

HUZOOR'S TOUR OF CANADA

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2016

PART 3

A Personal Account

By Abid Khan

Introduction to Part 3

Part 2 of this personal account concluded with Huzoor's return to Peace Village after an historic visit to Ottawa. In Part 3, I shall narrate incidents from the following week in Peace Village.

The narrations of a martyr's wife

On 19 October 2016, Huzoor held sessions of family Mulaqats all day. The morning session commenced at 11.20am and continued uninterrupted until 3.20pm and so Huzoor met Ahmadi's without break for four hours. Thereafter, after lunch, he returned to the office and the Mulaqats recommenced.

One of the people who met Huzoor was a lady called *Rabia Waseem*, who met him along with her three young children. She was the wife of *Waseem Ahmad Shaheed sahib*, who had been martyred at the age of 38 during the terrorist attacks on our Mosques in Lahore on 28 May 2010.

Two of her children were very young at the time of their father's martyrdom, whilst her youngest daughter was born a few months later and so never got to see her father. The family had now resettled in Canada.

I was really moved and impressed by her fortitude and courage. In common with all the families of martyrs that I have met, she bore not a trace of self-pity, bitterness or anger, rather she spoke with dignity and humility. She spoke with a smile on her face and if she had not told me her story, I would never have imagined the sacrifices she had made.

Rabia sahiba told me a little about her husband and their relationship. She said:

“My husband Waseem had many qualities which I can vouch for, however in my opinion his best quality was humility and patience. If I ever got angry or upset over anything, he would say ‘Khalifa-Waqt tells us to be patient and that anger leads a person astray and never towards prosperity’, and upon hearing this, I would always calm down.”

Rabia sahiba continued:

“Undoubtedly, the past 6 years have been extremely tough but when I look back at this period, I consider the martyrdom of my husband to have been an immense blessing upon me and our family. The greatest example of this has been the love and care we have received from Huzoor. I will never forget the day Huzoor called us after the martyrdom - I was left completely astounded and shocked. I had not even the slightest thought that someone like me would ever have the opportunity to speak to my Khalifa and so that day I realised what a great honour martyrdom really is. The pain of my husband’s loss was great but the love of Khilafat shielded us and healed our grief.”

Speaking about the blessings of Huzoor’s prayers, Rabia sahiba said:

“Today, I am living on my own with three young children and am in a country far away from where I was brought up. Yet, me and my children are happy and we are doing well. This is proof that Allah listens to the prayers of Khalifa-Waqt, otherwise it would have been impossible for

someone like me to migrate half-way across the world to a place that I did not know at all. Alhamdolillah, our life is now peaceful, it is blessed and above all we know that Allah is with us."

After meeting Huzoor, Rabia sahiba was extremely overjoyed and delighted. She said:

"This was the first time that I ever had the opportunity to meet Huzoor and I just cannot stop smiling. With so much love, and like a father, Huzoor asked us how we were and gave us gifts from his own hand."

Forever in debt

On a personal level, I did not know any of the 28 May Lahore martyrs but I will bear a debt of gratitude to them for as long as I shall live. Prior to the incident, I had served in the *Press & Media Office* for nearly three years and I used to meet Huzoor once or twice a month in his office and take instructions from him on mornings when *daftari* (office) Mulaqats took place.

However, a day or two after the 28 May incident, I received a call from Private Secretary, Munir Javed sahib saying Huzoor had told me to report that afternoon.

As instructed, I reported to Huzoor but had no idea why he had called me.

Upon entering his office, Huzoor told me to take a seat and then said:

"What is the news for today?"

I remember being confused and entirely unsure of what Huzoor meant. Nevertheless, I mentioned a couple of reports I had read about the 28 May attack.

After listening, Huzoor simply said:

“Due to the circumstances these days, it is better that you keep reporting to me every day in the afternoon.”

I remember for the first few weeks and months, I kept expecting that one day Huzoor will tell me to return to my old schedule but *Alhamdulillah*, almost seven years later, I continue to have what I consider the greatest blessing and privilege of my life – being able to report to Khalifatul Masih each day.

In these meetings, I have seen day after day the wisdom, grace, knowledge, courage and love of Khalifatul Masih and have learned from him, what I could have learned from no one else.

In those first few weeks after the Lahore attacks, Huzoor would call the family members of those who had been martyred and often I would meet him immediately after he had done that day's calls. Huzoor would tell me about which families he had spoken to that day. Very emotionally, Huzoor would tell me how the relatives were displaying the very highest standards of patience and rather than display grief they would ask him how he was.

Like I said, I did not personally know the Lahore martyrs but I will be forever indebted to them.

An emotional meeting

When I look back to Huzoor's tour of Canada, there were many people I met whose stories made me extremely emotional and made me realise just how much I take for granted.

As a father myself, in many ways perhaps the most emotional meeting I had was with a family who were originally from Faisalabad but long settled in Canada. The elder of the family was *Naeem Ahmad Kaiser* and he had come with his family to meet Huzoor.

When I met them, Naeem sahib's daughter appeared very distressed. She was pacing back and forth, clearly anxious, holding her month-old infant child.

I went to ask her if everything was ok and from her gesture I got the impression that she was deaf. Her father who was just behind confirmed that his daughter was deaf and so I asked him why she was upset. He said that her infant child had not been fed for a while and was extremely hungry but her daughter could not find anywhere private to feed because every room was occupied.

I took them to my office and pulled down the blinds and told her father to tell her she can feed her child and no one would disturb them. As she went into my office, I could see the relief in the eyes of the mother and just that glance was enough to remind me that a mother's love for her child is unique and they simply cannot tolerate the distress of their children under any circumstances.

Once she had fed her child, I met Naeem sahib and the rest of his family and I was left astounded and speechless by what I heard.

Naeem sahib and his wife, who were both very elderly, had four grown up children, two sons and two daughters, with the eldest being 34 and the youngest 27. Tragically, all four of their children had been born deaf and unable to speak.

In order for their children to have normal lives, Naeem sahib and his wife had searched long and hard for other Ahmadis who were deaf for them to marry.

They wanted their children to marry into homes, where they were not a burden on the other family.

In fact, their children themselves only desired to marry people with similar health conditions because otherwise they feared their relationships would not last. *Alhamdulillah*, their efforts had reaped fruits and so their two daughters were married to two deaf men and they had been blessed with five grandchildren. Miraculously, the grandchildren were born with the ability to hear and speak as normal.

Recounting one of the most emotional moments of his own life, the elderly Naeem sahib said:

“After 37 years of marriage, I heard the word ‘Baba’ (father) for the very first time when my grandchild called me it. You cannot imagine the

emotion and joy I felt at that moment because I had come to think I will never hear that beautiful word in my life.”

As he said this, Naeem sahib became extremely emotional. As tears flowed from his eyes, I felt them begin to fall from mine as well.

He told me that in Canada he had faced judgement from those whose duty it was to care and help them.

Naeem sahib said:

“The doctors here seemed to blame us for the fact that our children had been born deaf and unable to speak. They said it was because I had married my cousin. In response, I said that my children are in a special-needs school where there are 120 children who are all deaf and unable to speak and I asked the doctors if those other children were also the result of cousin marriages? When I said this the doctors were silenced and had no answer.”

Having composed himself, Naeem sahib told me that the three generations of his family had *Mulaqat* with Huzoor for the very first time that day. The way the *Mulaqat* had been conducted was unique.

Naeem sahib said:

“Meeting Huzoor today was a true miracle for our family. It was extremely emotional because my granddaughter Fatiha, who is 9, speaks fluently and is also very well versed in sign language, acted as the

translator between my children and Huzoor himself. My four children would sign to her and she would then tell Huzoor what they said. When Huzoor would graciously respond, my granddaughter would sign Huzoor's words for her parents and aunts and uncles."

It was amazing to hear how such a young girl had become the intermediary between Khalifa-Waqt and a family of Ahmadis.

After telling me this story, Naeem sahib introduced me to his nine-year old granddaughter Fatiha herself, who lived with her parents in Mississauga.

It was immediately clear that Fatiha, was a very intelligent and responsible child. I had to keep reminding myself that she was just nine, as the circumstances of her upbringing meant she was wise beyond her years.

Fatiha said:

"At school, I sometimes translate between my parents and my teachers and so often I am the one who gives my own report to my parents! Similarly, my father does construction work and occasionally I translate for him with his bosses and so I did have some experience of translating from sign language but still my heart was pounding and beating really fast when I realised that I would be translating for Huzoor!"

Fatiha continued:

"To meet my Khalifa was really magical and special and I have just one request for him and it is that he prays for the health of my family and

particularly my one-month old cousin. I request Huzoor to pray that she grows up to be healthy and has no difficulties in speaking or hearing."

Fatiha then kindly offered to translate whilst I spoke to her aunt, *Zainab*, who remained in the room with her child.

Through her niece, I asked Zainab sahiba how it felt to meet Huzoor. She signed her response, which Fatiha translated for me.

Zainab sahiba said:

"I have tears in my eyes and I cannot believe that today we were all able to meet Huzoor. He immediately noticed my young daughter and he prayed for her good health, which is the only thing I desired from him. Just to be here, with my child and my family, meeting our spiritual leader is a true miracle."

As my meeting with Naeem sahib and his family concluded, I felt emotionally drained.

I could not help but wonder of how our Khalifa continued to meet hundreds of people each day, every day, all with their own individual problems. Only with Allah's Help could anyone tolerate such a burden.

A few precious moments

On 19 October 2016, I had the opportunity to meet Huzoor for a few minutes after *Maghreb* and *Isha*.

I mentioned the family of deaf people I had met earlier in the day. Huzoor spoke with great affection and love for them and asked me how they were after their Mulaqat. Huzoor's love for all Ahmadis is forever apparent and particularly for those who are suffering in any way or who are vulnerable.

Thereafter, I mentioned to Huzoor a question that had provoked debate amongst some Khuddam during the past few days.

Huzoor was due to have a meeting with the National Majlis-e-Amila of Khuddamul Ahmadiyya at the end of October, however a new *National Sadr Khuddam* had recently been elected and his term was due to start on 1st November. There were also a few changes in the rest of the Amila as well.

Thus, the question was whether the old Amila should meet Huzoor or whether the one that would be formed on 1st November should meet him. Obviously, both desired the opportunity to meet Huzoor and to seek his guidance.

Prior to speaking to Huzoor, my personal view was that the new *Sadr Khuddam* and new *Amila* should be the ones to meet Huzoor, as they were the ones who would be serving Khuddam in future and would most benefit from his guidance.

However, the alternative view was that those who had done duty for the past term should have the opportunity to meet Huzoor, especially given that the meeting would take place on a day when they were still in office.

Upon hearing the alternate views, Huzoor said:

“There is no need for this debate – the answer is simple. They can both attend the meeting. Most of the Amila will consist of the same people and so it will just be a few extra people.”

Huzoor also said:

“Regardless, from 1st November, the new Sadr Khuddam will assume duties and the new Amila’s term will start, even though the change will be during the middle of my tour.”

I also mentioned to Huzoor that a friend of mine, Amjad Khan from the United States, was writing an article about his aunt Dr. Nusrat Jahan sahiba who had passed away days earlier. He had asked if a photo of Dr. Nusrat sahiba could be published along with the article.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Dr. Nusrat was always very conscious and particular about Purdah and so if he wants to include a photo it should be one in which she is observing full Purdah.”

It was an interesting lesson for me – that even after a person’s death we should maintain their previous standards of modesty and dignity.

I also mentioned to Huzoor that Asif Khan (*Secretary Umoor-e-Kharija*) had discussed an issue with me in relation to a forthcoming reception in Calgary in which Huzoor would deliver the keynote address.

The event had been themed as a celebratory event to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Jamaat in Canada, however Asif sahib was worried that terming it a 'celebration' might be considered insensitive, as it was being held on 11 November, which of course is 'Remembrance Day', where people remember and recognise the services of those who lost their lives during the wars of the past.

Hearing this Huzoor said:

"There is no need to call it a celebration and the event can be termed as something else which is more appropriate and respectful."

Huzoor continued:

"As 11 November is Remembrance Day, in my address in Calgary I will speak about the dangers of warfare and the fact that so many millions of people have been killed in the past through conventional wars and how we cannot even imagine the devastation that would be caused by a nuclear war."

Having received this guidance, the Canada Jamaat changed the theme of the event and called it the '*Calgary Peace Symposium*' which was very well received.

Very kindly, Huzoor asked me how my wife Mala and the children were in London. I mentioned that Mala had told me that Moshahid had thrown one of Mahid's toys that day and in response Mahid had told him off by saying ***"No Abba and no Masjid!"***

This was Mahid's version of punishment for his younger brother, whereby in penalty for throwing his toy, he placed a ban on Moshahid from seeing his father or visiting the Mosque! Certainly, Mahid's punishments were quite draconian!

Hearing this, Huzoor smiled and said:

"I saw your video of Moshahid bouncing in his bouncer chair and I have never seen a baby bounce so vigorously! Masha'Allah he has a lot of strength!"

Huzoor's comment was extremely kind and also funny. It was true that Moshahid would rarely sit still in his bouncer and would continuously bounce back and forth, something he still does.

A visit of an Olympian

I also told Huzoor about an incident relating to our *Press & Media* team in London.

A few days earlier a video of the famous British Olympic gymnast, Louis Smith, who had won medals at the past two Olympics, had emerged in which he, and a friend, had childishly mocked Islam.

To his credit, Louis Smith immediately apologised for his mistake and seemed genuinely remorseful. Hence, a member of our team invited him to visit our Mosque to learn about Islam.

The gymnast accepted the invitation and had come to visit both the *Fazl Mosque* and the *Baitul Futuh Mosque* earlier in the week leading to national media coverage in the UK. During a BBC interview, Louis Smith said he had learned more about Islam in five minutes with our Khuddam than he had in the rest of his life. Throughout his stay with our team, he was very respectful and again expressed sincere regret for his error.

Huzoor was happy to hear that the gymnast had learned about the true teachings of Islam and told me that he had watched the BBC news report already and had noticed that our Khuddam were serving him only spicy Asian food. It was a good reminder that when there are guests we should cater to different tastes and not assume they will eat Asian *desi* food.

Huzoor also said:

“I also saw that our young Missionary, Quddus Arif was taking a selfie with the Olympian!”

How Huzoor finds the time to view and remember such things is incredible.

Standing at a distance

On 20 October, after the Zuhr and Asr prayers, Huzoor returned to his residence and even though it was raining heavily, rather than return by car,

Huzoor chose to walk because some Ahmadis had lined the route to see him and wave to him.

As soon as Huzoor had entered his residence, Ahmad bhai waved at me frantically and told me to wait. The way he gestured suggested that he might have a message from Huzoor or something else important to tell me.

Immediately, Ahmad bhai called a few Khuddam who had been on security duty to where I was standing and quite forcefully reprimanded them. He was upset that they had walked very close to Huzoor on the way back from the Mosque.

Ahmad bhai told them that their instructions were to stay at a distance, particularly when it was raining, because it was quite possible to splash dirty rain water towards Huzoor if standing close by.

As Ahmad bhai addressed them, it felt to me as though he was admonishing me as well and so this must have been the reason he had asked me to wait. I replayed in my mind where I had been walking and remembered that I had been at a distance of at least 20 metres from Huzoor and had purposely stayed back because of the rain.

Just as I was thinking that I did not deserve to be told off, Ahmad bhai turned to me and suddenly smiled and said:

“Oh sorry Abid – did you hear that as well. The reason I asked you to stay back was because baji Roofo (relative) has requested that you send back the dish in which she sent some dessert for us last night!”

Hearing this I breathed a sigh of relief that I had not been a target of Ahmad bhai's anger but wished he had given me this message before he addressed his security team!

Nonetheless, I understood why he had been upset because to risk splashing Khalifa-Waqt with dirty water was completely wrong.

Friday Sermon

On 21 October 2016, Huzoor delivered his weekly Friday Sermon from the Baitul Islam Mosque in Peace Village.

During the sermon, Huzoor spoke about the recent passing of Bashir Rafiq sahib and Dr Nusrat Jahan sahiba and said they had both served the Jamaat with great distinction and thereafter Huzoor spoke in detail about their services and narrated incidents from their lives.

Being late

On 22 October 2016, Huzoor delivered the keynote address at Canada Jamaat's first National Peace Symposium.

It was also a day that I got a stark reminder that it is best to double check times. On the programme I had with me, it stated that the Peace Symposium would begin at 6pm and so after lunch, I returned to my room and decided to wait there until around 5.30pm.

As I had some spare time, for the very first time in the tour I put on the TV and became involved in a comedy that was coming on. As I was relaxing, at 5.15pm, I suddenly got a call from Nasir Amini asking me where I was.

I could sense the urgency in his voice, and too embarrassed to say I was watching TV, I asked him:

“Has Huzoor come out?”

Nasir replied:

“Yes, Huzoor is in his office meeting dignitaries – so come quick!”

I quickly put on my coat, grabbed my *topi* and literally ran to *Aiwan-e-Tahir*. As I reached Huzoor’s office, several people gave me looks that silently communicated the question ***“Why are you late?”***

I felt extremely embarrassed to have been late and, especially given the fact that I had just been in my room watching TV. Henceforth, I ensured that I would not just follow the programme provided but would double check times before each session.

1st National Peace Symposium Canada

Huzoor and the dignitaries walked to the main hall in *Aiwan-e-Tahir* where the formal Peace Symposium took place.

With the *Grace of Allah*, more than 600 guests attended, including politicians, dignitaries and a range of other people, including many Tabligh contacts.

Following a welcome address by Amir Sahib, a short address was given by the *Mayor of Vaughan*, Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, during which he spoke about his admiration for the Jamaat.

As he concluded his remarks, no one applauded and it was clearly apparent that the guests were unsure whether it was appropriate to applaud or not at an Islamic event.

Upon noticing this and out of respect for the Mayor, Huzoor intervened by saying:

“There is no restriction on clapping at this event and so feel free to do so.”

With this clarification made, the audience applauded with great vigour and enthusiasm and the Mayor seemed particularly touched by Huzoor’s kind intervention.

Huzoor’s address

During his keynote address, Huzoor spoke in detail about the Jamaat’s beliefs and teachings.

He also made it clear that our interpretation of Islam was not a modification of its teachings but a return to its original teachings.

Huzoor said:

“It is absolutely true that we, Ahmadi Muslims, are peace-loving and seek to build bridges of love and hope between different religions and different communities. However, this is not because we have deviated from Islam or ‘modernised’ it in any shape or form. Rather, it is because we follow Islam’s authentic teachings.”



Huzoor said that the Holy Prophet (sa) had taught that Muslims should like for others what they liked for themselves and that this simple principle was the basis for peace.

Huzoor said:

“Do we have ambitions to be mired in poverty and to go to bed hungry every night? Do we want our children to be plagued by ill-health, to be uneducated and to be placed in danger? Of course, no normal person would ever hope for any of these things. Therefore, as Muslims, we must seek prosperity not only for ourselves but also for others.”

Referring to the treatment of prisoners of war, Huzoor said that in the modern world it was often the case that prisoners were kept in inhumane conditions with little or no recourse to justice.

In complete contrast, Huzoor narrated the example of the *Battle of Badr*, where the Holy Prophet (sa) instructed those prisoners of war who were literate to teach the Muslims to read and write as their means of freedom.

Huzoor said:

“Those who had themselves shown no mercy towards the Muslims were treated with compassion and consideration and utilised as teachers.”

Huzoor continued:

“This example exhibited two beautiful aspects to the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). On the one hand, he was neither vengeful nor bitter towards those who had persecuted him and his followers. Secondly, it proved how highly he valued education and learning. He desired for people to better themselves and to progress in all spheres of their lives and education was the key to this.”

Impact of Huzoor’s address

Following the conclusion of the event, Huzoor met personally with many dozens of guests who came forward to thank him for his words and to solicit his prayers.

A number of the guests were not only appreciative but also extremely emotional. For example, a Filipino lady, could not hold back her tears and her sentiments were also broadcast on an MTA clip that was widely viewed.

The lady said:

“I have been following His Holiness by watching his programmes on the internet... I kept saying to my friends that I wish to meet His Holiness and finally I met him today. I even got his signature and I am so emotional and so blessed. His message is so strong, it is really sharp and it is so good that we have a leader, a worldwide religious leader that wants nothing but for us to love and for peace for humankind.”

I also met a man called *Heidrun Minutu*, originally from Germany but now living in Canada, who said that the teachings of Islam presented by Huzoor were the polar opposite of the Islam commonly portrayed in the media.

Mr. Minutu said:

“What fascinates me is that the media reports about Islam are completely the opposite of what the Khalifa said. Whilst, His Holiness said Islam is a religion of friendship, love and tolerance, the media says it is a religion of hatred and extremism. I know who I believe – and it is not the media!”

The guest also told me he was particularly impressed by the hospitality at the event. He told me that people would willingly pay a hundred dollars for

the meal and service received that evening. I told him not to worry and that we would not send him a bill!

I met a gentleman called *Edgar Coexter*, from the *Humanist Association*, which is a non-religious secular organisation.

Mr. Coexter said:

“We humanists value secularism and logic, yet when I saw the Khalifa today and heard him I felt spirituality and I found myself agreeing with everything he said. If every person in the world was like the Khalifa the world would be an abode of peace. I also have to say he is extremely brave when he speaks about the double standards in foreign policies. This shows he is a man of truth who is willing to highlight negative points to people to their face and not behind their backs.”

I met a retired engineer, *Thomas Casey*, who had travelled from the United States to listen to Huzoor’s address.

Mr. Casey said:

“I found the speech to be amazing and a message of peace and justice. The Khalifa is a man of morality. In the USA we have Presidential candidates who are motivated by power, money and greed and what we need are people with integrity like your Khalifa. I also appreciated how he spoke about the injustice of government policies. People used to say 50 years ago that USA was the breadbasket for the rest of the world but now all we can claim is that we are the arms-basket of the world.”

A Canadian lady, *Ingrid Hart* said:

“The only words to describe the Khalifa and his speech is ‘amazing and astonishing’. He has a special quality that he seems like a leader for all people and not just a leader for Muslims. It was very moving when he said that the Quran teaches to love others like a mother loves her child. What a beautiful teaching.”

I also met a young Canadian man called *Craig Kennedy*, who told me his sister had recently converted to Ahmadiyyat.

Mr. Kennedy said:

“I learned so much about Islam today and feel as though for the first time I understand what Islam is. I finally understand why my sister was attracted to this religion. The point I liked the best was when he said that Ahmadis are not ‘liberals’ or ‘reformists’ but are actually ‘orthodox Muslims’ and follow the original teachings.”

Jamia Ahmadiyya Class

On 23 October 2016, Huzoor graciously spent the morning at *Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada*, located on the third floor of the *Aiwan-e-Tahir* building in Peace Village.

The first programme was a class with students of *Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada* and younger boys who were studying at the Jamaat’s *Hifz-ul-Quran* school.

For some reason, the translation of Tilawat was not included in the programme and upon seeing this, Huzoor said:

“Why have you not included the translation of the Tilawat? Do you all understand the meaning already?”

Thereafter, Huzoor handed the Quran placed on the table in front of him to one of the students and told him to read out the translation so that everyone could benefit.

Subsequently, three short presentations were made, two of which were by Jamia students and one by a student at the Hifz-ul-Quran school. The latter, which was by a young boy, was about the importance and significance of committing the Quran to memory and was very well made.

Following the presentations, the students had the opportunity to ask Huzoor questions. However, even before this, Huzoor asked the students a question himself.

Huzoor asked:

“What are the responsibilities of a Missionary?”

In response, one Jamia student raised his hand and replied:

“It is to make a link with Allah and to offer two hours of Tahajjad prayer each morning.”

Upon hearing this reply, Huzoor jokingly commented:

“If you are reading two hours of Tahajjad every day then you are very righteous!”

Thereafter, Huzoor explained what were the true duties of Missionaries.

Huzoor said:

“To make a link with Allah is the duty and responsibility of every Ahmadi. However, our Missionaries have the particular responsibility to do the moral training of Ahmadis and to do Tabligh to non-Ahmadis and non-Muslims. Thus it is essential that you study the Holy Quran, the Ahadith and the books of the Promised Messiah. This will provide you with the spiritual weapons to fulfil your mission. Furthermore, you must set the highest standards of humility.”

One student asked Huzoor if he had noticed any change in himself upon being elected as Khalifatul Masih.

In response, Huzoor said:

“For the first few minutes, I did not comprehend what had happened. Then after just 10minutes there was a change, as the fear of Allah in my heart increased to a completely new level. Apart from this, in terms of my personality, it is the same as it was before Khilafat.”

A student asked Huzoor about mental illness and depression and how these afflictions could be controlled.

In reply, Huzoor said:

“Grief of itself is not wrong. For example, the Holy Prophet (sa) was restless and grief-stricken at the state of mankind but that was due to his love for humanity and not caused by any worldly desires. Thus, in the Holy Quran, Allah the Almighty asked the Holy Prophet (sa) if he would grieve himself to death because the disbelievers did not listen or believe.”

Huzoor continued:

“However, a major cause of mental illness and depression today is due to worldly frustrations and so the solution is to make a true connection with Allah and to have true faith in Him.”

Another student asked Huzoor how non-Ahmadis had reacted to Huzoor’s recent addresses in Parliament and at the Peace Symposium.

In response, Huzoor said:

“From people’s faces you can sometimes see that there has been a real and positive impact. For example, a Sikh guest came up to me and began to weep out of emotion after listening to my address. My hope is that such emotions are not temporary but those who listen then act upon what they have heard and learned.”

Huzoor continued:

“The real question is whether my sermons each week have any impact upon you and whether you try to act upon what Khalifa-Waqt has said?”

A Jamia student then asked Huzoor how to handle ‘politics’ within the Jamaat or between Ahmadis.

In response, Huzoor said:

“If you observe politics or disputes it is essential you act fairly at all times. Where you see something that is wrong you should point it out and try to correct it. Further, you should try to act with wisdom and try to ensure that whatever is wrong is stopped, rather than inflaming the situation or letting it spread further.”

Huzoor continued:

“If there are two parties who are in dispute then you should try to fix it but do it in a way that no one can question your impartiality. Thus, if you go to the house of one of the parties in order to guide them do not even drink a cup of tea there so that no one can raise the allegation that you were influenced by their hospitality.”

One student said that sometimes people, even Jamia students, refrained from writing to Huzoor because they did not wish to “waste his time”.

A couple of days earlier a Jamia student had asked me the same question and so I was particularly interested to hear Huzoor's response. At the time, I had responded by saying that if Huzoor received 1500 or 2000 letters a day then one extra letter was not going to make much difference to Huzoor's time, but would be a means of great benefit to the writer, as it would enable him or her to develop a personal relationship with Huzoor and to receive his prayers.

Anyway, in response to the question, Huzoor said:

"If someone says they do not write to me because they want to save my time the likelihood is that it is just an excuse. However, if the person is truly sincere then he should use that time when he could write to me to bow down and pray for Khalifatul Masih."

Huzoor continued:

"Personally, I like it when Ahmadis write to me because such correspondence is the means of building a personal relationship with Khilafat. You do not need to write reams and reams, it is better to write concise letters. When I used to write to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (rh) and Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) I used to first ponder over the purpose of my letter and what I wanted to say. Only then would I write it and I tried to keep it as short as possible."

Huzoor was asked how Missionaries should conduct themselves if they ever had the opportunity to meet influential people, such as leading politicians or other public figures.

In response, Huzoor said:

“You will meet them in your capacity as an Ahmadi Missionary and you will have truth on your side and so there is no need for any inferiority complex or fear. Of course, you should act with wisdom. I have often heard the comment from very famous politicians that I am able to criticise their policies in a delicate fashion and without causing offence. Thus, you should also try to guide others softly and diplomatically.”

Towards the end of the class, a student asked Huzoor whether he missed Pakistan.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Sometimes I do remember the streets of Rabwah. I was the first boy from the family of the Promised Messiah (as) to be born in Rabwah and so naturally I have a lot of memories. I saw how it developed over the years. For the first few years the roads were so muddy that even Jeeps would get stuck but with the Grace of Allah it grew and progressed into a beautiful town.”

Guidance on photos

Following the conclusion of the class, Huzoor met all of the students individually, before meeting the teachers and staff of Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada in the staff room.

Whilst there, Huzoor noticed that photos of the Promised Messiah (as) and his Khulafa had been hung in sequence, where on one side there was a photo

of the Promised Messiah (as) and then a photo of the First Khalifa (ra), then the Second Khalifa (ra) and so forth.

Huzoor directed that the photos should be placed in a way that the photo of the Promised Messiah (as) was placed in the centre, rather than at one side.

Inspections and Lunch

Thereafter, Huzoor inspected the *Library of Jamia Ahmadiyya*, the *Hifzul-Quran* school and also visited the *Ayesha Academy*, which is an educational facility for members of Lajna Imaillah, where they follow a proper curriculum of religious study.

Following the various inspections and photos with different groups, Huzoor attended a lunch hosted by Jamia Ahmadiyya.

An unforgettable scene

Throughout the tour there were a host of emotional scenes, but one that sticks in my memory took place later that afternoon.

As Huzoor returned to his office after the lunch break he stopped briefly at a meeting being held with Syrian Ahmadiis, many of whom were refugees who had recently come to Canada.

For a few minutes, Huzoor spoke to the Syrians before standing up and walking to the ladies side and as he did, Huzoor offered *salaam* to the various Syrian ladies and affectionately met the young children.

From all sides, I saw ladies and even young children with tears streaming down their faces. You could see, and feel the rush of emotion in those people who had endured years of great hardship and had been forced to leave their homes.

Amongst them were some who had even had to bury their relatives and loved ones back in Syria due to the war that was taking place. Yet after years of torment, misery and grief, all their emotions were released as they met Khalifatul Masih. All you could see was pure elation and an atmosphere of love and gratitude.

Those brief moments, that lasted perhaps two or three minutes, were clear proof that the mutual love between Ahmadis and Khilafat is completely unique.

It was a scene which showed that distances mean nothing. For, the Syrians had lived their lives thousands of miles apart from their Khalifa, yet their love for Khalifa-Waqt and passion was an example to Ahmadis like me who live at the doorstep of Khilafat.

Emotions of Ahmadis

Following that emotional meeting, Huzoor returned to his office where he met dozens of Ahmadi families in Mulaqat.

One of the people who met Huzoor that day was a young Ahmadi girl called *Anoosheh*, aged just 10. Her joy at meeting Huzoor was clearly evident.

Anoosheh said:

“I am so excited and I feel like I cannot even breathe! I have never felt like that before.”

Tears suddenly began to flow from the eyes of the young girl. It was emotional for me to witness such a young child overcome by her love for Khilafat.

As she wiped away her own tears, Anoosheh said:

“Did I really just meet Huzoor? Was it real or was it a dream? Honestly, I cannot believe it ever happened. I am the luckiest person in the world.”

I also met an Arab family who had come to Canada as refugees. The family members were *Ahmad Darweish (32)*, his wife *Maryam Ahmad*, their son *Muhammad (9)* and daughter *Fadeela (7)*.

Ahmad Darweish sahib told me about some of the difficulties he and his family had faced. He said:

“We accepted Ahmadiyyat around three years ago and, no matter what difficulties or persecution we faced, it could never weaken our faith. Due to the civil war in Syria we had to leave our nation because some Ahmadis had been martyred and so the Jamaat advised us to leave. First we crossed into Turkey and thereafter we were able to come to Canada as refugees through the efforts of Humanity First.”

Unable to stop his tears, Ahmad sahib said:

“I cannot describe how I felt the moment I walked into Huzoor’s office. I felt something change inside me and I felt a surge of relief and emotion that I have never experienced before. Whilst, I was in Huzoor’s presence I prayed that everyone in Syria would have the opportunity to come and meet him. Our countrymen have faced great trials and cruelties over the past few years and it is only Khalifatul Masih who can heal their pain, just as he healed ours.”

Ahmad sahib continued:

“In Syria we lost everything but today we have gained the entire world. It is strange how things work out because if it were not for the war in Syria then we would never have come here and probably I would never have met my Khalifa. Hence, as strange as it may sound, the war was the greatest blessing our family ever had.”

Ahmad sahib’s wife, Maryam sahiba then said:

“I just can’t describe how I am feeling and I cannot tell you the emotion that is in my heart. You can see the tears that are falling from my eyes – these are not tears of pain but are tears of pure joy because today we met the Khalifa appointed by Allah. I feel as though I have been born again and started a new life from today.”

I spoke to their young seven-year old daughter *Fadeela*. As soon as I saw her, I felt a deep sense of pain that such a young child will have already seen such

brutalities and misery that most of us will thankfully never come close to in our lives.

Her father told me that Fadeela had wanted to recite the Holy Quran in front of Huzoor but the time of their Mulaqat ended before they could ask. Hence, when she came out of Huzoor's office Fadeela had begun to cry and was very upset.

Telling me about what happened next, Ahmad sahib said:

“One of the security guards saw Fadeela crying and informed Huzoor's Private Secretary, who then informed Huzoor that Fadeela had wanted to do Tilawat in front of him. Our Khalifa is so kind and gracious that, even though he is so busy, he called us back in his office and my daughter recited verses of the Quran in front of him. At the end, Huzoor smiled and was pleased and he said ‘Masha’Allah’. The happiness Huzoor gave my daughter and all of us is indescribable.”

After hearing this, Fadeela said she would like to show me how she recited the Quran in front of Huzoor. It was a genuinely moving experience hearing her recite the Quran with such innocence and love.

I then spoke to their nine-year old son, Muhammad who said:

“I feel very lucky today because I met the person who is nearest to Allah and I also had the opportunity to do Tilawat in front of Huzoor after my sister. My biggest dream is that Amir-ul-Momineen remains always happy with me.”

As our conversation concluded, I felt amazed at the faith and love for Khilafat, not just of the parents who were converts, but also of their young children.

Often when you meet Arab people who have accepted the Promised Messiah (as), their faith and passion is such that it leaves you highly embarrassed at your own weak standards by comparison.

Instant photography

As Huzoor's Mulaqats were taking place that day, I was called for a moment by Khalid Daud sahib and Tariq Mahmood sahib, who both were part of the 'Mulaqat team' who were arranging the Mulaqats.

They had set up a new system, which they had started trialing the day before, in which Ahmadis were emailed their Mulaqat photos almost instantly.

I watched as a family went in for Mulaqat and within a few moments of them coming out their photos had been emailed to them. It was a very efficient system, which has now been duplicated by Private Secretary's Office in London since Huzoor's return.

Huzoor meeting some relatives

Later that evening, after *Maghreb* and *Isha*, Huzoor met with some of his relatives.

One elderly relative, living in Canada, mentioned to Huzoor that there were some Khuddam in the United States who were serving the Jamaat by being very active in promoting the true message of Islam through the media.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Those youngsters who you talk about come and meet me regularly in London and they seek my guidance about how to spread the message of Islam and how to defend it from the false allegations that are being made. Masha’Allah, it is not just the United States but also good work is now being done in other countries like the UK, Germany and here in Canada.”

Huzoor continued:

“A few years ago, the USA Jamaat proposed that they hire a P.R. company to help them spread the message of Jamaat. They said that such companies know all the tricks and have the best strategies. I gave them permission only so that they could fulfil their desire once and see for themselves that there was no need for our Jamaat to turn to such external organisations. In the end, no progress was made and having the P.R. company did not benefit us in any way.”

Huzoor added:

“Once the US Jamaat understood that there had been no benefit and it was out of their system, I told them that I would guide them step by step about making in-roads with the media. I told them to focus on

contemporary issues and instructed that they should never be fearful but should be bold and open. Since then, Alhamdolillah, there has been a great deal of progress made over the past few years.”

A few moments with Huzoor

I then personally had the opportunity to spend a few minutes in Huzoor’s company in the room adjoining his residence with the guest house in which I was staying.

Huzoor mentioned the Peace Symposium that had taken place the night before. Huzoor referred again to the Sikh guest, whom he had mentioned in the Jamia Class as well.

Huzoor said:

“The Sikh guest came up to me and said that there was so much injustice in the world and so he felt that the message of Islam I had given was absolutely crucial and necessary. Then suddenly he started to weep and could not control his emotions at all. I have rarely seen a guest so emotional.”

Thereafter, Huzoor told me that his youngest two grandsons, Muaaz and Imaad, had been unwell for the past few days.

Just as any father or grandfather would be worried, Huzoor was also concerned for the health and well-being of his family members back home.

I told Huzoor that we had been informed that the office of one of the Canadian MPs who had hosted Huzoor in Parliament, had received calls from non-Ahmadi Muslims perturbed by the fact that Huzoor had been so well received in Parliament. They even asked the MP's staff how much the Jamaat had paid for Huzoor to be acknowledged in Parliament and to have a meeting with the Prime Minister!

The MP's staff made it clear that the Jamaat had not paid a single penny and that that it had been an honour for the Parliamentarians to welcome Khalifatul Masih.

A source of grief and sadness

Throughout the day, one thing that concerned me was that I noticed that during the Jamia Ahmadiyya Class, Huzoor was holding his head quite a lot and asked for the Air Conditioning to be switched off as he was feeling cold.

I was worried that Huzoor may be feeling unwell yet his activities continued non-stop throughout the day and so I thought perhaps I was imagining it. Anyway that evening, Huzoor confirmed my earlier suspicions.

Huzoor said:

"Today, I felt extremely unwell. I had a high fever, a throbbing headache and other feverish symptoms. During parts of the class and then during the lunch at Jamia, I felt particularly unwell and am not sure how I managed to carry on. Even when I was walking to the Mosque at one point I felt I might fall but was just able to control myself."

As I heard these words, I felt extremely saddened and upset that Huzoor had been so unwell all day.

I am always fearful of ever saying anything that may be discourteous or beyond what is appropriate.

Hence, with a degree of trepidation, I said:

“Huzoor, the next few days were scheduled to be free but I heard today that Huzoor has instructed for Mulaqats to take place. Why does not Huzoor rest for a couple of days?”

In reply, Huzoor said:

“Yes, I have instructed for Mulaqat sessions to be scheduled. Meeting Ahmadis is more important because there are still many who have not met me and desire to do so. It does not matter that I am not feeling well. I will take some paracetamol and homeopathy and leave the rest to Allah.”

Over the next few days, most people were not at all aware that Huzoor was unwell and seeing Huzoor’s constant activities, I also thought after a day or so that Huzoor had recovered. Yet, sadly it was not the case.

About a week later, Huzoor said to me:

“I remained very unwell for a few days after the Jamia class, both during the day and at night. Some evenings, I would wake up in a cold sweat and

was feeling terrible. Hopefully most people will not have been aware as my duties continued as normal.”

When Huzoor said these words to me, I felt so sorry and just wished I had the capacity to offer some form of service at such times.

In truth, Huzoor rarely even calls upon those who have the ability or skills to serve him when he is unwell.

For example, Huzoor also mentioned that he had been unwell to Dr. Tanvir sahib, who was on-duty with the Qafila.

Later, Dr. Sahib told me what Huzoor had said to him. He said:

“Huzoor called me and told me that one night he had been very sick and felt his temperature was very high. He said that he was thinking of calling me to ask that I bring a thermometer so he could check his temperature but he decided to refrain because he did not want to worry me or create any panic.”

Later, Huzoor informed me that Dr. Sahib did prescribe some antibiotics for him and that the course did help in his recovery, *Alhamdolillah*.

As I write these words, it is now early February 2017 and sadly recently, Huzoor has had a severe chest infection here in London.

Most other people would stay in bed and rest, yet each day Huzoor continued to come to his office.

For the first few days, when I reported for Mulaqat, Huzoor would cough extremely strongly and I could see the discomfort and pain on his face, yet as soon as the coughing stopped, Huzoor would once again turn towards the files in front of him and re-start his work.

As I watched this scene, Huzoor told me that it was not just him, but also his family members had been unwell with flu and I was amazed by what Huzoor said next.

With no trace of irritation at being unwell, Huzoor simply said:

“Anyway, it is an opportunity for us to increase in Istighfar.”

It is for such reasons that Khalifatul Masih is the most beloved of Allah, whereby rather than complain or become frustrated, Huzoor even sees the blessings in an illness, whereby he considers it an opportunity to repent and to grow closer to His Creator.

At that moment, I took the liberty to suggest that Huzoor take a break and visit somewhere with a little sunshine and warm weather. However, it was clear from Huzoor’s response that he did not appreciate this suggestion and so I spent the rest of the day seeking forgiveness from Allah for exceeding my boundaries.

The bond of love between Ahmadis and Khalifa-Waqt is such that no Ahmadi can tolerate seeing their Khalifa in any type of pain.

Just a few days ago, I received an email from someone in Pakistan that made me very emotional.

He wrote that Ahmadis who lived far away from Khilafat would give anything to switch places with those who were near and so it was the duty of those close to Huzoor to care and protect him on behalf of those who were much further away.

May Allah grant Huzoor a long and healthy life.

No time for rest

At the beginning of the tour, I was given a programme of events for the Canada tour and I immediately noticed that the three days from 24th to 26th October had been kept free.

The Canada Jamaat had even proposed a tentative plan for Huzoor to travel to the *Algonquin National Park* for two days of rest.

Whilst, I was happy to see that three days had been kept clear, I also thought that just because the Jamaat had proposed a break did not mean it would actually take place.

The final decision was Huzoor's and so the night before the 24th Huzoor instructed that normal meetings and Mulaqats were to be scheduled and that there was no need for a break. Ultimately, those three days were no less busy than any other period of the tour.

Meeting with Mississauga Mayor

On 24 October 2016, the *Mayor of Mississauga*, Bonnie Crombie, visited Huzoor in Peace Village.

The Mayor told Huzoor that there was a large population of people from the Pakistani community who lived in Mississauga.

Hearing this, Huzoor smiled and said:

“You must have learned a little Urdu by now then?”

Mayor Crombie responded by saying:

“Yes, I have learned a little and also a little Punjabi too!”

Huzoor said that he hoped the Jamaat would build a purpose-built Mosque in Mississauga whilst Mayor Crombie was in office. In response, the Mayor said she also hoped this would be the case.

The Mayor told Huzoor about Mississauga and said that it was constantly developing and progressing.

In response, Huzoor said:

“You should try to ensure that at least 10% of your city is dedicated for parks and greenery. This will be of long-term benefit for your people and

for the city. Canada has been blessed with vast amounts of land and so keeping space for park-land should not be difficult.”



Huzoor also asked the Mayor if it was possible to establish a ‘Peace Village’ type project in Mississauga. In response, the Mayor said her city would be ***“honoured to have more Ahmadis and more Ahmadi Mosques”***.

The Mayor said that she was proud that Canada was a very multi-cultural society and informed that there were more Sikhs in Canada’s Federal Government than in India’s!

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Yes, when I visited Canada’s Parliament, I personally counted six Sikhs on the Government side that day.”

Huzoor visiting his aunt

Following his meeting with the Mayor, Huzoor and Khala Saboochi (Huzoor's respected wife) travelled to a hospital to meet and enquire after *Bibi Asma Khalil sahiba*, the wife of (late) *Mirza Khalil Ahmad*. She was the daughter-in-law of Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) and Huzoor's aunt. Thus, the only personal time Huzoor took during the entire six-week tour, was to visit his elder relative who was sick.

She was severely ill with cancer and so throughout the trip, Huzoor would enquire about her health and send Dr. Tanvir sahib to visit her on regular occasions, both during the tour, and also after Huzoor returned to London.

Sadly, on 23 December 2016, Bibi Asma sahiba passed away (*Surely to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return*) and Huzoor led her funeral prayer in absentia from London and paid tribute to her in his Friday Sermon.

A cause of confusion

Following the Zuhr and Asr prayers on 24 October, as Huzoor returned to his residence he looked at the various properties across the road and enquired from Amir Sahib which were owned by the Jamaat and which were privately owned.

Huzoor noticed that the numbering on the houses was somewhat disjointed. For example, there were two houses that were next to each other and one was house number 11 and the other was house number 15. There was no number 13, as would normally be the case.

Hearing this, I mentioned to Huzoor that this was something I had noticed in many parts of Peace Village. I said that Huzoor's own residence was number 10 and the building in which I was staying was number 2, even though they were next to each other! Similarly, on the other side of Huzoor's residence was number 16! It really did not make much sense.

Huzoor enjoyed this observation and laughed before returning to his residence.

A precious afternoon

Later that afternoon on 24 October 2016, Huzoor called me to the office in his residence. Huzoor was wearing a white shalwar kameez and sleeveless sweater and looked extremely graceful.

To get to Huzoor's office, we had to walk up a flight of stairs in Huzoor's residence and, as we did, I mentioned to Huzoor that they were quite steep.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Yes they are steep, certainly more so than the stairs where you are staying.”

As I entered Huzoor's office, I was immediately reminded of four years earlier in 2012, when Huzoor had also called me to the same very office to assist him in some work.

Huzoor's office was very small and his desk was mostly covered with books and papers. Apart from Huzoor's own chair, there was one other chair and on it lay Huzoor's briefcase. Huzoor told me to put the briefcase to one side and to take a seat on the chair.

Upon seeing me rest my laptop on my leg, Huzoor said:

"You can put the laptop on my desk as you will be more comfortable in that way."

Thereafter, Huzoor told me that it was his normal practice to eat a light lunch and that day he had eaten a bowl of soup, with a toast for lunch. He said that after lunch he had rested for a few minutes and then woke up so he could work.

Huzoor said:

"Normally after a few minutes rest in the afternoon I am refreshed but today I was not feeling too well and so I am still a little tired. Hence, we will start our work in a few minutes and not straight away."

I felt like asking Huzoor to go back and rest some more but I knew that Huzoor would not accept this and so I remained quiet.

Huzoor noticed that I was wearing a 'smartwatch' and asked me about its features and so I took it off my wrist and showed it to Huzoor.

One feature was that a person can check the rate of their heartbeat and so Huzoor checked his own heartbeat and then looked at the weather app and a few other things.

I showed Huzoor that it was also possible to receive messages on the watch and as I did, Huzoor saw that my most recent message was from Dr. Tanvir sahib.

In return, Huzoor sent a message to Dr. Tanvir sahib from my watch. Huzoor did not write anything but put a full-stop punctuation point and pressed 'send'.

I said to Huzoor that Dr. Sahib will be confused as to why I have sent him just a full-stop and Huzoor smiled.

Later, Dr. Tanvir sahib did ask me why I had just sent him a 'dot'. He was concerned if everything was ok and thought I might have been sending him a distress message in code!

When I explained to him what had happened and who the true author of that message was, he became extremely emotional and said it was the most precious message he had ever received in his entire life.

Huzoor also spoke about the meeting with Mississauga's Mayor earlier in the day and I mentioned that the meeting had been longer than I had expected.

In reply, Huzoor said:

“I purposely gave her more time because most of our Ahmadis had not voted for her in the election, yet she still had the courtesy to come and greet me.”

It is truly amazing how Huzoor ensures that he responds with even greater kindness to any courtesy that is offered.

A faith inspiring incident

I also took the opportunity to inform Huzoor of a conversation I had with Asif Khan (*Secretary Umoor-e-Kharija*) earlier that day.

He told me that prior to Huzoor’s tour, the Canada Jamaat had proposed for Huzoor to visit Quebec and to make an address at their Legislative Assembly.

However, Asif told me that when the plan was sent to Huzoor, he instructed that he would not attend this event.

Upon receiving this instruction, Asif admitted that he was confused as to why Huzoor had declined it and it even crossed his mind that this was a ‘*missed opportunity*’.

Yet, a day or two before, Asif was astounded when he saw that the *Member of the Legislative Assembly* (MLA) who had offered to host the event had been forced to resign amid a personal scandal.

Upon seeing this news, Asif said:

“When I saw the news about the MLA, I was shocked. If we had gone ahead with the programme undoubtedly there would have been many photos of Huzoor with the politician and it could have been potentially very embarrassing when just a few days later he became involved in this scandal.”

Asif continued:

“When we sent the programme to Huzoor, no-one could have envisaged the issue with the politician and yet Huzoor still declined it. This truly was an example of how Allah the Almighty always guides Khalifa-Waqt and personally very faith-inspiring for me. It also reminded me that there is wisdom in every decision made by Khilafat, whether the rest of us understand or not.”

As I finished narrating this, Huzoor said:

“Allah always protects the honour and dignity of Khilafat and this is another example of this.”

“Al-Amroo foqal Adab”

Thereafter, Huzoor began his work and over the next 45 to 50 minutes, Huzoor dictated an address that he was going to deliver at a reception in the city of Regina, where he was soon to inaugurate a new Mosque.

As he worked, Huzoor occasionally stood up to search for a particular book of the Promised Messiah (as) on a bookshelf to the side. Out of respect, when Huzoor stood, I also stood, but Huzoor told me to remain seated.

To stay sitting, whilst the Khalifa is standing, is very difficult however the instruction was to remain seated and so I did.

In *part 1* of this diary, I mentioned an incident in Canada, where Huzoor had called a Bangladeshi Ahmadi to come forward for a photo with him but the Ahmadi responded by saying that he did not wish to waste Huzoor's precious time and requested only for prayers.

At the time, I wrote that I was impressed that the Ahmadi had sacrificed the opportunity for a photo with Huzoor. However, I was later reminded of an incident when the Promised Messiah (as) graciously went to see off Hazrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif Shaheed sahib (ra).

As they reached the point of farewell, Hazrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif sahib fell to the ground and clasped hold of the feet of the Promised Messiah (as) and would not let them go.

Upon this, the Promised Messiah (as) told him to let go but fearing he would never see the Promised Messiah (as) again, Hazrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif sahib could not bear to pull away.

Finally, the Promised Messiah (as) spoke in Arabic and said:

"Al-amroo foqal adab"

Meaning:

“An instruction takes precedence over respect”.

Upon hearing this, Hazrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif sahib (ra) followed the instruction and withdrew.

When I reflected on this, it came to my mind that no matter the intention of the person, still it would have been more appropriate for him to come forward for a photo once Huzoor had called him.

Meeting with Mauritian diplomat

Later that day, Huzoor met with the *Honorary Consul-General of Mauritius to Canada*, Ben Sennik and his wife. The guests were originally from India but had moved to Mauritius in the 1960s, before later emigrating to Canada.

Upon meeting Huzoor, Mr. Sennik said:

“Your Holiness, I have listened to your message and it is the message that is needed in the world. You are calling for peace and with great dignity you are spreading this virtuous message to the people of the world. Your style of speaking is polite, yet it has a profound and deep impact upon the listener.”

Thereafter, Huzoor explained in detail the teachings of Ahmadiyyat and about the claim of the Promised Messiah (as). Huzoor also mentioned a number of signs in support of the truth of the Promised Messiah (as), such as the eclipse of the sun and the moon during the month of Ramadan.

The wife of the Consul-General, who I later learned shared a name with my own wife Mala, also took the opportunity to speak to Huzoor. She said:

“I like how you modernise your Jamaat according to the time.”

In response, Huzoor said:

“In this belief you are not correct. Whatever we say or do is based upon the original teachings of Islam. The reason we are peaceful, and the reason we love and care for humanity, is because this is what the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (sa) taught us.”

Huzoor then gave a detailed explanation of the concept of Jihad and the reasons why defensive battles were fought in early Islam.

Following this, the lady said:

“Thank you for clarifying this. I had no idea that Islam was always like this and I am very grateful that you have explained it.”

After the meeting concluded, the Honorary Consul General spoke about how it felt to meet Huzoor.

Mr Sennik said:

“We feel exceptionally blessed that we had a once in a lifetime opportunity to be in the presence of His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor

Ahmad, who in our opinion is a true living Saint. The photographs that we took with him will adorn our humble home.”

A personal mistake

During Qafila tours, the members of the Qafila do not take leave without permission of Huzoor. We are all well-aware that we are extremely privileged to be with him and our primary focus is our duty to Khilafat.

Occasionally though, mistakes are made or people show weaknesses in this regard.

For example, in Germany, earlier in the year, one of Huzoor’s security guards, Mahmood Khan sahib went out cycling without permission and sadly was involved in serious cycling accident.

On this tour, I also made a mistake and, though the consequences were thankfully not severe, it reminded me that we are only protected so long as we stay under the blessed shield of Khilafat.

One morning, I required to get something from the shops, however it came to my mind that I will be quick and it was not worth taking Huzoor’s time to seek his approval. Hence, I called a friend and asked him to drop me at the nearby *Vaughan Mills* shopping centre and asked that he would pick me up after an hour.

I had been in the shopping centre for around half an hour when I suddenly heard a number of people screaming and shouting.

I also saw dozens of people run past shouting:

“Everyone get out, there is a man with a gun and he is shooting”.

The look of panic on the faces of the people as they ran was frightening. It was clear that they were worried that there was some type of terrorist incident taking place.

The first thing that came to my mind was the fact that I had not taken permission from Huzoor.

Anyway, as I saw people running, I also ran myself and followed them out of the mall. Immediately, I saw a number of police vehicles with lights flashing arriving at the scene.

It was raining heavily and so I called my friend and asked if he would be able to come a little earlier and take me back to Peace Village. Thankfully, he did and as I got back safely I breathed a sigh of relief.

I immediately went and checked the news to find out what had happened. It turned out it was not a terrorist attack but some people had done an armed robbery at a jewelers within the mall. Thankfully, no one had been injured.

The incident had a very strong effect on me and left me a little shaken. At the end of the tour, I did go to a mall in Calgary but only having taken the permission of Huzoor and having that permission meant I enjoyed myself and did not have any fear or guilt in my heart.

Emotions of Ahmadis

Later that evening, Huzoor held a session of family Mulaqats.

After her Mulaqat with Huzoor, I met a Syrian lady *Khaula al-Zaeid* who was a convert to Ahmadiyyat. Khaula sahiba had been accompanied by her husband, who was not an Ahmadi.

Speaking about the religious freedom she had in Canada, Khaula sahiba said:

“I had to wait for years to be able to openly proclaim that ‘I am an Ahmadi’ because in Syria if I had said this openly then we would have faced great danger. Thus, the greatest blessing for me to come to Canada is that I can tell the entire world openly and proudly that I have accepted the Promised Messiah (as).”

That evening I also met a 9 year old girl who was the daughter of an Ahmadi who had been martyred in Syria. For some reason, I did not note down the girl’s name but I remember our conversation vividly.

Very emotionally she told me that she had struggled to accept that her father had been martyred and kept seeing him in dreams.

She said that she was missing him constantly and so upon meeting Huzoor, she asked him why Allah had taken her father away.

The little girl told me herself what Huzoor had said to her. She said:

“Huzoor told me that my father was a good and righteous person and because of this people attacked him and persecuted him and so Allah called my father to heaven so he would be free from the pain and difficulties he faced. After hearing this, I feel much better, I feel reassured and understand why Allah took my father.”

Hearing this narration, I felt myself becoming extremely emotional, as I thought of how beautifully Huzoor had consoled this little girl.

The little girl continued by saying:

“Huzoor also said it was now my job to be good and honest person like my father and to follow in his footsteps. Insha’Allah, I will try my best.”

Interview with Globe and Mail

On 26 October 2016, Huzoor had an interview with the *Globe and Mail* newspaper. The interview was conducted by the journalist *Sherill Sutherland* and she asked Huzoor about the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan, the prospect of a Donald Trump Presidency and about ‘Islamaphobia’ in the West.

In response to a question about the persecution of Ahmadis, Huzoor said:

“A Government should not interfere in matters of religion. In Pakistan, they seek to legitimise the persecution of Ahmadis by justifying it in the

name of democracy. The Pakistani Government claims it was the demand of the people that Ahmadis should be declared non-Muslims and so this is why this step was taken. My belief is that if they do not accept that we are Muslims it is ok, however they cannot deny us our right to identify as Muslims and force us to declare ourselves non-Muslim. We should have the right to call ourselves Muslims and to practice our faith."

Huzoor was asked his opinion regarding some of Donald Trump's more inflammatory campaign promises and statements.

In response, Huzoor said:

"In this era, we are already passing through so many sufferings and problems and conflicts. By igniting further division and hatred what can be gained? Instead of creating or developing hatred, we must all work together toward the better cause of humanity, and that can only be done by trying to bring peace in society."

Huzoor was also asked about the rise of *Islamaphobia* in the Western world.

In response, Huzoor said:

"Instead of looking only at the acts of the tiny minority who are extremists, people should look and see that the vast majority of Muslims are peaceful. They should look at the teachings of Islam, rather than the conduct of terrorists. For example, when the Quran gave permission for the early Muslims to fight a defensive war it was given in order to protect all places of worship and all religions. Thus it is the duty of Muslims to

protect not only mosques but also churches, temples, synagogues, and all other places of worship.”

After the interview, I spoke to the journalist and she said that this final point had particularly struck and surprised her. She said it was the first time she had heard that Muslims were duty-bound to protect other religions and their places of worship.

Meeting with Jewish delegation

Later that day, Huzoor also met with a group of Jewish leaders at Peace Village. The group consisted of Rabbi Michal-Shekel, *Executive Director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis* and senior representatives of the *Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs* (CIJA).

One of the Rabbis present mentioned that a fundamental tenet of Judaism was *‘peace and freedom of belief’*.

In response, Huzoor said:

“We are all the progeny of the Prophet Adam (as) and in this way we are brothers and sisters. If we honour this shared ancestry then there will be true peace in the world.”

Hearing this, the Rabbi replied by saying:

“Insha’Allah.”

Narrating a conversation he once had with a Rabbi, Huzoor said:

“I once met an American Rabbi in London and he told me he visited the Sacred Mosque in Jerusalem. Upon trying to enter, the caretaker asked him what he believed in and the Rabbi replied ‘I believe there is none worthy of worship save Allah’.

The caretaker was doubtful and so the Rabbi then repeated the full Kalima and said ‘I believe there is none worthy of worship save Allah and Muhammad (sa) is His Messenger’. Hearing this the caretaker gave the Rabbi a full tour of the Mosque.

After the tour was completed the caretaker again asked what his beliefs were and the Rabbi said ‘Even though I am a Jew, I believe in Allah, the One God, and I have read how Muhammad (sa) reformed the Arabs and so I believe him to be a Prophet, as only a true Prophet could bring about such a reformation of his people’.”

Huzoor continued:

“This is the concept of brotherhood that we need to instil in order to develop inter-faith harmony.

We Ahmadis believe in all of the Prophets of God, and if you believe in the Prophets of other religions, it is impossible to disrespect their followers or to hold hatred towards them.”

Use of the word 'Certainly'

On the evening of 26 October, I was blessed with the opportunity to spend a few minutes in Huzoor's company.

I mentioned to Huzoor that a young Khadim had told me that he liked the way Huzoor pronounced the word '*Certainly*'.

Hearing this, Huzoor smiled and said:

"When I lived in Ghana, there was an African man who used to say 'Certainly' a lot and I liked the way he spoke. Perhaps, subconsciously, I picked up this word from him and so I do use it quite often. I also often say 'Obviously' and 'Of course'."

I also narrated some of my other experiences of the past few days before Huzoor stood up and returned to his residence.

Narrations of a martyr's son

On 27 October 2016, Huzoor held a session of family Mulaqats. One person who met Huzoor was a young Ahmadi called *Saad Ahmad Khan (24)*.

He was the son of *Dr. Asghar Yaqub Shaheed*, who had been martyred in Lahore during the 28 May 2010 attacks.

Saad had moved to Canada a year previously and was now well settled and working in a bank.

Having met Huzoor for the first time earlier that morning, Saad said:

“Before entering Huzoor’s office, I felt very nervous and even a degree of fear but as soon as I saw Huzoor all I felt was peace and happiness. I feel as though all the burdens and difficulties that me and my family have faced were removed during those moments with our Khalifa. Living here in Canada has its challenges because it is a worldly and materialistic society, but when we see Huzoor it proves to us that materialism has no value and our priority should always be our faith.”

Saad then started to tell me about the period of his father’s martyrdom. He told me that his A-level exams were scheduled two weeks after 28 May and he thought he was in no fit state to sit them.

Hence, he wrote to Huzoor to inform him of this but received an immediate reply from Huzoor saying that he must sit his exams as normal and not delay them.

Speaking about that time, Saad said:

“When I look back now, I still do not know how I managed to get through the exam period. I did not really have support at College because many people hated me because I was an Ahmadi.

However, due solely to the blessings of following the instruction of Huzoor, Alhamdolillah I passed and got good grades. That entire period showed me that the power of the prayers of Khalifa-Waqt are stronger than any other force in the world.”

Speaking of Huzoor's support and love for his family, Saad said:

"I can never ever forget the fact that Huzoor himself called us after my father was martyred and then he called us again on the first Eid after the 28 May attacks. The calls were not short but quite lengthy. I timed one of them and by the end Huzoor had spoken to our family for eight minutes!"

Saad continued:

"I genuinely was shocked that our Khalifa would give us so much time. He has all the world's responsibilities and yet he still spoke to me, when I was a teenager, and guided me with love. Huzoor asked me about my studies and asked if there had been any change in my grades after my father's martyrdom and then he prayed that Allah blesses my studies"

Speaking further, Saad said:

"Ever since our father's martyrdom, Huzoor personally sends us Eidi (Eid gift) and he also sent us a framed picture in which he wrote 'May Allah protect you'. Even now we are in Canada we still received Eidi from Huzoor. His kindness is unbelievable and we are certainly witnesses that the love of Khilafat is unique and unparalleled."

As our conversation reached a conclusion, Saad mentioned his late father and the example he had set for his children. He said:

"My father's sacrifice places a great responsibility on me and my family. In his life and in his death, my father was a role model for me. He was a

doctor and used to always say that we should be willing to put ourselves in discomfort or difficulty for the sake of providing comfort and ease of others.”

Saad continued:

“Once someone asked my brother for some assistance but because it was during his exam period, my mother said that he should focus on his studies. Upon hearing this, my father said to my brother that ‘Exams will come and go but the need of that person is now and so you must go and help him’.”

A ‘special’ sermon

On 28 October 2016, Huzoor led the Friday Sermon from Peace Village. During the Sermon, Huzoor spoke in detail about the Waqf-e-Nau scheme and the responsibilities of those who were part of the scheme and of their parents.

Huzoor said that being a Waqf-e-Nau was not a ‘title’ but a ‘duty’ and that sometimes people were under the misconception that being a part of the scheme made a person automatically ‘special’.

Huzoor explained that it was not being born into the scheme that made a child special, rather it was their conduct and moral standards that would determine if they were special and distinct.

Very memorably, Huzoor listed dozens of qualities which ought to be the hallmarks of members of Waqf-e-Nau and he said that only if they were living to such standards would Waqf-e-Nau be classed as truly special.

For example, Huzoor said Waqf-e-Nau should excel in building a relationship with Allah, in fulfilling the rights of the worship of God, in displaying the highest moral standards and increasing their religious knowledge. Huzoor listed a number of other qualities, which all Waqf-e-Nau, should seek to adopt.

A couple of days earlier, Qamar Suleiman sahib, *Wakil-Waqf-e-Nau*, had arrived from Rabwah. He had been invited by the Canada Jamaat to speak to the Waqf-e-Nau in Canada about their roles and responsibilities.

Qamar sahib, who is also my relative, was also staying in the same building as me and so upon seeing him after Jumma, I joked:

“You can return to Pakistan now, as Huzoor has done your job for you!”

Qamar sahib laughed and heartily agreed. In fact, later in the tour, he himself said to Huzoor that he had done his work for him in a way far better than he could ever have done himself.

MTA failure in Huzoor’s residence

One thing that Huzoor repeatedly reminds Ahmadis of is the need to watch *MTA* and to utilise this great blessing as much as possible. Huzoor never asks

Ahmadis to do things that he himself does not do and so, despite being extremely busy, Huzoor continues to watch *MTA* as much as possible.

For example, on many occasions, I have seen that Huzoor has *MTA* on in his office and listens to whatever programme is being broadcast, whilst he continues to check his office mail.

Similarly, during tours abroad, Huzoor tries to watch *MTA* whenever possible. However, in Canada, Huzoor told me that the *MTA* system in his residence did not work. He mentioned this to the Jamaat officials but it was not properly resolved.

Huzoor told me that they had installed what they considered to be an ‘advanced system’ but it failed to work most of the time.

Huzoor said:

“In UK, the Sky TV system is much better and simpler but the Canada Jamaat’s system was extremely complicated and did not even work most of the time!”

By chance, occasionally Huzoor was able to get *MTA* to work in his office in his residence and so he and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor’s respected wife*) would leave it on in there and listen to it.

I felt sorry that Huzoor had to go to such difficulty in order to have access to *MTA*.

A fortunate driver

In the evening of Friday, 28 October 2016, another historic event took place, whereby Huzoor delivered the keynote lecture at the York University in Ontario.

Upon emerging from his residence at 6pm, Huzoor walked past the car in which he routinely was seated and walked towards another Qafila car driven by a member of the Canada security team, Mansoor Ahmed Bajwa. It was a sign of Huzoor's kindness and love that he gave another Khadim this blessed and entirely unexpected opportunity to drive Khalifa-Waqt.

Later I spoke to Mansoor sahib about those moments when he was able to drive the car of Hazrat Khalifaul Masih V (aba).

Speaking of the moment Huzoor turned towards his car, Mansoor sahib said:

"I was seated in my car when I saw Huzoor walk past his normal car and towards my car. When I realised Huzoor was actually coming in, I almost jumped out thinking that it is not possible for someone like me to have the honour of driving Huzoor's car but Huzoor's security guard, Sakhawat Bajwa sahib, quietly gave me a thumbs-up gesture and so I remained in the driver's seat."

Mansoor continued:

"When Huzoor took a seat, I nervously said salam to him and he asked me who owned the car. Huzoor's voice was filled with such a mixture of

grace, majesty and power that it made me shiver. I responded by informing that the car was owned by another member of our team called Saadat. Then, I was told to start and I had the great honour to drive Huzoor to York University and back again."

Reflecting on that evening, Mansoor sahib said:

"I will never ever forget that single moment when I realised Huzoor was coming in my car. I honestly could not believe it and it felt as though all of my life's dreams had come true. I was astonished and amazed and the pleasure was even greater because it was so unexpected. Even now, I cannot believe that I was seated just a foot away from Huzoor for so long."

Mansoor sahib continued:

"No one can ever take those blessed moments away and they are part of my life's history and Insha'Allah my children and grandchildren will be able to tell others that their father and grandfather once had the opportunity to drive Huzoor to an extremely historic function."

At the end, I asked Mansoor sahib if he found the actual driving difficult, whilst Huzoor was in his car.

I could only imagine how nervous I would be if I was ever in a similar situation.

In response, Mansoor sahib said:

“It was ok as once you start driving you focus on that, but at one point I braked a little hard and Huzoor noticed this and commented on it. However, even that was a blessing for me because it meant that Huzoor spoke to me once again.”

Meeting with Dignitaries at York University

After a short drive, Huzoor arrived at York University, where he was welcomed by the *Chancellor of York University*, Mr. Greg Sobara and *Ontario’s Minister for Research, Innovation and Science*, Hon. Reza Moridi.

Both before, and after the main event, Huzoor privately met both dignitaries and it was apparent how much respect they both had for Huzoor and also that Huzoor enjoyed their company.

At one point, Chancellor Sobara mentioned that he had heard Huzoor had met Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau.

The Chancellor then said:

“Your Holiness, I do not think you will have met Justin Trudeau’s father, Pierre Trudeau, as you will have been very young when he was Prime Minister. He was also very popular like his son.”

Hearing this, Huzoor smiled and said:

“Rather, we should say that his son is popular like his father – not the other way around!”

Historic Reception at York University

The main event, hosted in collaboration between York University and Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, was held in the main auditorium at York University and commenced at 6.30pm.

The hall was packed with students and guests seated row after row, whilst another hall, used for overflow, was also packed. In total there were more than 180 guests in attendance, as well as hundreds of Ahmadi students and members.

Short remarks were initially given by Amir Sahib Canada, the Chancellor of York University and Provincial Minister, Reza Moridi.

I particularly enjoyed the comments of York University’s Chancellor, Greg Sobara, who said:

“In his capacity as the Caliph, His Holiness has the burden of tending to the spiritual needs of millions and millions of Ahmadi Muslims around the world. He was well prepared for this undertaking because as a young man he studied agriculture, nourishing the soil. In Ghana he cultivated an agricultural miracle when he grew wheat in that country for the first

time. Truly your mission needs to be heard around the world because it is a mission of peace and of love for all, hatred for none.”

Huzoor’s address at York University

Thereafter, Huzoor took to the stage and delivered an historic lecture entitled ‘*Justice in an unjust world*’. It was a truly inspirational and enlightening address, in which Huzoor outlined many of the major issues of the time and offered solutions based on Islamic teachings.



Using the Quran and *Ahadith* as his only weapons, Huzoor proved that Islam was a religion of peace and tolerance opposed to all forms of extremism and terrorism.

Huzoor also cited certain *Western* foreign policy mistakes as a cause of frustration in the Muslim world and called upon the *United Nations* to act with justice and fairness and to follow its founding principles.

Huzoor said:

“At the United Nations it should not be that certain countries wield undue power and influence, or that the permanent members of the Security Council care only for their own interests and utilise their veto power even where it is in conflict with the interests of the majority. Rather, all members of the United Nations should work together and fulfil the covenant of trust upon which the institution was founded - to maintain the peace and security of the world.”



Speaking about the arms trade, Huzoor said:

“Even Western writers and commentators have spoken of the hypocrisy and immorality of the international arms trade, yet when questioned about such sales, governments either ignore the question or seek to justify what is patently unjustifiable. All they care about is that their cheques clear so that billions are added to their own national budgets.”

Summing up the fundamental cause of injustice in just a few words, Huzoor said:

“In short, money talks and morality is left nowhere to be seen. How on earth can peace be achieved in such an environment?”

Concluding, Huzoor said:

“If we truly want peace in our time then we must act with justice. We must value equality and fairness. As the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) so beautifully stated, we must love for others, what we love for ourselves.

We must pursue the rights of others with the same zeal and determination that we pursue our own rights. We should broaden our horizons and look at what is right for the world, rather than what is only right for us. These are the means for peace in our age.”

Post-event meeting

Following the conclusion of the address, Huzoor once again met with both the Chancellor and Provincial Minister and both dignitaries sincerely thanked Huzoor for his address.

The Chancellor stated that he had found Huzoor’s words to be ***“courageous”*** and he admitted that the world continued to suffer the consequences of the Iraq War of 2003.

The Provincial Minister, Reza Moridi stated that he had been particularly struck by a section of Huzoor's speech in which he questioned how terrorist groups were able to continually fund themselves and acquire arms.

The Provincial Minister also informed Huzoor that before entering politics he was a nuclear physicist and had been greatly influenced by the work of Dr. Abdus Salam.

Minister Moridi said:

"I studied the works and writings of Dr. Abdus Salam a great deal and in his field he was the equivalent of Einstein. He was a truly brilliant man."

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

"Professor Salam wished to set up his research institute in Pakistan but due to the persecution of Ahmadis he was unable to and so established it in Italy."

Huzoor continued:

"I keep asking our Ahmadi youth to enter research so that they are able to serve their nations and to help them develop and progress."

Thereafter, Huzoor enquired about York University and was informed that there were increasing numbers of foreign students. The Chancellor said that this posed a personal challenge to him as some of the names of students were very difficult for him to pronounce.

Hearing this, Huzoor laughed and said:

“You have known me for a number of years and you still cannot pronounce my name!”

The Chancellor, as well as everyone else in the room laughed a great deal, and the Chancellor admitted that this was true and so he had decided to refer to Huzoor just as “*His Holiness*” in future!

Impact of Huzoor’s address

Following the meeting, Huzoor returned to Peace Village, whilst I stayed back for a few minutes and met some of the people who had attended.

I actually spent a few minutes with the *Chancellor of York University*, Greg Sobara who had hosted Huzoor.

Speaking about Huzoor, Chancellor Sobara said:

“Even before today I was impressed by your Khalifa but today I have developed true affection for him. He is so gracious and humble and I will never forget this evening where I was able to share a platform with such a wise and important world leader.”

Mr. Sobara then said to me that having worked in politics for a long time he knew that the job of being *Press Secretary* is extremely difficult and so he “sympathized” with me.

I responded by saying:

“My job is actually very easy because the Khalifa tells me what to say and what to do and guides me in every matter.”

Hearing this, the Chancellor laughed and said:

“That is the opposite to my own experience because in politics the Press Secretary tells his boss what to do, what to say and how to say it!”

I also laughed and said that this was the difference between religion and politics!

Another person I met was a journalist called *Simone Sohn*, who said:

“It was a privilege to listen to His Holiness and I would describe his speech as ‘mesmerising’. Normally, I am a very fidgety person and cannot sit still but through the speech was transfixed and learned a great deal about Islam. It was a touching and moving address in which he proved that Islam is an extremely fair and peaceful religion.”

A teacher, called *Debra* said:

“The most significant part of the speech was the Caliph’s point that we should do for others what we do for ourselves and we should like for others what we like for ourselves. What a truly beautiful and simple teaching and if you follow this then we would not have all the wars that we have in the world.”

A retired nurse, called *Janice Omelon* said:

“The Caliph was magnificent! I was literally hanging onto his every word and waiting for the next one with anticipation. I loved what he said about voting for the most qualified person or the party with the best policy rather than voting on party lines or for your own friends. That part of the speech was completely magical!”

A lady called *Ester Gomez* said:

“His Holiness is an extremely gentle man and appears completely sincere, honest and you feel a sense of peace from him. His address was poignant and emotional, especially how he kept saying and proving that Islam means peace.”

A journalism student, *Vanessa Giralico* said:

“Today’s speech was a call to action for the Western world. His Holiness said ‘stop making excuses and stop the funding of terrorism and stop the arms trade’. His message was very practical, he said stop oil, stop trading, stop hypocrisy and then everything will be ok. I genuinely think that if the world follows his action plan then Daesh will be finished soon.”

Another student, *Alyssa Nobbie* said:

“Today’s speech by the Caliph changed my perspective on a lot of things. He made me realise that the United Nations should be doing so much more for the world and how it is unfair because there is a veto power

which individual nations can use to override what is in the interest of the world. The speech was ‘unfiltered’ and by this I mean it was not political. He said what was in his heart without fear or concern about what other people may think.”

A journalist, *Julia Nowicki* said:

“I loved the comment of His Holiness about the world that ‘money talks’ and this was the stand out part of the speech for me. In just one line he encapsulated what is wrong with the world and in that one sentence he was able to fulfil the mandate of the title of his keynote speech which was ‘justice in an unjust world’.”

Huzoor’s visit to home of Dr. Muneeb

Upon returning to Peace Village, Huzoor led the *Maghreb* and *Isha* prayers at the Baitul Islam Mosque.

After Namaz, rather than return to his residence, Huzoor travelled the short distance to the home of his relative Dr. Muneeb Ahmad.

Dr. Muneeb himself was out of the country and so Huzoor and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor’s respected wife*) were hosted by Dr. Muneeb’s wife, Amatul Raoof sahiba, who I know as Khala Roofo, and her children.

Later, Khala Roofo’s son, *Hashir (19)* told me how it felt to have Huzoor and Khala Saboohi visit their home that evening.

Hashir said:

“When we found out that Huzoor was going to visit our home, just a couple of hours before he came, we were all extremely overjoyed, overwhelmed and excited. We were running back and forth to try and get everything ready.”

Hashir continued:

“Upon entering, Huzoor looked around our home and he even checked the basement where my elder brother’s room is. My brother Qasid did not have time to clean it and upon seeing it Huzoor smiled and said ‘This is a typical boy’s room’! After this, Huzoor took a seat in the lounge and I sat down nearby but, Huzoor said to me that my mother and sister were working in the kitchen and so I should go and help them!”

Hashir told me that after a few minutes, they were able to serve dinner to Huzoor and Khala Saboohi and *Mash’Allah* they both enjoyed the food.

Throughout the tour, Hashir had been part of the team who had served dinner to Qafila members and so during dinner he informed Huzoor that some of the Qafila members ate a lot but some ate very little. Hearing this, Huzoor had asked who ate less and Hashir mentioned my name.

Hashir narrated that in response, Huzoor had said:

“You have not seen Abid eat tikkay, if you had then you would see that he sometimes eats more as well!”

I laughed when I heard this! It reminded me of spending Eid in Australia in 2013 and having the blessed opportunity to eat lunch with Huzoor. At that time, Huzoor made a plate for me in which he placed many chicken *tikkay* and lamb *kebabs* and waited until I had finished eating, even though he and the other people present, had completed their meals many minutes earlier.

As I heard Hashir narrate this comment, I was not sure but thought perhaps Huzoor was referring to that!

Hashir continued by saying:

“After dinner, Huzoor asked us about the rental prices in Peace Village and Huzoor said that he had come to know that rental prices in Peace Village were generally very high and people were charging large amounts even for basement apartments.”

Walking back

Huzoor spent over an hour at Khala Rofo’s home in Peace Village and as he did so, the local Ahmadis, waited outside in the freezing cold, as they were desperate to get just a glimpse of Huzoor when he came out from her home.

Hundreds of Ahmadis waited outside Huzoor’s own residence, whilst many others had congregated outside of Khala Rofo’s home itself.

The Ahmadis raised loud and passionate *naaray* continuously, each louder than the last. They were desperate for Huzoor to know they were waiting for him and indeed were beckoning him to come out and see them.

Huzoor did hear the *naaray* from inside Khala Roofo's home and so rather than return to his residence by car, Huzoor graciously walked back and waved to the Ahmadis who were overcome with emotion and joy.

It was an emotional few minutes walking back with Huzoor and witnessing the mutual love between Ahmadis and their Khalifa once again.

It was also a precursor to an unforgettable walk that was still to come.

End of Part 3

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