

"Abid and Major sahib were standing in the middle of this play area!"

Huzoor then walked towards the exit and just before leaving he handed me the bag of crisps that he and Khala Saboohi had been eating. I was pleased to see that the packet was now at least half empty and this suggested that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi had liked them.

I took the crisps back to our car and we all enjoyed them knowing that Huzoor had been eating from the same packet a few minutes earlier.

Alhamdulillah those minutes at the services were both very enjoyable and very blessed as we observed Huzoor and Khala Saboohi having a few minutes to relax.

A rare sight

The *Qafila* drove onwards to Gothenburg and as we were driving, Mubarak Zafar sahib pointed to the sky and said that to our right the sun was visible and to our left the moon was also visible. It is rare to see the moon during the day and even rarer to see it alongside the sun.

Mubarak sahib was very interested by this occurrence and ever the accomplished poet, he said:

“As we travel to Gothenburg, on one side of the Qafila we see the sun and on the other side we see the moon and together they provide light and protection as they escort the fifth star of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.”

Arrival and first night in Gothenburg

We arrived at the *Nasir Mosque* in Gothenburg at 8.15pm. The Mosque, which was the first Jamaat Mosque in Sweden, lay atop a hill at an elevated position. Hundreds of Ahmadiis had gathered to welcome Huzoor and they were all so excited and delighted to see their Khalifa.

After dinner, Huzoor led *Namaz* and thereafter we were taken to our respective accommodations.

That first evening, Munir Javed sahib, Majid Tahir sahib, Mubarak Zafar sahib and me spent the night at the home of Nisar Yusuf sahib, the son of Kamal Yusuf sahib, who was the first *Missionary* sent to Scandinavia by the Jamaat back in the late 1950s. We spent one night at his home but thereafter we stayed at a nearby hotel.

Kamal sahib was also present at his son's house and the next morning at breakfast it was very interesting to hear some of his old stories. He told us that when he first arrived in Sweden the Jamaat could not afford to rent any accommodation and so he would stay at youth hostels.

However, there was a rule that you could only stay at a youth hostel for three nights consecutively and so every three nights he would pack up his belongings and move.

I felt very humbled listening to this and it reminded me how fortunate the *Waqifeen-Zindigis* (life devotees) in this modern era were considering the hardships and difficulties faced by those who came before.

Emotions of Ahmadis

The next day, on 19 May 2016, Huzoor met members of the local Jamaat in a session of family Mulaqats and so I took the opportunity to talk to some of the Ahmadis after they had met Huzoor.

One person I met was an elderly Ahmadi called *Bashir-ud-Din Ahmad (82)* who had lived in Sweden since 1969.

He told me he was related to Huzoor, as (late) Hazrat Umme Nasir (the mother of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}) was his aunt. Hazrat Umme Nasir had of course also been the maternal grandmother of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba).

Even though he explained the relationship to me as best he could, I have to admit I was still confused and so later on I asked Huzoor and it was only after Huzoor explained it that I understood the relationship.

Masha'Allah, Huzoor's knowledge of family relationships, not just within his own family, but of much of the Jamaat, is incredible.

Speaking to me about Huzoor, Bashir sahib said:

"I knew Huzoor since he was very young and the change I have seen in him after Khilafat is indescribable. Before he was very quiet and stayed in the background and whilst he remains simple and humble he has now transformed into a man of majesty and spiritual authority."

I also met a Bosnian convert called *Sabina Bengtsson* who was introduced to me by Amir sahib Sweden. Normally, I do not ask any lady her age in case it is considered impolite, however Sabina sahiba herself said:

"Note it down that I am 76 and I have been an Ahmadi Muslim since 1991!"

Sabina sahiba was extremely warm, kind and friendly and I sincerely enjoyed those few minutes I spent with her.

Sabina sahiba said:

“Whatever the Khalifa says is right – he is pure and goodness personified. I also met Huzoor’s wife and her face was filled with kindness and love and meeting her also brought me a great deal of happiness.”

Speaking about her experiences as an Ahmadi convert, Sabine sahiba said:

“In my heart I was an Ahmadi all of my life even though I did not know of it until decades later. All my life I wanted to meet truly sincere and kind people and it was when I met Ahmadis that I found the people I had been looking for. Having lived as an Ahmadi for a quarter of a century, I can testify that Ahmadis are the best people in the world today.”

As I said goodbye to her, she smiled at me like a grandmother might smile at her grandchild. Little did I know that she had an even closer relationship in her in mind.

As she left, she looked at me and said:

“My dear boy, from this day I now consider you to be my lovely son!”

A word of warning

Later that day I saw on the news that an *EgyptAir* flight from Paris to Cairo had crashed. In the first few hours the Egyptian Government and media all said that there was a distinct possibility that the flight had been victim of a terrorist attack.

I informed Huzoor of this development and upon hearing this news, Huzoor said:

“These satanic, fragmented people are without leadership and so they will continue to do these hateful acts. They are falsely perpetrating such cruelties in the name of Islam and so one day surely Allah will put an end to them. Let us wait and see when that time comes.”

Huzoor’s words were extremely powerful and I prayed that the day of reckoning Huzoor referred to would quickly come to pass.

A place for our shoes!

On 20 May 2016, Huzoor was to lead his weekly *Friday Sermon* from the Nasir Mosque.

It had rained all morning and so amongst some of the *Qafila* members, including me, there was a debate about where best to place our shoes during *Jumma*.

The reason for the discussion was that Huzoor was due to have a media interview straight after *Jumma* and so we did not wish to leave our shoes in the normal shoe racks as it might be difficult to reach them as we would have to cross through all the rows of Ahmadis in the Mosque and so we could be delayed.

The alternative was to place our shoes outside of the Mosque, however due to the rain factor it was likely our shoes would be soaked!

My own feeling was that we should just place our shoes in the normal rack and we would manage to get across to them somehow. I preferred that option to having drenched shoes. However, Majid sahib was adamant that it was better to leave our shoes outside and if we left them at a certain angle facing the wall they would be saved from the rain.

Thankfully, Mubarak sahib had a brainwave and decided to get a carrier bag and placed his shoes inside them and then placed the bag outside the Mosque!

As soon as I saw him do this I went in search of a carrier bag and upon finding one I copied his trick. Thus our shoes thankfully remained dry and easy to access!

Friday Sermon in Gothenburg

During his Friday Sermon, Huzoor spoke about how satanic influences were continuing to spread in the world, even amongst Muslims.

A prime example of this was the bloodshed witnessed on a daily basis in several Muslim countries.

Speaking about this, Huzoor said:

“What is happening in Muslim countries today? We can all see how satanic influences are leading to brutality and murder. Innocent people are being slaughtered and the perpetrators claim they will be rewarded with a place in heaven. However, the Quran makes it clear that such people are bound only for hell.”

Huzoor continued by saying:

“The media and the modern means of communication have brought all of us much closer together. Yet most regrettably, instead of steering us towards righteousness and morality it has led to increased immorality and wrongdoing.”

Huzoor also spoke about the concept of *Purdah* and *Hijab*. He said that there were certain activities that were immoral yet were permitted and even promoted in today's society, whilst conversely there were some *Western* governments that sought to depict *Purdah* as an affront to freedom.

Huzoor said that due to such influence, there were some Ahmadi ladies who had become weak in *Purdah* due to a fear of being mocked.

Nevertheless, there were many others who remained completely firm in their belief that every Islamic teaching was underpinned by wisdom, reason and logic. Huzoor said that such ladies considered *Hijab* as their personal choice, freedom and right.

Huzoor also advised members of the Jamaat to watch the weekly *Friday Sermon of Khalifa-Waqt* together as a family and to spend at least one hour watching other programmes on MTA each day.

Interview with SVT Vast

Immediately, after *Jumma* was completed, Huzoor proceeded directly to his office where he was interviewed by *SVT Vast* television.

Before the interview, the journalist asked Huzoor if he would keep his answers short because the TV piece she was preparing was going to be relatively short.

Her comment was unnecessary and disrespectful and though Huzoor was entirely calm it did seem from his answer that he did not appreciate her comment.

In response, Huzoor said:

“The length of answer depends on the type of question because some questions require more detailed answers.”

During the subsequent interview, Huzoor was asked about his views on extremism and radicalisation in Islam.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Such extremists seek to align their views to religion but Islam has no place for any form of extremism or violence. They are only seeking to serve their own vested interests. Islam teaches that there should be no compulsion in religion and every person is free to join Islam or to leave it.”

Emotions of Ahmadis

Later that day, Huzoor met Ahmadi families in a session of family *Mulaqats*.

One of the people Huzoor met was a Khadim called *Umer Malik Khan (30)*.

I spoke to him after his Mulaqat and he said:

“To see Huzoor and to pray behind him is completely different to anything else I have ever felt before. Just hearing Huzoor’s Tilawat (recitation of Quran) during Salat makes me extremely emotional.”

Speaking about the wider impact of Huzoor’s visit, Umer said:

“In Sweden our Jamaat was not particularly well known and so I have been amazed by the impact Huzoor has had in just a few days. It is as if Huzoor has single-handedly introduced Jamaat Ahmadiyyat to the

Swedish people. Every time I pick up a newspaper or turn on the TV it seems there is another story or report about our Jamaat.”

I also met a married couple, *Abdul Jabbar (36)* and his wife *Dalia Jabbar*. The latter was a Lithuanian Ahmadi convert.

Speaking after their Mulaqat, Abdul Jabbar sahib said:

“I was brought up in Pakistan and I used to be amongst those who always wondered if I would ever get to see our Khalifa. Only those who have lived in Pakistan can understand how desperate Pakistani Ahmadis are to see and meet Huzoor.”

His wife, Dalia sahiba said:

“I converted to Ahmadiyyat in 2007 and today I met Huzoor for the very first time. It was truly wonderful and quite simply the best moment of my life. I feel true contentment and extremely emotional. Seeing how loving Huzoor is and how kind he is has further increased my faith.”

She added:

“To become an Ahmadi was the best decision I ever made in my life. I am a completely different person and I believe I am a better person because I have been shown the right path.”

A few moments with Huzoor

After Mulaqats were completed. Huzoor called me to his office for a few minutes and Huzoor mentioned the interview that had happened earlier in the day after *Jumma*.

Huzoor said that the journalist seemed very inexperienced and that most of her questions were not of the standard expected.

I replied by saying that I was very annoyed that that she had asked Huzoor to keep his answers brief. I said I was even more annoyed when I watched the TV broadcast of her report that had aired a few minutes earlier because she had not shown any of her interview with Huzoor.

Rather, she had just shown a report about *Jumma* in which she mentioned that Huzoor had travelled to Gothenburg and included soundbites of some other members of the Jamaat.

Huzoor's humility is unmatched and an example to us all and so upon hearing that she had not included any footage of her interview with him, Huzoor said:

“At least the message of the Jamaat and of the Promised Messiah (as) was shown and reached a large audience – that is the main thing.”

I mentioned how earlier in the evening a non-Muslim Swedish man who lived near the Mosque had come in his car and rather aggressively approached a Khadim who was on security duty.

With an angry tone, the neighbour said:

“I have just watched a TV broadcast on the news and it says there is a Khalifa visiting here – who is he? What is he doing here? Why is he here?”

The Khadim explained who Huzoor was and about the Jamaat’s peaceful message and told him he was welcome to visit the Mosque. Upon hearing this the neighbour soon calmed down and became friendly.

Huzoor smiled and said:

“This at least proves that our message has reached one person today.”

This comment reminded me of how Huzoor is concerned for the welfare of every single person and how he desires for misconceptions about Islam to be dispelled from the heart of every person in the world.

Huzoor asked me if I had spoken to anyone in the USA recently, as he is aware that I have a number of good friends there. I mentioned how many of my friends had told me that the Jamaat in USA were very happy that Huzoor had approved the election of *Sahibzada Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad* sahib as the new *Amir* Jamaat.

I did not mention it to Huzoor but in my heart I was quite sure that one major reason why the USA Jamaat was happy was due to the extremely close relationship that their new *Amir* shared with Huzoor as his elder brother.

Huzoor's blessed guidance

Thereafter, Huzoor asked how my wife Mala and our children were back in London.

Huzoor particularly asked how my elder son Mahid was and if he was speaking more. It was very kind of Huzoor to enquire because he knew that I had been worried about this issue over the past year.

In fact, ever since I had communicated my worry to Huzoor about this issue he has given me tips and advice and has prayed for Mahid's speech development.

I remember when I first mentioned my worries to Huzoor, he had said:

"You should talk as much as you can with Mahid and have proper conversations with him. You are naturally not the type to speak so much and so make a special effort. Each evening spend at least 30minutes having one to one talks with him and he will soon pick it up."

A few weeks later, I also spoke to a professional *speech and language therapist* for the first time and shared my concerns with her. I will never forget her recommendations. She said:

"You should talk with Mahid as much as you can and have proper conversations with him. Try and spend at least 30minutes each day having one to one talks with him and you should soon see an improvement!"

I remember thinking that this lady had devoted much of her life and training to speech and language development, whilst on the other hand Huzoor had no such training but Allah has blessed him with knowledge of so many things and so much wisdom.

Alhamdulillah through Huzoor's guidance and prayers, Mahid's speech has developed considerably over the past few months.

Emotions of Ahmadis

The next day on 21 May 2016, I met a young Ahmadi called *Yusuf Salman Khan (28)* who had just been appointed as a *Ryanair* flight captain two days before and so he had worn his new captain's uniform during his *Mulaqat* with Huzoor.

Speaking about his *Mulaqat*, Yusuf said:

"Having our spiritual leader here is a rare privilege and such a blessing. Our lives are filled with contentment because we have a spiritual leader who guides us. I love the fact that I can write to Huzoor any time I like and there is no one who can stop or interfere with this direct connection."

Yusuf added:

"In my Mulaqat I wore my new uniform and thanked Huzoor as it was only due to his prayers that I attained this new position."

I met another young Khadim, *Adeel Zafar (30)* who had been serving in the Khuddam *Hifazat-e-Khas* (security) team.

Adeel said:

“I feel so emotional and shocked that Huzoor remembered who I was. It was the best feeling in the world. We are so fortunate that Khalifa-Waqt lets us all have a personal connection with him.”

Speaking about the impact of Huzoor’s visit on Khuddam, Adeel said:

“During these few days I have seen such a change in the spirit of our Khuddam. I have spoken to many Khuddam, some of whom had become very distant from the Jamaat, and they all said how they were overwhelmed by Huzoor’s humility and how when he speaks to them he speaks so kindly. Huzoor has such a great status but he has no pride or arrogance and this is what makes him so unique.”

Meeting with Khuddam Amila

Later that day, Huzoor held a meeting with *Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Sweden’s National Amila*.

Early in the meeting, the *Mohtamim Ishaat (Secretary Publications)* presented Huzoor with a copy of the most recent issue of the *Khuddam* magazine.

Upon seeing it, Huzoor appeared a little surprised to see that a photo of a young Muslim lady covered almost the entire A4 front cover. Although, the lady was observing Hijab it seemed odd for Khuddam to have such a large photo of a lady on the front of its magazine.

It turned out that the reason they had chosen the cover was because one of the main stories in the issue was a report about the non-Islamic practice of FGM. Nonetheless, the cover they had chosen still did not seem entirely necessary or appropriate.

Upon seeing the magazine, Huzoor instructed that before *Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya* published a magazine they should get it checked by either the Jamaat's *Ishaat Committee* or by a *Missionary*. In Sweden, Huzoor said the local Missionary, Kashif Virk should do the checking.

Huzoor then asked how often the Khuddam published the magazine and whether it was a quarterly publication. In response, Huzoor was informed that this was only the second ever edition of the magazine.

Huzoor asked when the previous edition had been published and I can never forget the response of the *Mohtamim Ishaat*. He said:

“The last edition was published in 1995.”

Hearing this, Huzoor smiled and said:

“The first edition was published in 1995, the second in 2016 and so I should expect that the next edition will be published in 2037!”

Thereafter Huzoor said:

“You should publish the magazine at least two or three times a year and it should be done with regularity.”

Upon hearing that receiving content for the magazine on a regular basis was difficult, Huzoor said:

“Just seven or eight years ago the Review of Religions had the same problem. The editors and board members told me that people were not interested in the magazine and they did not receive any content.

Thus, I re-organised the entire administration and personally guided them about how to proceed. Now Review is printed every month and its quality is far greater than it was in the past and they have a backlog of articles waiting to be published and so sometimes have to publish extra-long editions.”

For the past few years, I have seen how Huzoor himself takes personal interest in *Review of Religions* and guides Amer Safir sahib (Chief Editor) at every stage.

In fact, sometimes Huzoor has even personally designed the front cover and wherever Huzoor’s input has been received it has invariably led to great success and many blessings.

As the *Amila* meeting progressed it did seem as though the *Amila* was quite relaxed in its approach and did not seem as motivated as it ought to be.

For example, one *Secretary* said that he did not have any report to present to Huzoor.

Thus, after a few minutes, Huzoor addressed the entire Amila and said:

“You all need to realise that being a Mohtamim and part of the National Amila is not just a title for you to tell others. It is not just for you to say we are serving in such and such role and then to relax. Rather, you need to take your responsibilities extremely seriously and need to be motivated and to work as hard as you can at all times and set the very best example for others to follow.”

Huzoor added:

“Always remember that to bring someone close to the Jamaat is a very difficult task but to push them away is very easy.”

An enjoyable narration

The *Mohtamim Maal* (Secretary Finance) mentioned to Huzoor that a modern day problem was that *Khuddam* often said that they did not carry cash and only had cards with them.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor remembered a short video he had seen on *Whatsapp* some time ago.

Huzoor said:

“Once someone sent me a video in which an Asian beggar approached a family in a car and asked for some money. They looked in their wallets but after doing so they said that they did not have any change and only had their cards with them. Instead of being disappointed the beggar smiled and pulled out a portable credit card machine and handed it to them so they could pay by card!”

I instantly remembered the video that Huzoor was referring to and the look of shock and hilarity on the face of the family as they saw a beggar carrying a card machine! I remember that Huzoor had told me as well at the time that he had laughed and enjoyed the video.

However, after giving this light hearted narration, Huzoor added:

“However, you should remember that we are not beggars and the Jamaat is not in need of anyone’s contribution. Thus, it is your job to explain to others that financial sacrifice is a command of Allah the Almighty which leads to countless blessings and benefits.”

Blessings of Huzoor’s visit

As the meeting concluded, Huzoor very kindly turned towards *Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Sweden* and invited him to London.

Huzoor said:

“Sadr sahib you should come to the UK Jalsa and see how the Khuddam are working there and learn how to activate and motivate your Khuddam here in Sweden.”

It is at such times and during such meetings that you see the immense benefit of *Khalifatul Masih* travelling to different countries and meeting the Ahmadis and their office bearers.

During the course of this meeting it was quite apparent that the *National Amila* was being motivated and coming to understand far better their responsibilities.

This was something that a number of the *Amila* members expressed to me afterwards as well.

The *Mohtamim* Ishaat, *Waheed Raziullah* (36) told me:

“Huzoor gave such amazing advice and constructive criticism through which we can improve. I personally feel very blessed that Huzoor gave so much guidance to Ishaat department. Even though we are weak, and Huzoor could see this, he did not scold us but rather he taught us with love, kindness and compassion.”

Emotions of Ahmadis

Later that day, I met a Khadim called *Malik Ammer Imran (36)* who was the nephew of Amir sahib Canada, *Malik Lal Khan* sahib.

He told me that his two-year-old daughter was extremely shy and always became upset around new people and so he and his wife were very worried that she would start crying upon seeing Huzoor during their Mulaqat.

Malik sahib said:

“Our daughter is painfully shy and will not go towards anyone except me and her mother. She does not even talk or play with her grandparents. If she met you Abid sahib she would certainly run away and hide!”

Upon hearing this I burst into laughter! It took me a couple of minutes to compose myself and to continue our talk.

Malik sahib continued by telling me his daughter’s reaction to seeing Huzoor. He said:

“We were both amazed that during our Mulaqat she happily held Huzoor’s hand and as soon as we came out of the meeting she said she wanted to meet Huzoor again. The way she reacted to Huzoor proved to me that Allah places the love for Khilafat in the hearts of people and children Himself. It showed that even children know that Khalifa-Waqt is a means of peace, love and sanctuary.”

Thereafter, he told me that he himself had converted to Ahmadiyyat in 1996 in Pakistan and in 2011 he had requested Huzoor's prayers that his father and two sisters also accepted Ahmadiyyat.

Malik sahib said:

“Most kindly Huzoor prayed for my family and within a few months my sisters accepted Ahmadiyyat. My father has still not done Bai’at but when he found out I was meeting Huzoor he still asked me to request Huzoor’s prayers for him.”

Later that day, I met *Sarmad Hubner*, a young Swedish Ahmadi convert who had become a good friend of mine over the past couple of weeks. I had spoken to him earlier in the tour about how he had come to accept Ahmadiyyat and now he told me a little about his experiences during Huzoor's current tour.

Sarmad said:

“It feels as though Huzoor has come and watered the spiritual plant of the Sweden Jamaat. I have seen people who were distant from the Mosque yet now they are here every day and praying with great emotion.”

Sarmad continued:

“Any place where Khalifa-Waqt is staying is the safest and purest place on earth because he is surrounded by angels - I truly believe this. I do

not want to be apart from him ever again because Khilafat is the oxygen that increases our spirituality. I feel devastated that Huzoor is leaving in two days and that then we will have to return to our normal daily lives thousands of miles from our Khalifa.”

Huzoor’s visit to Murrabi sahib’s home

During the tour, I met and came to personally know Sweden’s Missionary-in-charge, Agha Yahya Khan sahib for the first time.

He and his family lived in a flat below the Nasir Mosque and early in the tour Agha sahib requested Huzoor to visit their home and on the final full day of the tour, 22nd May Huzoor fulfilled this request.

Later on Murrabi sahib’s daughter, Amal Yahya Khan told me about her family’s experience. She said:

“During Huzoor’s stay in Gothenburg we would all rush back to our home after each Namaz eagerly waiting that perhaps Huzoor would bless our house with his presence. As the days passed, with a heavy heart we accepted that Huzoor was too busy to visit us.

However, then on 22nd May we were sitting on the sofa and we heard our father say ‘Assalamo Alaikum’ loudly. We noticed the happiness and nervousness in his salam and we all understood instantly that Huzoor had come to our house.”

Amal sahiba continued:

“We rushed to the door to welcome Huzoor and we greeted him with tears of joy running down our faces.”

She told me that six years previously there was a fire in their kitchen and to her amazement Huzoor remembered this. Thus upon entering the room Huzoor said:

“This is the kitchen where there was a fire and was then renovated.”

Thereafter, Huzoor observed a photo of the Promised Messiah (as), which was hanging in the wall of the living room.

Upon seeing it, Huzoor said:

“The photo is quite blurry and so you should replace it with a better quality photo of the Promised Messiah (as).”

In all matters, you see Huzoor’s absolute respect for the Promised Messiah (as) and so he did not like to see a photo that was not clear being displayed.

Amal sahiba told me that just before he left their home they requested a photo with Huzoor. Speaking of this, she said:

“It never ceases to me amaze me how Huzoor is able to make everyone feel so special. My father took the first photo and then I took the next photo so he would be in a photo as well. After I took the photo, Huzoor said that I would want to have a photo with Huzoor in which my father

was also present and so he told my elder sister to take one last photo. In this way, we all had photos with Huzoor alongside all of our other family members.”

Khuddam losing their balance

After the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers on 22 May 2016, I noticed that a Khadim doing security duty lost his balance and was about to fall to the ground when two other Khuddam noticed this and were thankfully able to break his fall. I presumed that he had become tired from standing in the same place for a lengthy period.

I felt personal sympathy for him because a couple of months earlier, I had given a talk to some *Atfal* boys in the Fazl Mosque in London and had been sitting in the same position for around an hour.

Without me realising, my foot had become extremely numb and so when I got up I lost balance and fell face-first to the ground.

I remember distinctly how some of the children looked at me as though I was a bit of a clown.

I actually sprained my ankle quite badly and many weeks later it had still not entirely healed.

I remember the day I fell, I told Huzoor about it and he advised that if a person ever has to sit for long periods they should change the position of their feet at regular intervals.

Thereafter, Huzoor mentioned another incident from a few years previously. It was from Germany where Huzoor was participating in the final session of Jalsa Qadian via MTA.

Huzoor said:

“Once when I was in Germany and participating in the final session of the Qadian Jalsa, I was sitting on my chair on the stage when I noticed that the Khadim who was reciting the Nazm had become physically unstable. The other people on stage and the security guards did not notice but I could tell that something was wrong. Thus, I myself got up from my chair and grabbed his collar to hold and support him just as he had started to fall. Thankfully, I was able to hold him before he had collapsed to the ground.”

Huzoor continued:

“After he had composed himself the Khadim expressed his desire to continue the Nazm and so I let him recite a couple more verses and then I told him to go and sit down, to rest and relax and not to worry at all. Alhamdulillah later he was fine.”

I remember when I heard that narration I was amazed.

There are dozens of people who sit on the stage in Germany and yet it was only Huzoor who had noticed the problem of the Khadim.

I also thought how fortunate the Khadim was. Our spiritual salvation lies in Khilafat but on that day Huzoor was also the means of physical salvation for the Khadim.

It was also a lesson in how to handle such issues, wherein there was no panic or confusion, rather Huzoor very calmly stood up and gave support to the Khadim and once he had regained his balance Huzoor told him to go and rest.

Meeting with Ansar National Amila

Later in the day, Huzoor held a meeting with *Majlis Ansarullah Sweden's National Amila*.

It so happened that the members of the Ansar Amila were seated at a few metres distance from Huzoor and so after a minute, Huzoor smiled and said:

“You should all bring your chairs forward because as members of Ansar some of you might have difficulties hearing!”

As they brought forward their chairs all members of the Amila laughed and enjoyed Huzoor's joke.

Huzoor told the Amila members that they should conduct their duties diligently and with perseverance.

Huzoor said:

“It is not enough to just send out instructions or guidance every now and then and consider that you have fulfilled your duties. Remember how Allah the Almighty instructed the Holy Prophet (sa) to persistently spread the message of Islam no matter what. Sweden is a small Jamaat and such small Jamaats should be examples for others because to raise the standards of a relatively few people should be easier to accomplish.”

During the meeting, Huzoor was informed that one of the Amila members lived around 11 months of the year in Dubai.

The *Sadr Ansarullah* said that he still paid his *Chanda* in Sweden and that his duties were such that he could do most of his Jamaat work remotely.

However, Huzoor was not satisfied by this and so instructed that a person who lived in Sweden should replace him.

Furthermore, Huzoor said that Ahmadis should pay *Chanda* in the countries in which they lived unless there was a specific reason and even then they should have written permission from the Markaz (centre) to pay it in a different country.

Giving general advice to the Ansar Amila, Huzoor said:

“Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) once said Ahmadis were extremely active whilst they were Khuddam, however when they entered Ansarullah many became lazy. He said this out of sadness and worry and it was not

a permission or licence for the Nasirs to be neglectful of their duties. Regrettably, I have seen that what he said decades ago remains as true today as it did then."

Emotions of Ahmadis

Later that day, I met a young teenage Khadim called *Fahim Tahir (18)* who told me that he hoped to *join Jamia Ahmadiyya* and to train as a Missionary. Despite his youth, he spoke with maturity and I could see just how much of an impact Huzoor's presence had had on him.

Fahim said:

"I have always found the study of religion extremely fascinating and have always found that Ahmadiyyat provides the most logical and reasoned arguments to every single question. Thus, I am certain that Khilafat is guiding us on the right path."

Fahim continued:

"The spirit I feel due to Huzoor's presence is such that I am ready to sacrifice my life for the sake of our Jamaat. I truly believe that this life is a temporary home and all our focus should be on attaining Allah's pleasure for our permanent home in the Hereafter. Each day I remind myself that this life is just an entry exam for the next life. I consider myself to be an ambassador for Khilafat and so in school I try to treat everyone with love, respect and to be forgiving."

Speaking about living his life as a Muslim youth in Sweden, Fahim said:

“Sweden is an extremely liberal country and completely secular. Thus the majority of young people in this country have no real faith or belief, yet in our Jamaat the youth take pride in our faith and are committed to the true teachings of Islam.”

Immediately after meeting such a passionate youth, I met an elderly man who was equally passionate and unable to control his emotions. His name was *Liaqat Ali (66)* and he had travelled to Sweden from Norway to meet Huzoor.

Throughout our meeting he constantly wiped tears from his eyes as he spoke about his Mulaqat.

Liaqat sahib said:

“Today is the happiest day of my life. Who am I to meet the Khalifa? Who am I to speak before him?”

He continued by telling me about some of the difficulties he had faced during his life.

He said:

“I used to live in Karachi and I was very wealthy but one day all my wealth and property was seized due to me being an Ahmadi. Thus, when I came to Norway twelve years ago I was penniless but in truth I was a

million times richer because here I could listen to Khalifa-Waqt with freedom and my family can serve the Jamaat openly. This is true wealth and this is true honour.”

By now the tears were streaming uncontrollably from his eyes and as they did, he said:

“I am so grateful that my worldly wealth was stolen from me because through that I gained a spiritual wealth that will enrich me and my future generations both in this world and the next life.”

There was a Khadim I saw on duty throughout the trip and whenever I saw him he smiled and said *salam* very loudly and so on that final day I approached him and we started to talk.

His name was *Bilal Malik (24)* and he was a student at university. He told me that he had come to Denmark at the beginning of the tour when Huzoor was there.

Speaking about his experiences, he said:

“I did not plan to do security duty during this tour but in Copenhagen at one point Huzoor walked past me and as he did so he smiled and waved in my direction. That single moment was life-changing. Since that day, I have done duty every single day and do not want this tour to ever end.”

Bilal told me of some of the difficulties he had faced in order to do security duty.

Bilal said:

“My university did not authorise holiday as these days are our exam period. I applied twice but both times they rejected my application. In the end I decided simply not to attend and it is possible they will make me repeat the year but I do not care because God’s chosen representative is here and so I do not want to be anywhere else. Even if they were to kick me out of university I will consider it to be an honour and feel pride.”

I do not know if his decision to leave his exams was the right one, however certainly his spirit and true love for Khilafat was clearly apparent and so I shared his confidence that Allah would bless his good intentions, *Insha’Allah*.

Nikah ceremony

That day Huzoor also performed the *Nikah* (marriage) ceremonies of a few local Ahmadis.

Prior to announcing the marriages Huzoor said:

“Where a marriage is a means of happiness for both families it also brings about great responsibilities. This is why in the verses of the Quran recited before Nikah ceremonies, Allah the Almighty repeatedly calls on believers to act with Taqwa (righteousness), to fulfil each other’s rights, to develop mutual trust and to hold fast to the truth at all times.”

Huzoor continued by saying:

“Allah the Almighty desires that we should look towards our futures and not just the present day. Thus, always reflect and see if your conduct is such that will benefit you in the next life and also whether your legacy in this world - your children - are those who are firm in their faith in Islam.”

Emotions of Ahmadis

That evening, Huzoor met more Ahmadi families in Mulaqat and so I again took the opportunity to talk to some of those people who had just met Huzoor.

One child I met was a young boy called *Sheryar Humayun* who was aged just seven.

I approached him because he looked a little shaken and so I wanted to see if he was ok. He looked at me and said:

“When I did salam to Huzoor and touched his hand for the very first time I felt something good in my heart and I do not know what that feeling was. I have never felt anything like it before.”

He kept telling me that the feeling was something he had not felt before. Whilst the love of Khilafat is something that continues to develop and increase, there is no doubt that the basic connection and bond is something that Allah seems to place in the heart of Ahmadi children *Himself*.

I also met a Syrian refugee, *Ali Jaber (29)* who had come to Sweden in 2013.

He told me that whilst other refugees were being extorted by people smugglers and human traffickers, his experience was very different.

Ali said:

“Whilst so many other people have struggled and even died en-route to Europe, I came safely and easily and even though I had no visa when I came here the immigration officials stamped my passport and let me enter without delay. I firmly believe this was a result of the prayers of Khalifatul Masih.”

He then told me about his experience of meeting Huzoor for the very first time earlier that day. Ali said:

“I became an Ahmadi Muslim in 1995 and today, 21 years later, I was able to meet my spiritual leader for the very first time. He is the person I love and respect more than anyone else. In Huzoor’s company, I was left speechless because he was so humble and loving. Huzoor even asked me if I wanted a photo with him and this shows his humility and grace. Rather, it should have been me begging my beloved for a photo.”

Meeting with National Amila

The final official activity of the tour occurred on the evening of 22 May 2016 when Huzoor held a meeting with Sweden Jamaat’s *National Majlis-e-Amila*.

During the meeting, Huzoor said there was a great need to focus on *Tabligh* and so every member of the *Amila* should seek to convert at least one person to Ahmadiyyat each year and that the *Missionaries* should try to convert at least two people annually.

Huzoor said that *Tabligh* plans should be made that were in line with the temperament and nature of Swedish people.

Message to a Parliamentarian

During the meeting, Huzoor asked Amir sahib about a Bosnian female MP who had visited Huzoor just over a year previously in London. At the time she had expressed a great desire for Huzoor to visit Sweden and said that she would like to host him. However, she had not attended either the Malmo Mosque opening or the reception hosted by the Jamaat in Sweden.

Amir sahib informed Huzoor that, as a member of the *Social Democratic* party, she had not attended out of a fear of displeasing her party.

This related to the fact that the Social Democratic party had expressed '*disappointment*' at an interview Huzoor had given earlier in his tour in which he said that homosexuality was against the teachings of both the Quran and the Bible.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Give my salam and greetings to the Bosnian MP and tell her that I had thought she was a very courageous lady and yet she did not even come

and attend our function even though she was a Muslim, whilst on the other hand the lady MP who was a Christian and from the same party attended.”

I remembered meeting the Muslim MP myself when she was in London and how both during and after her meeting with Huzoor she had expressed her great respect for him.

She had told me that Huzoor deserved to be welcomed and given great respect in Sweden’s Parliament and she would work towards this. Thus, the fact that she did not attend was disappointing, especially given the fact that she herself was a practicing Muslim.

Nonetheless, rather than exhibit any anger, Huzoor had said that the Jamaat should convey his *salam* and to gently draw her attention to the fact that she had not attended due to a fear of potential political consequences.

Jaidad discussion

Much of the meeting was spent discussing a *Jaidad* (property) issue.

Following the inauguration of the Malmo Mosque, the *Jaidad Secretary* was of the opinion that an older property owned by the Jamaat in Malmo should be sold.

He referred to the building as a “*safaid haathi*” which translates as a ‘white elephant’. I was shocked that the phrase ‘white elephant’ was also used in Urdu in order to describe buildings that are useless or difficult to maintain.

On the other side, Amir sahib and a few other members of the Amila were of the opinion that the property should not be sold and in the long term keeping the property would prove beneficial.

Huzoor had visited the property on his previous visit to Sweden and referring to that visit, Huzoor said:

“When I came in 2005 the Malmo property was in good condition and so the current state shows that you did not maintain it properly. We should always ensure that any Jamaat property is looked after and maintained in the best way possible.”

Having heard both sides, Huzoor said:

“As there is no agreement amongst the Amila, I will send an Ahmadi structural and civil engineer from London to assess all the possible options. Furthermore, you should present this matter in your next National Shura and deliberate it there.”

As the meeting concluded, Amir sahib requested Huzoor to visit Scandinavia more regularly and he proposed a joint *Scandinavian Jalsa* to be held every few years in which Huzoor could attend.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Send me your written recommendations and proposal in writing on this matter for me to consider.”

An evening invitation

In my experience it is very rare for Huzoor to accept the personal invitation for dinner of an Ahmadi during tours. Huzoor is so extremely busy and his focus is always on the Jamaat and his duties. Thus, I have seen Huzoor even reject the invitations of his relatives.

However, on that final evening in Sweden, Huzoor graciously accepted the invitation of Amir sahib Sweden and his family.

Amir sahib kindly invited the *Qafila* members as well and so we were also able to attend.

Throughout the tour, Huzoor’s car had been driven by Mahmood Khan sahib but that evening Huzoor accepted the request of Tariq Shah sahib, a relative of Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor’s respected wife*), to permit him to drive Huzoor to Amir sahib’s home. Thus, Tariq sahib drove Huzoor and Khala Saboohi in a car owned by a German Khadim who had travelled to Sweden to do security duty.

Amir sahib’s home was around 15minutes drive from the Mosque and the *Qafila* arrived just after 9pm.

All of Amir sahib's family was waiting at the entrance and the joy and delight on their faces was very clear as they received Huzoor and Khala Saboohi and escorted them into their home.

The rest of us stayed outside and I presumed that we would be served food outside in the front garden.

However, after a few minutes Amir sahib came and told us that arrangements for the *Qafila* members were also inside. Hence, we entered Amir sahib's home and I could see that the ladies were seated in the lounge area downstairs, whilst we were taken upstairs.

As we reached upstairs, Amir sahib turned towards Munir Javed sahib, Majid sahib, Mubarak Zafar sahib and me and told us that we should sit at a table on the other side of the room.

Part of the table was covered by an internal wall and so we could not see the table from a distance and it was only when we reached it that we saw that Huzoor was seated at the head of the table already. Immediately, I found myself taking a step back but Huzoor graciously gestured to us to sit down.

The table was quite small. Huzoor was seated at the head, Majid sahib was to Huzoor's immediate left and next to him was Munir Javed sahib.

To Huzoor's immediate right there was one empty chair and next to it Mubarak Zafar sahib sat down. Thus, I sat down on the chair directly opposite Huzoor.

Thereafter, Amir sahib and his family served dinner to Huzoor and the rest of us. I saw that Huzoor took some *naan* bread, with *karhai*, some fried fish and some lamb *kebabs* that had been made into a curry. Huzoor did not take the huge lamb leg roast, known as *raan*, which had been prepared.

After a minute Amir sahib came towards me and asked if I would like some *raan*. I expected a small piece but Amir sahib cut a huge piece that covered my entire plate. I looked at it for about five seconds wondering how on earth I would eat so much. It was very nice and so in the end I did eat a fair amount but not the entire portion.

For much of the meal we were all very quiet. On three or four occasions I almost plucked up the courage to speak to Huzoor, however each time I used to look at the faces of Munir sahib, Majid sahib and Mubarak sahib and thought that if they are being silent then I should as well.

I felt bad however thinking that we are proving extremely poor company for Huzoor!

Anyway, after about ten minutes, Huzoor looked at us and said:

“I think this has probably been the quietest dinner any of you will ever have eaten!”

Upon hearing this, I thought that now I should at least speak and so I mentioned to Huzoor that earlier that day the *Masroor Cricket Tournament* had concluded in London and that Canada had beaten the *Markazi* (central) team known as *Omaid XI*.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor asked the details of the match and as Omair Aleem, the manager of the defeated *Omair XI*, was present he was able to tell Huzoor the details.

Explaining the defeat, Omair said that the ground for the final had been poor.

Huzoor smiled and simply said:

“Was the ground good only for Canada?”

We all laughed and Omair also realised that Huzoor’s point was of course correct that even if it was a poor wicket it will have been a poor wicket for both sides.

Amir sahib then presented Huzoor with dessert and there was both ice cream and the milky Asian dessert known as *rasmalai*. Huzoor said he would take ice cream only. Amir sahib duly presented a bowl of ice cream to Huzoor and Huzoor picked it up, stood up and went downstairs to where Khala Saboohi was sitting with the female members of Amir sahib’s family.

Most graciously, Huzoor spent some time with Amir sahib’s family members.

The rest of us quickly finished our desserts before heading back outside to the cars.

For Amir sahib's family it was of course something they would always remember but for the *Qafila* members it was also something very special at the end of the tour to be able to spend some informal moments in the blessed company of Huzoor.

We were all extremely grateful to Amir sahib and his family for inviting us as well and sharing their blessed experience with us.

A couple of days later, after we had returned to London, Huzoor mentioned the dinner at Amir sahib's home to me. Huzoor said:

“During the dinner were you all able to eat properly? I noticed that Majid sahib did not eat much and so I hope he ate something after I left.”

In reply, I said that due to Amir sahib's *raan* intervention I certainly did not leave his home hungry.

Emotions of Amir sahib's daughter

Later, the daughter of Amir sahib Sweden, Nayla Muzammil told me about her family's experience that evening.

I knew Nayla as she lives in London and is good friends with my wife Mala, whilst her husband a young Missionary, Muzammil Dogar is a good friend of mine.

Speaking about the experience, Nayla said:

“Our entire family were anxiously waiting outside our house to welcome beloved Huzoor. The tension grew with each car that drove past. Never had we paid attention to our road before, but at that moment we just couldn't take our eyes off it. After a short while of waiting, the car that led Huzoor and his Qafila to our house appeared. The adrenaline surged through us and we felt a sudden shiver down our spines. Within minutes Huzoor's car was parked in our driveway.”

Nayla continued:

“We (the female members of the family) had the opportunity to eat food with Apa Jaan while Huzoor remained upstairs with the male members of the family and Qafila. Apa Jaan was very sweet and polite and she would not even let us put food for her in her plate. It showed her great humility.”

Speaking of the moment when Huzoor joined Khala Saboohi and the ladies, Nayla said:

“After Huzoor finished his meal he walked downstairs by himself to have his dessert with us ladies who were sitting with Apa Jaan. This was the best surprise we could have asked for. Everyone jumped out of surprise and joy. Huzoor entered our living room downstairs and sat down on a sofa. Huzoor smiled and said "I left the men upstairs because they weren't able to eat freely in front of me, I hope I don't disturb your

food with my presence!" - Who are we? We have no worth! Yet Huzoor, our spiritual leader is so concerned about us and also his Qafila."

Speaking of her cherished memories, Nayla said:

"The whole experience was like a dream and still is hard to believe. Forever has this experience been engraved in our hearts and forever will we remember Huzoor's graciousness towards us."

Late night packing

The *Qafila* returned to the Mosque at around 10pm and after a few minutes Huzoor entered the Mosque to lead and led the *Maghreb* and *Isha* prayers.

It was decided that those of us staying at the hotel would bring our luggage to *Fajr* and drop it at the Mosque. Thus, before going to bed I packed up my belongings and readied my suitcase to take with me to *Fajr*.

A few anxious minutes

After *Fajr* we returned to the hotel for a couple hours of sleep and then got ready to return to the Mosque from where Huzoor and the *Qafila* were due to depart at 9am for Gothenburg Airport.

The drive from the hotel to the Mosque normally took around 15minutes but we were conscious of potential rush hour traffic and so we asked to be picked up at 8am.

Unfortunately, our driver had himself become stuck in traffic on the way to picking us up. As the minutes passed we all started to get worried that we would be late for departure. The idea of being late for the flight or to delay Huzoor in any way was something that none of us could bear thinking about.

When it got to 8.15am, I suggested that we order a taxi and go to the Mosque ourselves. However, the receptionist at the hotel said that it would take quite a while for a taxi to arrive due to heavy traffic.

Just as we were all feeling a dawning sense of panic finally the driver arrived at 8.25am. We quickly put in the luggage and jumped into his 8-seater vehicle.

We were still worried that we might be late as we were in the middle of rush hour but our driver used an alternative route and so with Allah's grace we managed to proceed at a good speed. In the end it did not take any longer than normal and we arrived at the Mosque 8.40am and all of us took a long, deep sigh of relief.

Departure from Nasir Mosque

A few minutes before 9am, Huzoor came out of his residence and walked along the Mosque complex waving at the hundreds of Ahmadi men, women and children who had come to see him off. The Ahmadis were extremely emotional and sad to see Huzoor leave.

It is at such times that you truly appreciate being a part of Huzoor's Qafila because you are able to avoid the desperate sadness of seeing Huzoor leave and rather you feel happy to be travelling back with him.

After a silent prayer led by Huzoor the *Qafila* departed from the Mosque at 9am and proceeded directly to the airport. The local police escorted Huzoor and the *Qafila* cars throughout the journey.

Stay in airport lounge

Upon reaching the airport we were taken to a private security screening area before entering a small lounge area. The lounge was divided into two sides and so on one side Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were seated and on the other side the rest of the *Qafila* members and also Amir sahib Sweden and Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Sweden.

After a few minutes, I heard Huzoor call me and so I walked to where Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were seated.

Huzoor smiled and said:

“Abid, Masha’Allah you are travelling with a very nice brown leather bag.”

I responded by saying:

“Yes Huzoor, I purchased this bag the day before the tour started and it has proved very useful to carry my laptop and notepad.”

Huzoor told me to bring the bag to him and both he and Khala Saboohi very kindly said that it was a smart bag.

Huzoor said:

“The problem with such leather products is that soon the leather begins to wear and so you really need to look after them well and polish the leather if you want it to stay in good condition.”

After hearing Huzoor’s advice, I said:

“Yes already during this tour I can tell that there has been a small difference and that it has started to wear.”

It was very kind of Huzoor to even notice such a small thing and after wondering if I had made a good investment for the past few weeks, I was now confident that the bag had been a good purchase and delighted that Huzoor had liked it.

I returned to where the other *Qafila* members were sitting.

There was some coffee and small chocolates and biscuits laid out on a table in front of us. After a few minutes Major sahib poured himself some coffee and then picked up one of the chocolates and put it inside his coffee.

Seeing this, Amir sahib Sweden said:

“Major sahib you have placed a chocolate in your coffee by mistake.”

In reply, Major sahib said:

“Not by mistake - I did it purposely so I get my money’s worth!”

During those few moments as we waited for boarding, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi spent the time looking at some pictures or videos of their grandchildren. I felt very happy for them to have these few minutes because I knew that as soon as Huzoor returned to London his almost non-stop routine and duties would instantly start again.

A few minutes later, Huzoor called me again. Huzoor had his phone in his hand and asked me what the *Wi-Fi* code was for the airport. I explained how to log on onto the airport *Wi-Fi* but it appeared very slow.

Upon seeing this, Huzoor said:

“In Scandinavia generally I have noticed the Wi-Fi signal is fairly weak.”

Thereafter, Huzoor asked me how the other Qafila members were and how they were spending their time. I said that a couple of them seemed to be catching up on their sleep.

In particular, Majid sahib was tired, as he had only slept for around two hours during the night.

The reason was that Majid sahib stayed at the Mosque after Fajr and came to airport early with the Qafila luggage.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor said:

“A couple of hours of sleep at night are enough to become fresh.”

I thought to myself, how Huzoor’s routine was such that on some nights he probably did only get a couple hours of sleep.

Even on those occasions where he could sleep a little more, he would still sleep far less than the average person. Thus, a couple of hours for Huzoor were really enough to make him fresh.

Three parts instead of two

I mentioned to Huzoor about the various experiences and emotions of some of the Ahmadis I had met in the previous few days.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Hopefully you will have enough stories to write a diary when we return to London.”

I nodded and in my mind I thought that I would write the diaries in two parts.

One part would focus on the first half of the tour and one on the second half of the tour.

However, upon returning to London, Huzoor said to me:

“You should make the diary into three parts so that it is easier for people to read it. Thus, the first part should be about Denmark, the second part about Malmo and Stockholm and then final part about the final few days.”

Alhamdulillah, I am very fortunate that Huzoor gives so much time to guiding me about these diaries.

Departure from Sweden and return to London

After a few more minutes, Huzoor stood up and walked towards where the other *Qafila* members were seated.

Huzoor looked at both Amir sahib Sweden and Sadr sahib Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya and said:

“Once I have left then you should both go to sleep and get some rest!”

After a few more minutes we were informed that our *British Airways* flight back to London was ready to board.

We followed Huzoor and Khala Saboohi onto the plane and as I entered I saw that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were seated in very small and cramped seats with very little leg room.

I felt extremely sad about this and so throughout the journey I kept praying that may Allah make the journey as comfortable as possible for them.

On the plane, I was seated next to Major sahib who showed me photos of his grandson and was good company throughout.

The flight departed from Gothenburg at 11.30am and we arrived in London at 12.15pm local time.

The Qafila members were taken to the *Windsor* suite at Heathrow where Amir sahib UK and Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya UK were waiting to receive Huzoor.

As the immigration formalities were completed Huzoor and Khala Saboohi waited in a lounge, whilst the rest of us *Qafila* members were seated in a nearby room.

After a few minutes, Huzoor enter the room in which we were waiting and met Amir sahib UK.

Amir sahib requested Huzoor's prayers for a special *Khilafat* themed Tabligh event that the UK Jamaat was hosting later that day in central London.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor asked why the event was not being held on or after *Khilafat Day* itself which is on 27th May.

After a few minutes, the Qafila departed from the airport and headed back to Fazl Mosque, where Huzoor arrived at 1.40pm and was greeted by hundreds of Ahmadis all extremely happy that Huzoor was had returned home safely.

As we drove into the Mosque, I noticed my own car parked on the side of the road outside the Mosque. My wife Mala had come to pick me up with Mahid and Moshahid. It was extremely nice to be back home.

Conclusion

Alhamdulillah, Huzoor's tour of Scandinavia had proved extremely blessed in all respects. I felt humbled to have had the honour to serve as a bystander watching the unique impact of Huzoor's visit.

Thousands of Ahmadi Muslims had been spiritually rejuvenated, whilst millions of people had come to know of Ahmadiyyat and the true and peaceful message of Islam through his interviews and receptions.

Huzoor's humility, grace, compassion and love had been witnessed and personally felt by so many people.

During those three weeks spent in Copenhagen, in Malmo, in Stockholm and Gothenburg, we witnessed how Allah the Almighty is forever with his Khalifa.

In the tour, we saw the courage and bravery of Khalifatul Masih as he addressed contemporary issues boldly in light of the teachings of Islam without any fear or anxiety.

For the first time during any of Huzoor's tours in which I had been present, I saw the seed of opposition flicker as members of the Sweden's governing party sought to condemn Islam's views on homosexuality and how journalists raised the issue of Muslims not shaking the hands of people of the other sex again and again.

Huzoor's confidence and complete trust in Islam never once wavered or faltered. In this way, Huzoor set the very best example for Ahmadis today and tomorrow to follow.

May Allah grant Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) a long, healthy and prosperous life in all respects. *Ameen.*

End of Part 3

Any comments or feedback: abid.khan@pressahmadiyya.com