

HUZoor'S TOUR OF GERMANY

MAY – JUNE 2015

A Personal Account

PART 1

By Abid Khan

Introduction

On 23 May 2015, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) and his *Qafila* (entourage) set off for an 18-day tour to Germany, where Huzoor would grace the *Jalsa Salana* with his presence.

On this occasion the *Qafila* was a little larger than on the previous tours I had been a part of. Apart from Huzoor and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*), there were 14 members of the *Qafila* who travelled from London on that day.

There were seven security staff, Muhammad Ahmad Sahib (Ahmad bhai), Nasir Saeed Sahib, Sakawat Bajwa Sahib, Mohsin Awam Sahib, Sardar Humayun Sahib, Khawaja Qudoos Sahib and Nazir Baloch Sahib.

The office staff comprised Munir Ahmad Javed Sahib (*Private Secretary*), Abdul Majid Tahir Sahib (*Additional Wakil-ul-Tabshir*), Mubarak Ahmad Zafar Sahib (*Additional Wakil-ul-Maal*), Bashir Ahmed Sahib (*PS Office*) and me travelling on behalf of the central *Press & Media Office*.

Nadeem Amini and Nasir Amini, two cousins from Bradford, were also part of the *Qafila* as the designated drivers for two of the cars.

A few days prior to Huzoor's arrival, Mahmood Ahmad Khan Sahib (security staff) had been sent in advance to Germany and he had been accompanied by a young *Waqf-e-Zindighi* serving in *Private Secretary Sahib's Office*, Athar Baig.

Packing advice

A couple of days before the tour, I was fortunate to have *Mulaqat* in Huzoor's office. Whilst, I was seated, Huzoor was going through his office mail when he came across a document in which the weather forecast for the duration of Huzoor's forthcoming tour of Germany had been printed.

Huzoor looked up at me and said that, according to the forecast, the weather would be hot in Germany, especially during the Jalsa days. I asked Huzoor if I should not pack a sweater then. The reason I asked this was because the suitcase I was taking was quite small and I was trying to save space.

However, Huzoor responded by saying:

“No matter the forecast, it is a sign of wisdom and intelligence to pack at least one sweater so you are fully prepared.”

I did pack a sweater and by the second day of the tour was wearing it in Germany! Although the weather forecast for the days of Jalsa was correct, the first week of the tour was much cooler and so I was glad to be prepared!

Blessings of Huzoor's love and prayers

Huzoor's departure was on Saturday morning. Just two nights before, on Thursday evening, my 2-year-old son Mahid developed a very high fever

and so we took him to the hospital. I was anxious that he would recover before we left.

Despite being so busy, when Huzoor was informed of his fever on Thursday night, he immediately prescribed some homeopathic medicines and prayed for Mahid's recovery. Then, on Friday, Huzoor asked me how he was and prescribed some further medicines.

Whilst, I had initially been quite worried, as soon as I knew we had Huzoor's prayers and we had given the medicines Huzoor had prescribed, I immediately felt relieved and reassured. And with the *Grace of Allah*, by Friday evening Mahid seemed completely fine and recovered.

Departure from Masjid Fazl

Many Ahmadis had come to see Huzoor off from *Masjid Fazl*. As always, it was quite apparent that the locals left behind were very sad to see Huzoor leave.

Huzoor and Khala Saboohi came out of their residence at 10am and after a silent prayer the *Qafila* departed from the Mosque.

Last year, when Huzoor travelled to Germany and Ireland, I had been seated in a car driven by Nadeem Amini Sahib. However, this time, I was allocated a seat in the car directly behind Huzoor's vehicle. I was seated next to *Private Secretary*, Munir Javed Sahib, whilst Sardar Humayun Sahib was in the front, alongside Khwaja Qudoos Sahib who was driving.

The *Qafila* was due to cross the *Channel* into France on the *Eurotunnel* on the 12.20pm train but due to heavy traffic at the terminal, we missed that train and departed on the subsequent one, which left at 12.50pm.

Travel in the Eurotunnel

The *Eurotunnel* is a very efficient means of crossing into France as it takes only 35minutes to reach Calais. On the tours, I have been on, the routine has been that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi have remained in their car during the journey. Most of the other *Qafila* members step out of their cars and spend the time chatting amongst ourselves.

The same routine occurred also on that day. Nasir Amini had brought some delicious dry fruit and so it was first served to Huzoor and Khala Saboohi and then Huzoor kindly sent it back out for the *Qafila* members to enjoy.

A memorable visit to a petrol station

Upon crossing into France, Huzoor was received by Ameer Sahib Germany and other officials of the Germany Jamaat at a nearby petrol station.

After meeting the members of the Jamaat, Huzoor entered the shop at the petrol station and called me towards him. Huzoor looked extremely graceful, wearing his *Achkan* coat over his *shalwar kameez* and instead of his *paghri* (turban), Huzoor was wearing a round Afghani *topi* on his head.

Huzoor noticed me standing on the side and so called me over. Huzoor's humour is always very wonderful and so smiled and said that he had not seen me earlier and so thought perhaps I had decided not to come!

Very affectionately, Huzoor then told me to come and look inside the petrol station with him.

In the petrol station, Huzoor looked at the various products and in particular he noticed some roadmaps that were on sale. Upon seeing them, Huzoor asked whether there were still people who used such traditional roadmaps? Huzoor said it seems that now everyone uses satellite navigation. I was not sure myself, but said that perhaps there were a few people who still preferred the old methods.

Huzoor also asked me how Mahid was and if he had been taking the medicines he had prescribed.

At such moments, a person's love for *Khalifa-Waqt* can only increase. Huzoor's extremely important and busy tour had only just begun and yet he still enquired about my son's health.

Huzoor asked which car I was seated in and so I mentioned that I was seated next to Munir Javed Sahib. Huzoor asked if I was comfortable and then with a smile asked whether Khawaja Qudoos Sahib was a good driver. I responded "Yes" to both questions.

It was a very informal, yet extremely memorable, few minutes in the petrol station. *Alhamdulillah.*

Lunch in Calais

From the petrol station, we drove a short distance to the *Courtepaille* restaurant in Calais, where the previous year we had also stopped for lunch.

Being at the restaurant brought back a lot of memories. Most of us ate the same lunch of *grilled salmon with a jacket potato* that we had been served the previous year.

Though, most of us had salmon, a few people ordered steak, including Ameer Sahib Germany. Afterwards he told me that he sent his steak back twice because the first time it was burnt and the second time it was raw! Thankfully it proved third time lucky!

Travel to Aachen and arrival at Mansoor Mosque

Rather, than travelling straight to Frankfurt, the programme was arranged that Huzoor would first travel to the city of Aachen to inaugurate the *Mansoor Mosque* in the evening. Thus from Calais we drove directly to Aachen.

Before, arriving at the Mosque, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi briefly visited the home of an Ahmadi, Sadiq Doggar Sahib who lived in Aachen.

Thereafter, the *Qafila* proceeded directly to the Mansoor Mosque where the local members of the Jamaat welcomed Huzoor.

As they sang poems and raised *naaray* it was clear how excited and happy they were that Huzoor had graced the occasion with his presence.

Inauguration Reception at Mansoor Mosque

After Huzoor led the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers, he proceeded to a marquee erected on the complex for the formal reception. There were more than 200 non-Ahmadi guests in attendance, including a number of dignitaries.



Initially, Ameer Sahib gave a welcome address and he was followed by a number of guest speakers, including the *Lord Mayor*, who took to the stage to congratulate the *Jamaat*.

Whilst they spoke in German, we listened with an earpiece to the Urdu translation. Huzoor also listened to the translation and I noticed that as the guests spoke, Huzoor was making notes on a piece of paper.

It transpired that Huzoor was preparing the notes for his own address whilst the other speakers were on stage.

In his address, delivered in Urdu, Huzoor mentioned some of the good points made by the guests and expanded upon them from an Islamic perspective.



For example, the *Mayor* had spoken of the need for people to *'live together'* and so during his address, Huzoor acknowledged this point and expanded upon it. Huzoor said that a person could only fulfil the objectives of religion if they *"respected human values"* and so it was the duty of the local Ahmadis to care for and protect their neighbours.

The guest speakers had also referred to a local Ahmadi Muslim florist who worked in the city centre. He had become well known in the local

community for gifting flowers to locals in an effort to eradicate the reservations or fears of the local people towards Islam.

Upon learning of this, Huzoor said this was an example of how Ahmadis sought to spread peace and goodwill in society.

Very beautifully, Huzoor added:

“Whilst physical flowers die away after a few days and lose their fragrance, the spiritual flowers presented by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community are everlasting. These spiritual flowers, consisting of the highest moral values, will forever be remembered and appreciated by nations and their people. This is the gift presented by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to the world whose fragrance will prove eternal.”

Positive impact of Huzoor’s address

Masha’Allah, it was apparent that the guests had all very much appreciated Huzoor’s message.

I met a few guests afterwards and they all spoke of how they had been reassured about Islam’s teachings and were very honoured that Huzoor had taken the time to visit their city.

One person I met was a Turkish non-Ahmadi Muslim man called *Cagaty Letinsoy*. He repeatedly said that he felt that Huzoor’s speech was a means of spreading the true teachings of Islam. He said that though he was not an

Ahmadi, he had greatly appreciated Huzoor's defence of Islam. He added that his own knowledge of his religion had increased.

Mr Letinsoy said:

"I am so grateful to your leader because he has explained the beauty of Islam unlike anyone else. For example, the way he spoke of the rights of neighbours was beautiful. I have never before heard how wide the scope of neighbours is in Islam. I just wish there were other people who portrayed Islam like your leader is doing."

Impact of Huzoor's writing style

During the tour, there were subsequent Mosque openings in *Hanau* and *Vechta* and a foundation laying ceremony in the city of *Iserlohn*.

At those events, it was also apparent that Huzoor made the notes for his own address, whilst the guest speakers were addressing the audience. This was something that a number of guests noticed and appreciated.

For example, later in the tour, at the foundation laying ceremony in *Iserlohn*, a German police officer, who was seated at the same table as me, made an interesting observation.

The police officer said:

"I very much liked how the Khalifa did not come with a prepared speech but actually listened to the guest speakers and made notes of their good

comments and expanded upon them in his own address. This is a perfect example of integration - to absorb the good points of others and to present them in an even better light."

I thought that this was quite an interesting insight whereby the police officer said that he considered Huzoor's very style of address as a form of positive integration.

Huzoor's comment about *Hatim Tai*

The guests were served dinner after the Mosque opening in Aachen.

Last year, the hospitality and food served at some of the events was not of the standard it ought to have been and this was something Huzoor addressed in his *Friday Sermon at Jalsa Germany* last year. In his sermon, Huzoor advised that all guests should be treated with great respect and the food should be of a good standard.

I have to admit that I was curious to see what the *Jamaat* served this year and thankfully it seemed that the arrangements were much better.

A proper Asian meal was served and the taste and quality of the food was far higher than the previous year. This in itself was an example of the blessings of *Khilafat*, whereby Huzoor guided the *Jamaat* in all respects about how to improve.

I was seated on a table with Munir Javed Sahib, Mubarak Zafar Sahib and Majid Tahir Sahib. Whilst we were eating, a member of the *Ziafat*

(hospitality) team who had been serving Huzoor's table approached Majid Sahib. He said that Huzoor had made a comment that he had not understood and perhaps Majid Sahib could clarify.

He said that Huzoor had used the Urdu expression:

“Aap loghon nay Hatim Tai keh qabar par laot mardiya hai”

A rough translation would be that ***“You have kicked the grave of Hatim Tai”***.

I have to admit I did not know who *Hatim Tai* was but was later told he was a very famous Arab who lived just before the advent of the Holy Prophet (sa). He was known throughout the Arab world as an extremely wonderful host, who always did whatever he could to make his guests comfortable.

Upon hearing Huzoor's comment, both Majid Sahib and Mubarak Zafar Sahib rather awkwardly said that it seems from this comment that Huzoor is not impressed by the hospitality at all. Upon hearing this, the local Ahmadi walked away dejected.

In the meantime, Mubarak Zafar Sahib told Munir Javed Sahib what Huzoor had said and Munir Sahib immediately said that their interpretation was wrong! He said that this is an expression that is used as a form of praise. He said it means a person's hospitality is such that it is of a similar style, or at least bears a similar touch, to the hospitality of *Hatim Tai*.

Upon this, Majid Sahib urgently called the Ahmadi gentleman back and then Munir Javed Sahib explained that he and the German team should be happy and not sad as this was a compliment! The relief on his face was palpable and there for all to see!

A narration from Munir Sahib

By the time we left Aachen it was 9.20pm and the journey time to *Baitus Subuh* in Frankfurt was at least 2 hours. *Maghreb* and *Isha* were to be offered in Frankfurt.

Whilst we were in the car, I asked Munir Javed Sahib, if he had ever seen Huzoor offer the obligatory *Salat* in the car. Munir Sahib said he had never seen Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) offer *Salat* during a car journey and that he would always wait until there was a stop or until the *Qafila* arrived at their destination.

Munir Sahib did mention one incident from the life of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh). He said that during a visit to Sweden, he had been seated in the front passenger seat of Huzoor's car and the plan was to stop at a petrol station to do *Namaz*.

However, it was raining incessantly and so suddenly Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) instructed Munir Sahib to lead the prayers. He said it was totally unexpected and he was extremely nervous but in the end he just about managed to lead the prayer appropriately!

Late arrival in Frankfurt

By the time Huzoor arrived at *Baitus Subuh* it was 11.25pm.

Despite the fact that it was so late there were still hundreds of Ahmadis who were at the Mosque to greet Huzoor, whilst dozens of young children recited Nazms to express their joy at Huzoor's arrival. If anything the fact that it was so late added to the emotional atmosphere.



As he walked past the overjoyed local Ahmadis, Huzoor smiled and waved in their direction.

Huzoor's respect for Begum Sahiba

Upon entering *Baitus Subuh*, Huzoor went towards the lift so that he could visit his residence for a few moments.

Khala Saboohi had not yet entered the complex and so very patiently Huzoor waited a few minutes for his respected wife and then they went up in the lift together.

It was a small thing, but I was struck how even at the end of a long and tiring day, Huzoor made sure to take care of his wife and to wait for her. Certainly, not just as our spiritual leader, but as a husband Huzoor is an example to all men.

Importance of congregational *Namaz*

After a few minutes, Huzoor came down to the Mosque to lead the *Maghreb* and *Isha* prayers. By the time *Namaz* started it was 11.45pm and by the time it concluded it was well after midnight.

Once during Huzoor's tour of Singapore in 2013, due to Huzoor's presence at a formal reception, *Namaz* was offered at around 11pm but this was certainly the first time I had seen *Namaz* observed so late.

The fact that Huzoor waited until we arrived at the Mosque to lead the prayer, rather than to offer it in the car or to stop on the way, was proof of how much Huzoor's follows the Islamic teaching for men to offer *Namaz* in congregation at the Mosque.

The end of a long day

The day had proved very long and certainly our departure from the *Fazl Mosque* seemed a distant memory.

As it finally drew to a close I kept hoping and praying that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were fine. When the opportunity arose, I said to Huzoor that I hope they were not tired after such a long day.

Immediately and very lovingly, Huzoor responded by saying:

“With the Grace of Allah we are fine – but how are you?”

Huzoor’s kindness and grace knows no bounds. I said that I was fine and that once again I had been witness to so many blessings associated with *Khilafat* throughout the day.

Overnight stay at a hotel

In 2014, I had stayed within the *Baitus Subuh* complex and I was looking forward to staying there again. Staying in the Mosque area is a completely different experience to staying off-site because you are constantly part of the spiritual environment created during Huzoor’s blessed tours.

However, that evening after *Namaz*, I was informed that Nadeem Amini, Nasir Amini and myself would be staying at a nearby hotel. In my heart, I felt disappointed but understood that there must have been a shortage of space and so I took my luggage and went to the hotel, which was located next to a petrol station around a mile from *Baitus Subuh*.

Jeryullah Sahib, a young Missionary posted in the *General Secretary’s* office in the Germany Jamaat, dropped us off at the hotel.

Almost late for Fajr!

As *Fajr* was at 4.30am it was arranged that someone would come to pick us up at 4.15am.

By the time I slept it was well after 2am and so I set my alarm for 3.40am. I was extremely worried that I would sleep through it and so I set an extra 10 alarms on my phone to make sure I got up!

Thankfully, I got up and went outside by 4.15am as planned. However, as the minutes passed-by nobody came to pick me up and it seemed that I would miss *Fajr*.

After a few minutes, I texted Jeryullah and asked if anyone was coming. He said he could not get in touch with the person who was supposed to pick us up and so he would come himself to bring me.

When he arrived a few minutes later I glanced at my watch and saw that it was 4.28am.

Thankfully, I had my seatbelt on because Jeryullah was determined to get us to the Mosque in time for *Fajr* no matter what!

I do not know what speed he drove at, but what was normally a 5 or 6 minute journey was completed in no more than 2minutes! By the time we got to the Mosque, Huzoor was just entering and so we reached just in time for *Fajr*!

Mubarak Sahib's kind offer

The next day, I mentioned to Mubarak Zafar Sahib about how we were almost late for *Fajr*. Upon hearing this, Mubarak Sahib mentioned that there was an extra bed in his room and that I was welcome to share with him. It was a very kind offer and a big relief for me to be able to return to the Mosque.

Upon this, the local Jamaat was also able to find a room in the complex for Nadeem and Nasir and so thankfully for the rest of our stay in Frankfurt we were all able to reside within *Baitus Subuh*.

Meeting Ahmadis

Sunday was our first full day in Germany and the majority of it was allocated for *family Mulaqats*.

Next to Huzoor's office was Private Secretary Sahib's office and next to his office was another office shared by Majid Sahib, Mubarak Sahib and me.

During Huzoor's Mulaqats I would spend some time at my desk but would also spend time meeting some of the people who had come to meet Huzoor.

It was often very emotional meeting such people, because many of them were meeting *Khalifatul Masih* for the very first time in their lives or after many years.

As they narrated their stories and feelings many people were unable to control their emotions. Seeing and hearing them was extremely faith-inspiring and a reminder of the power and blessings of *Khilafat*.

That first morning, I met Malik *Adeel Ahmad* (34) who was accompanied by his wife, *Amtul Mateen*.

Speaking about his Mulaqat, Malik Adeel Sahib said:

“Today I met the Khalifa-Waqt after a period of 10years and we did not know what to say in his presence but it did not matter because it felt as though he could read what was in our hearts. Seeing Huzoor has made me aware of my own many weaknesses and so I am going to try to improve myself.

For example, in the past I have never kept a beard but 2 days ago I started to grow it in anticipation of our Mulaqat. When I sat before Huzoor I pledged in my heart that I would try to make myself a better person so that my Khalifa is pleased with me and so I have resolved to keep this beard in future. I know this may be a very small step but hopefully it will lead to other improvements.”

His wife, *Amtul Mateen Sahiba*, also narrated her own feelings. She said:

“When Huzoor touched the head of my son with great affection, I felt that this is the most precious moment of my life and will be a means of protecting him all of his life.”

I also met with *Abdullah Bajwa (30)* and his wife *Amna Bajwa*. They had recently been blessed with a baby son who was resting in his mother's lap.

Abdullah Sahib was extremely emotional as he recounted his experience, by saying:

“Since as long as I can remember I have dreamed of meeting my Khalifa and wondered if I would ever see this day. In the past I had heard stories from others about Khilafat, but today I saw the reality and realised that whatever I had been told was completely true.

It took me 30 years to meet my Khalifa and yet my son has been blessed by Huzoor at the age of 5 months –when he is older I will tell him how truly fortunate he is.”

One person I met was an Ahmadi called *Shahid Mahmood Tahir (45)* who was meeting Huzoor for the first time along with his wife and daughter.

As he walked out of the Mulaqat I saw that he had tears streaming down his face.

Shahid Sahib told me that he had been a born Ahmadi, but as a young man he became influenced by non-Ahmadis and so left the Jamaat and lived for 18 years as a non-Ahmadi, before again coming to accept the truth of Ahmadiyyat.

Describing, his feelings upon meeting Huzoor, Shahid Sahib said:

“Today, was the greatest day and the greatest moments of my life. Today, Allah has blessed me with a new existence. How fortunate are we that we have met our spiritual father? I am not a rich man and I have nothing to offer, but I swear I am ready to give my life for Khalifa-Waqt.”

As he wiped away his tears Shahid Sahib walked away with his family and as they did I saw him point to the chocolate that Huzoor had given his 11-year-old daughter. I overheard as he told her *“You do not know just how fortunate you are.”*

Meeting a elderly family from Pakistan

I met an elderly gentleman called *Nisar Ahmad Sahib*, aged 64, who had recently migrated to Germany from Rabwah. He told me he had done security duty during the time of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (rh) but that this was his first personal Mulaqat with *Khalifatul Masih* in his entire life.

Hearing this, I kept thinking how fortunate are those of us who have had the opportunity to see Huzoor regularly.

Nisar Sahib told me that during the Mulaqat, Huzoor was extremely loving towards him, his wife and their daughter. He said he was amazed that Huzoor knew their family very well and that Huzoor even knew that Nisar Sahib's son-in-law was in the process of building a new house!

Nisar Sahib said:

“Huzoor said that the first floor of your son-in-law’s house is completed but the second floor is not ready yet! I could not believe that Huzoor was able to recall so much detail.”

Thereafter, Nisar Sahib’s wife, Bushra Sajida Sahiba, mentioned her own feelings upon seeing Huzoor. She said:

“My knees are very weak and constantly give me pain. Apart from this I have very high blood pressure and so it is extremely difficult for me to travel anywhere. However, I could not miss the opportunity to meet our Khalifa. Certainly, all pain and struggle is worth bearing for this opportunity.”

As they were leaving, Nisar Sahib said that Huzoor had asked him why he had left Rabwah in old age.

Nisar Sahib said:

“I was unable to answer Huzoor’s question properly but I shall tell you. Truly, my only motivation to uproot my entire life and to move across the world in old age was because I knew that Huzoor cannot come to Pakistan and so if I wanted to meet him I would have to come here. My only desire was to meet Huzoor once and to pray behind him and Alhamdulillah, Allah has fulfilled this desire and fulfilled the purpose of our migration.”

Spiritual reformation during Huzoor's tours

Many people who I met said that after meeting Huzoor they felt an innate desire to improve themselves and to try and remove their weaknesses.

For example, I met a 33year old man who said:

“After seeing beloved Huzoor I want to change my life. I swear I will now be regular in offering the 5 obligatory prayers and never again allow the weaknesses of the past to creep in again.”

I met a young Ahmadi couple, *Qazi Muddassar (26)* and his wife *Aafia Mushtaq*.

Although I asked her husband the first question, his wife was so overwhelmed and excited at having met Huzoor for the first time that she answered the question for him!

She said:

“The contentment, the joy, the happiness that I feel is indescribable. In these moments my love for Khilafat and Nizaam-e-Jamaat has increased manifold.”

Her husband then added:

“I swear I will seek to improve myself after having met Huzoor because this Mulaqat was a means of increasing my faith and belief in Islam.”

Walima ceremonies in Germany

On the evenings of 24th and 25th May, the *Walima* ceremonies of two *Murrabis*, recently graduated from *Jamia Ahmadiyya UK* took place.

On the 24th it was the *Walima* of *Saeed Rafiq*, who is posted in *MTA International* and on the 25th it was the *Walima* of *Abdul Khabbir Rizwan*, who is posted in *Private Secretary's Office*. *Huzoor* graced both ceremonies with his presence.

I was glad to be able to attend, as both *Saeed* and *Khabbir* are friends of mine from London.

On Sunday evening at the *Walima* of *Saeed*, I was seated next to *Athar Baig* who told me that the cost of weddings in Germany was much more than weddings at *Baitul Futuh* in London. I did not know if this was correct but *Athar* was adamant that he would get married at *Baitul Futuh* and never in Germany!

There were 2 further *Walima* ceremonies during the tour in which *Huzoor* participated. *Huzoor* hardly has any time to himself or family time during the course of a day and so when he attends such functions he sacrifices even those few private minutes he has.

Truly, the personal sacrifices made by *Huzoor* and his family for the sake of *Ahmadis* and the *Jamaat* is incredible.

Newlyweds visiting Mubarak Sahib

After Khabbir's wedding, Huzoor led the *Maghreb* and *Isha* prayers before returning to his residence. I went back to our office for a few minutes before going upstairs to the room I was sharing with Mubarak Zafar Sahib.

Most evenings, I tried to iron my clothes for the next morning and so that evening also I started to iron my clothes for the next day. After a few minutes, Saeed Rafiq, whose *Walima* it was the day before, came with his new wife to meet Mubarak Zafar Sahib. They spent around 15 or 20 minutes with Mubarak Sahib before leaving.

As they left, Mubarak Sahib told me that Saeed's wife was a relative of his. I said I was glad he had told me, because I had thought that perhaps they had come to meet him out of respect for his position as *Wakil-ul-Maal*! I said I was beginning to think that perhaps newlyweds were supposed to meet *Wakil-ul-Maal* Sahib and that perhaps I too should have come to meet him many years ago after getting married!

Mubarak Sahib and I both laughed a lot and he assured me that the reason they visited was due to the family relationship and nothing else!

An emotional meeting

I will not forget meeting a young Ahmadi family who had just met Huzoor. The husband was called *Mubashar Ahmad* and he was the same age as me. He was with his wife, *Adeela Qamar*, who had just met Huzoor for the very first time in her life.

First of all, Adeela Sahiba told me about her experiences of meeting Huzoor for the first time. She said:

“I waited all of my life for this moment and when I was finally in the presence of Huzoor, I felt as though I had entered a heaven in which only the sweetest and most pure rain was falling.”

At this point Adeela Sahiba, began to cry and quite uncontrollably so. As tears flowed from her eyes, I waited for her to compose herself. After a few seconds she continued:

“In my life I have faced many difficulties but every time I wrote to Huzoor and thereafter always my problems used to vanish or get solved somehow. Each time it seemed as though a miracle had occurred. I bear witness to the truth of Khilafat as I have seen how Huzoor’s prayers are answered.”

Her husband, Mubashar Sahib then began to recount his own experiences. He too became very emotional as he spoke. He said:

“The fruit Allah has given me today is the sweetest and most delicious fruit a person could ever taste. I feel as though the purpose of my life was fulfilled during that minute which I shared in the company of Huzoor. My children will forever be protected by the shade of Khilafat due to those moments with our beloved.”

Mubashar Sahib continued:

“After meeting Huzoor, I do not care about anything worldly or material. Everything else seems so insignificant. I just pray that my beloved Khalifa can visit Pakistan so that those who are poor or illiterate are also able to meet their spiritual leader and seek his prayers.”

Mubashar Sahib then told me a little about his background. He said that for 12 years he worked as a full-time volunteer in a *Jamaat* office in Rabwah.

He said that some of his family members resented him for this because they thought he should bring home a wage. They even advised his father to stop feeding him so that he would learn his lesson.

Speaking about that period of hardship, Mubashar Sahib said:

“Despite the pressures I faced I never stopped attending the office as a volunteer and today those moments I spent with my Khalifa were the greatest possible reward for my patience at that time. Whilst, I was seated before Huzoor, those days of difficulties kept running through my mind and I kept thinking how Allah has rewarded and blessed me.”

After spending a few minutes in their company, Mubashar Sahib and his family departed.

As they left I noticed that their young daughter had managed to cover her entire face and her entire dress with the chocolate she had received from Huzoor.

However, neither her mother, nor father was annoyed by this – rather they were both beaming with happiness – in the knowledge that the chocolate that had covered their daughter was a means of blessings and joy for their family.

Blessings of accepting Ahmadiyyat

Another very emotional meeting I had was with an Ahmadi family who had recently migrated to Germany from Pakistan. The father's name was *Sayed Waqar Hussain (47)*, the mother was called *Fauzia Naheed* and they had twin daughters aged 18 and another daughter also in her teens. They were not born Ahmadis but had done *Bai'at* around 9 years ago.

At first, Fauzia Naheed Sahiba, the mother, explained her feelings. She said:

“We have left all of our worldly possessions back in Pakistan and we have migrated here to Germany only so we can be close to Huzoor – he is our everything.”

She told me that after doing *Bai'at* she and her family had faced a great deal of opposition from their family members but Allah had blessed them and helped them in many ways.

She said that from amongst her family, her mother had also accepted Ahmadiyyat towards the end of her life. However, when her mother became unwell she became very worried at how she would pay for and arrange her funeral because her non-Ahmadi family members had made it clear they would not help or contribute in any way. She then described a dream she had seen at that time.

Fauzia Sahiba said:

“At that time of grief and worry, I saw a dream in which Huzoor appeared and very lovingly said to me ‘Do not worry, we will arrange everything’.”

She continued:

“Just 3 days after the dream my mother died and immediately the Jamaat contacted us themselves and the first thing the Jamaat representative said was ‘Do not worry, we will arrange everything!’. The Jamaat then sent its representatives to our village and collected my mother’s body and made all of the arrangements for the burial on our behalf. I can never forget the way my dream was fulfilled to the letter.”

The twin daughters asked me themselves if they could say a few words and if I would convey a message to Huzoor. I said I would try to, *Insha’Allah*.

In a way that perhaps only twins can, they spoke together and completed each other’s sentences without thinking.

Their message to Huzoor was:

“Dearest Huzoor – all of our relatives have rejected us and so we are worried about whether we will be able to find suitable rishtay (marriages) and so please pray that Allah grants us good husbands. Huzoor, also please pray that Allah guides our family members towards the truth of Ahmadiyyat because we feel extremely sad that our own loved ones have not been rightly guided and that they continue to reject the truth.”

Normally, I am able to control my emotions but on this occasion, having heard the story of their firm faith in Ahmadiyyat, despite all the difficulties they had faced, I found myself unable to control my emotions.

I felt tears coming down my eyes, which I wiped away quickly, in the hope that they had not noticed.

Feeling ashamed

On Monday lunchtime, I was stood in the corridor near Huzoor’s office when Huzoor, having completed the morning session of family *Mulaqats*, walked out of his office.

As Huzoor walked by, he called me towards him and said that he had watched *Jamaat News* on *MTA* that morning and there had been an issue, which meant it was not of the standard it should have been.

As the person responsible for *Jamaat News* I felt extremely ashamed. I apologised and said I would investigate the error.

Huzoor is extremely gracious and so there are so many weaknesses that he overlooks. Thus, whenever he does express his disappointment or anger, it makes you feel ashamed, and disappointed in yourself. I spent the afternoon doing *Istighfar* and also trying to investigate why there had been an error.

The entire day passed by with a feeling of guilt that I had let down Huzoor and that his expectations had not been met.

Later, in the evening, Huzoor walked from his residence to the hall where a wedding was being held and as he walked past me I saw him look in my direction and Huzoor smiled and made a short remark.

Although, the guilt and embarrassment at the weakness of the programme remained, that fleeting second where Huzoor looked in my direction was a cause of such relief and happiness that I could not describe. I am quite sure Huzoor will have known the anxiety I felt that day and so due to his kindness and love he put my mind at rest with that glance in my direction.

Huzoor's interview with *Die Zeit*

On the afternoon of 25 May, Huzoor was interviewed by *Die Zeit*, which is a very highly regarded national newspaper in Germany. The journalist sent by the newspaper was a young Ahmadi who was working for the newspaper called *Tahir Chaudhry*.

Before the interview, I went to meet Tahir so I could get to know him a little. However, as I approached Tahir, I noticed he was reading from a little pocket book he was holding in his hand. I looked closer and saw it was a book of various prayers. I did not disturb him, as it was clear he was utilising those final few minutes before the interview in prayer.



I could appreciate how nervous he was, being a young Ahmadi having to interview *Khalifatul Masih!* I recalled how in 2014, another young Ahmadi journalist was also involved in an interview with Huzoor in London and I he too was extremely nervous and anxious prior to it.

It had been arranged that the interview would last for around 20 minutes, as Huzoor had various engagements afterwards. However, in the end, Huzoor answered the questions of the journalist for over 50minutes.

The interview was conducted in Urdu, during which Huzoor answered various questions about Islam and certain contemporary issues.

The journalist enquired from Huzoor his views about the fact that in the past year the leader of one terrorist group had claimed *Khilafat* and had asked people to pledge allegiance to him.

In response, Huzoor said that *Khilafat* in Islam was inextricably linked to *Nabuwat* (prophethood) and so true *Khilafat* could not just suddenly appear but had to follow and succeed a prophet. Rather, than succeeding prophethood, Huzoor said such terrorist groups were involved only in perpetrating violence, cruelty and bloodshed of the most inhumane nature.

In contrast, Huzoor explained how the institution of *Khilafat* leading the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community had been established after the demise of the Promised Messiah (as), in accordance with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (sa).

Huzoor said he never had any desire to lead the *Jamaat* or to bear the responsibility of *Khalifatul Masih*.

Huzoor said:

“I never had any desire to be Khalifa – rather I was compelled to take this position by God Almighty who put my name in the hearts of the people (members of Electoral College).”

Upon hearing these words, I felt such love for Huzoor. As our spiritual guide he bears a lifelong responsibility of leading the *Jamaat* and continuing the mission of the Promised Messiah (as) to reform the world. No one can truly understand or comprehend the magnitude of this burden.



During the interview Huzoor commented on the increasing conflict witnessed in the Muslim world. He said that there existed external forces that had long sought to divide the Muslim world and the shame of it was that the Muslim countries were accepting this fate.

Huzoor gave the examples of Libya and Iraq, where foreign interventions had led to the destruction of those nations in the name of freedom.

Huzoor was also asked about his views on *climate change*.

In response, Huzoor said that a bigger concern for him was the increasing cruelties and injustices in the world. He said that each day innocent people were being killed and so bloodshed and disorder were a greater threat to civilization.

Regarding *climate change*, Huzoor also said that the *West* had developed its industry and economy decades ago and so it was easy for them to now say that there should be restrictions on industry in the name of *climate change* as this was a means of preventing potential rivals such as China or India fulfilling their economic potential.

At the end of the interview, Huzoor was asked if he had a message for the German people.

In response, Huzoor said:

“I would say that the German nation should continue its role supporting and protecting the European Union. If it does this then it can flourish. Therefore, Germany should seek to protect the integrity and unity of this Continent.”

At a time when many people are questioning the benefit of the *European Union*, it was very interesting to hear Huzoor again speak about the importance and value of Europe remaining united.

It was a message Huzoor had delivered a few years ago during his address at the *European Parliament* in 2012, but the fascinating thing about this interview was that Huzoor specifically advised Germany to protect the unity of Europe.

Publication of *Die Zeit* interview

Alhamdulillah, Huzoor's interview with *Die Zeit* was published, after a short delay, just over a week later.

The reason for the delay was that the editors of *Die Zeit* had apparently been concerned that Huzoor's message was too bold! It was interesting to hear this, because on the one hand, we constantly hear that Muslim leaders should speak out against extremism and terrorism, and yet when Huzoor did so, the editors were initially unsure whether it was too strong a message!

Naturally, the interview was published in German and so initially I could not understand it, however with the help of *Google Translate* and the help of some of German Ahmadis, I was soon able to read it and it seemed that the newspaper had conveyed fairly accurately what Huzoor had said in the interview.

The readership of the newspaper is vast and so through the interview Huzoor's message reached millions of Germans. Indeed, within minutes of it being published there were a stream of comments published by non-Ahmadis and non-Muslims about the interview. The vast majority were extremely positive, whereby many Germans appreciated the various points Huzoor had made.

For example, one German non-Muslim posted the following comment:

“An outstanding interview – voices like this need to be heard!”

Mahid – happy and angry!

On Tuesday morning (26 May), I called home using *FaceTime*. It was the first time I had video-chatted with my family since we had arrived in Germany 3 days earlier.

My wife Mala handed the phone to our toddler son Mahid and as he looked at me, I could see he was a little confused. In fact, I noticed how he was struggling to juggle his emotions because one second he looked at me in a very stern and angry fashion, probably wondering where I had vanished to, and then the next second he smiled and kissed the screen!

He probably did not understand but I kept repeating that with the *Grace of Allah*, I was with Huzoor and that *Insha'Allah* I would come home in a couple of weeks.

Meeting with Jamia teacher and his family

One day, I met a young Missionary, *Fateh Ahmad Nasir (33)* who came to Germany from Pakistan in 2011 and was serving as a teacher in *Jamia Ahmadiyya Germany*.

Fateh Sahib told me how seeing Huzoor inspired him to improve and to reach higher standards in his capacity as a *Missionary*. He said:

“When I see Huzoor and also witness his activities on tour I am astonished at how his every second is utilised for serving the Jamaat. It

is an example for me and motivates me to work harder. We are so lucky to have Khilafat to guide us in all matters.”

Over the past few years, some students from *Jamia Ahmadiyya Germany* have started to travel to London to meet Huzoor whenever the opportunity avails.

Regarding these visits, Fateh Sahib said:

“I have seen for myself that the Jamia students who travel to London come back completely changed after meeting Huzoor. They are more attentive in their studies and you can see that their concentration in prayers increases a great deal. This is all due to the influence of Khalifatul Masih.”

His wife, *Mubashara Nusrat*, also spoke to me about having met Huzoor for the first time. She said:

“It is hard to describe but when you see Huzoor it makes you feel like you are in a state of trance, whereby naturally you identify your own weaknesses and desire to correct them. The only thing we require is Huzoor’s prayers and most especially I need his prayers that my children grow up to be pious and sincere Ahmadis.”

As they were leaving, Fateh Sahib asked me if I would fulfil one request for him. He said that if I ever had the opportunity I should request Huzoor’s prayers that he is able to fulfil his *Waqf* throughout his life and remain loyal and obedient to *Khilafat* forever.

Emotions of Ahmadis

One day I met an Ahmadi husband and wife, immediately after their Mulaqat. From their demeanour you could see how emotional they were.

The husband was called *Raja Basharat Ahmad* (34) and his wife, who had met Huzoor for the very first time, was called *Mansura Basharat*.

Very emotionally, Raja Basharat Sahib started speaking about *Khilafat*. He said:

“We, Ahmadis are so fortunate that we are united at the hand of Khalifa-Waqt. We are fortunate that we have a person we trust completely and who guides us about our faith. I honestly believe that if we did not have Khilafat our Jamaat would be destroyed in a minute but with Khilafat we are a Jamaat who nobody can destroy. Huzoor is our shield who protects us from our own weaknesses.”

His wife, Mansura Basharat Sahiba added:

“I had read narrations of the companions of the Promised Messiah (as), who said that when they met him or prayed with him they felt as though their sins had been wiped away - and today I felt that same experience when I met Huzoor.”

Very happily, she also narrated how Huzoor had said that their 1-month old infant son resembled his mother's side, rather than her father's side and this had made the *Mulaqat* even better!

Reflections of a young child

The effect Huzoor's visits have on the young children of the *Jamaat* is also quite apparent.

Throughout the tour, I saw countless young children emerge from Huzoor's office with beaming smiles, proudly holding the chocolate bars that Huzoor had given them.

One little boy I met was called *Adeel Wadood*, aged 6. As he proudly displayed his chocolate bar, he told me:

"I could not sleep all night due to the excitement that today I would be meeting Huzoor. I really liked meeting Huzoor because he was so kind and he gave a special chocolate bar to me and also to my little brother. We are very lucky."

A few moments with Huzoor

On Tuesday afternoon, just before the *Zuhr* and *Asar* prayer, Huzoor called me to his office and asked me what the latest world news was. I informed Huzoor about the recent *referendum* that had taken place in Ireland in which the public had voted in favour of gay marriage.

In response, Huzoor said that many countries in the *West* had now taken this step and in the end it would cause great harm to them.

Huzoor said that gay marriage would prove to be a means of weakening the *Church*.

Upon this, I mentioned, how a leading *Bishop* in Ireland had already been quoted in the media as saying that the *Church* should realise that the world is currently undergoing a '*social revolution*' and so it needed to adapt the teachings of Christianity to better suit the modern era.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Is it right for a religion to change its basic beliefs due to the latest fashion trends or should it remain true to its original teachings? A true religion would always remain on its original teachings.”

Afterwards, I narrated how earlier in the day an Ahmadi lady had told me that due to their excitement at the prospect of meeting Huzoor, she and her two young sons had not slept all night.

I said that upon hearing this, her elder child, who was around 6 or 7, looked at me and said that it was true that neither his mother or he had been able to sleep – but that his younger brother had been fast asleep snoring!

Hearing this comment, Huzoor laughed and smiled and said:

“This is an example of the honesty and innocence of young children.”

Huzoor's meeting with German academics

On the afternoon of 26 May, Huzoor met with a group of 10 academics and a retired Priest at *Baitus Subuh*. In their respective careers all of the academics had researched or taught Islam, whilst the retired priest was now involved in trying to increase inter-faith dialogue in Germany.

The meeting took place in Huzoor's office, during which the academics had the opportunity to ask Huzoor questions and to ascertain his views on various matters. As all of the guests spoke English and so there was no need for translation.



I was seated in the room along with Majid Sahib and listening to Huzoor answer the various question was extremely educational for me personally. Huzoor's answers were so logical and reasoned.

One academic asked Huzoor what the Ahmadiyya Community's '*future plans*' were in Germany.

In response, Huzoor said:

"We are a community who seeks to portray the correct picture of Islam and so we are engaged in spreading Islam's true teachings throughout the world and not only in Germany. We are spreading the Quran's message that you must help those who are in need, who are weak and who are vulnerable."

One of the academics began his question by speaking about his positive views of the Ahmadiyya Community. However, he then said that he felt that 50% of our Community was '*restricted*'.

It was clear he was referring to women and I thought that he was going to ask about *Hijab*. However, his question was much more specific.

He said that Ahmadi women were, in his view, restricted because they were not permitted to go out dancing or to nightclubs etc. His point was that such restrictions meant – in his view – that Ahmadi women were not '*free*'.

In reply, Huzoor gave a very detailed answer. He said that such restrictions were not just on Ahmadi women but also Ahmadi men and that the academic should realise that what constitutes apparent '*freedom*' in the *West*, may be considered something entirely different in other cultures or parts of the world. Thus, the *West* should not just assume that their culture or beliefs were right or better than others.

Huzoor said that if a person believes in a religion then he or she believes that its teachings and guidance are for the benefit of the individual and society at large.

Citing the comment of a senior Irish Bishop that the *Church* should adapt its teachings in light of modern trends, Huzoor said:

“Whilst others may say that religion should follow the people, we believe that people should follow the teachings of the religion.”

Huzoor, also mentioned how an English female journalist came to attend the *UK Jalsa* last year and having spent much of the day on the *Lajna* side, she had spoken openly about how liberated she had felt at not having to stand before men all day and how she felt more respected in the *Jalsa* environment than she had in her own Church.

At the end of the meeting, as the guests filed out, one of the female academics, *Professor Schroeder* approached Huzoor and said that she had seen how persecuted Ahmadis were in Pakistan and in some other countries.

She said that she would have understood if Ahmadis had responded to such provocation and persecution in a violent manner.

In response, Huzoor said:

“It is my belief that we Ahmadis, are more peaceful than any other people and our tolerance threshold is higher. I myself was a victim of

the anti-Ahmadi laws in Pakistan and was arrested but I have no ill will or anger against those who were behind it.”

Professor Schroeder said she agreed with what Huzoor had said entirely.

As she left the room, I met Professor Schroeder and she reiterated that the peaceful response of Ahmadis in the face of the 28 May Lahore attacks and many other occasions was something that had affected her deeply.

Sharing her thoughts having met Huzoor, Professor Schroeder said:

“I am extremely grateful that the Khalifa gave us so much time and shared so much wisdom with us. He was very open and I was even able to see that he has a very good sense of humour. One thing that struck me from all of the answers he gave was just how compassionate he was. I feel very lucky to have had this opportunity.”

A few unforgettable moments

After the meeting concluded, Huzoor remained in his office and the evening session of family Mulaqats commenced. When they concluded, Huzoor came out of his office to return to his residence for a few moments.

I was stood on the side of the corridor and upon seeing me, Huzoor called me towards him and grasped my arm and said to come with him. The lift in *Baitus Subuh* is extremely small and can fit just two people at a time.

Normally, Ahmad bhai or one of the other security guards would accompany Huzoor in the lift, but as he entered it, Huzoor said to Ahmad bhai that he was taking me with him in the lift.

It was a rare privilege to accompany Huzoor in the lift and an extremely special few seconds. I felt very emotional as Huzoor continued to hold my hand.

As we went upstairs, Huzoor asked me about the meeting with the academics and Huzoor also gave his own comments. As we reached the level where Huzoor's residence was, Huzoor continued to hold my hand as he came out of the lift.

After a few seconds, Huzoor walked towards his residence and as he was about to enter, Ahmad bhai arrived, somewhat out of breath, having run up the stairs at a rapid pace! Huzoor saw him and smiled and asked him about the next programme before returning to his residence.

I think only a minute or a minute and half had lapsed from the time Huzoor called me on the ground floor to the time Huzoor entered his residence.

However, that minute and those seconds were moments that I will treasure forever, *Insha'Allah*. Surely, only the love and affection of Huzoor can cause such feelings of happiness and contentment.

Inauguration of *Baitul Aafiyyat*

On the evening of 26 May 2015, Huzoor inaugurated *Baitul Aafiyyat* – a huge 5-storey building directly opposite the *Baitus Subuh* complex.



The building has been jointly purchased by *Majlis Ansarullah Germany* and *Lajna Imaillah Germany* at a cost of 1.7million euros and will serve as the administrative headquarters for both auxiliary organisations. Apart from offices, it has various halls and rooms for guest accommodation.

Huzoor walked across the road from *Baitus Subuh* to *Baitul Aafiyyat* and upon arrival, he unveiled a plaque and led a silent prayer before conducting a detailed inspection of the complex.

Thereafter, an internal reception was held in which Huzoor said that in keeping with its name, the complex should become known as a beacon of peace.



Huzoor said:

“This building has been acquired only as a means of peace and security for all people, as that was why the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) was sent.”

Huzoor also said that the fact the *Jamaat* was able to acquire buildings and properties throughout the world was a fulfilment of the revelation given to the Promised Messiah (as) of ‘***Enlarge thy House***’.

Very beautifully, Huzoor explained that this revelation had not just been an instruction but had also been a prophecy.

Huzoor said:

“Today with the Grace of Allah, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has spread to 206 countries of the world and Allah has bestowed upon us very large buildings with solid foundations in all parts of the world. Thus the prophecy within the revelation ‘Enlarge they house’ has been fulfilled on countless occasions throughout the world, Alhamdolillah.”

Huzoor’s help with the Press Release

Huzoor made various other points during his address and so the next morning when I was drafting the official *Press Release*, I was struggling over which points to include because the length of a Press Release is limited.

In the afternoon, Huzoor called me to his office and so I mentioned this and immediately Huzoor said that the key point to include was regarding what Huzoor had said about the revelation *‘Enlarge thy house’* and how, despite the Jamaat’s limited resources, Allah had blessed it with properties and facilities throughout the world.

This was an example of how Huzoor has guided and helped me ever since I was appointed to the Press office. We issue regular *Press Releases* and Huzoor checks each one prior to release.

Quite often, Huzoor will tell me to add something or will correct an error and even on some occasions he has corrected my typing or spelling mistakes!

I have always seen that where Huzoor asks me to add a particular point to a *Press Release* or to a report, invariably that is the point that people appreciate and comment upon more than others.

A prayer fulfilled

I met a married lady, *Mubarka Sahiba*, who had come to Germany from Pakistan earlier this year. She had just met *Khalifa-Waqt* for the very first time.

She said that her husband had been unable to come for some reason and so all week she had been upset that she was going to meet Huzoor on her own.

Mubarka Sahiba said:

“All week I prayed that I do not wish to go to the Mulaqat alone but I knew my husband could not come. Then two nights ago, Alhamdulillah, I found out I was pregnant with our first child and so Allah answered my prayers because today in Mulaqat I was not on my own. When I met Huzoor I told him I was pregnant and that whatever is in my stomach is for the Jamaat and so please Huzoor accept the child into the Waqf-e-Nau scheme.”

A few precious moments

After the family *Mulaqats* were completed, Huzoor called me to his office for a few minutes. Huzoor mentioned how during his meeting with the academics the previous day, *MTA* had been filming but that they should not have filmed without taking the permission of each of the guests. Huzoor

asked me to convey this message to *MTA Production* and also to the *National Kharija Secretary*.

It was an example of how Huzoor is always extremely mindful of the comfort of the guests. This is something that I have seen time and time again.

Whenever, we have arranged for Huzoor to meet with journalists in London, Huzoor has always told me to check with them in advance to see if they are comfortable with *MTA* filming. Similarly, if we have ever sought to use the footage or to quote media reports of others, Huzoor always instructs that we seek their permission in advance.

I then mentioned to Huzoor that a video clip had been circulating on *Whatsapp* that day from the *Jamia UK Sports Day* which had taken place a few weeks before.

The clip was an extract from Huzoor's speech where Huzoor had made a joke in a very funny and loving way. Huzoor told me to play the clip and so I stood to the side with the phone in my hand and played it. Whilst, watching I could not control my laughter. Huzoor also laughed as well and enjoyed the clip, *MashaAllah*.

I then sat down again and Huzoor mentioned the forthcoming *Jalsa Germany*. Huzoor said that he had still not started his preparation for his *Jalsa* addresses and that every time he planned to begin some other work would present itself or there would be *Mulaqats* or *Jamaat* events.

I thought again of the pressure and workload that Huzoor bears. I thought of other leaders who had their speechwriters to do the work for them but our *Khalifa* is different. There is no doubt that without Allah's special *Help* no person could bear such responsibility.

Huzoor then said he better see how Majid Sahib is and so he would call him to the office.

Thereafter, Huzoor also called Mubarak Zafar Sahib. Both of them narrated that Huzoor had called just to make sure they were ok. It is truly incredible how Huzoor takes time to care for those who have travelled with him.

I am witness to the fact that there can be no better travel companion than *Khalifa-Waqt*.

Meeting with young Khadim

That afternoon, after lunch a young boy called *Osaf Ahmad*, aged 16, approached me at the Mosque. He said he had wanted to meet me because he had read the diaries I had written of Huzoor's recent tours.

He was very honest and said that until he had learned about Huzoor from the diaries he did not love *Khilafat* in the way an Ahmadi should but having read them he had seen just how much Huzoor loved the *Jamaat* and why we needed *Khilafat*. It was nice to hear that the diary had had a positive effect, *Alhamdulillah*.

As he was leaving, Osaf told me he was desperate to join *Jamia* but that he wanted to join *Jamia UK* so he could be near Huzoor. He said that since *Jamia Germany* had opened it was difficult to get admission into *UK Jamia* but he was hoping for a miracle!

Inauguration of Baitul Wahid Mosque in Hanau

At 5.15pm on 27 May, Huzoor, Khala Saboohi and the *Qafila* departed from *Baitus Subuh* to travel to the city of *Hanau* where Huzoor would inaugurate the *Baitul Wahid Mosque*. The Mosque opening coincided with *Khilafat Day*. As, Hanau was not far from Frankfurt and we arrived at around 6pm.



Huzoor was greeted by hundreds of local Ahmadis and also some local dignitaries. An interesting aspect of this particular Mosque was that it had been converted from an *Aldi* supermarket and so was large and spacious.

After leading the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers at the Mosque, Huzoor proceeded to a marquee erected on the site for the formal inauguration. More than 120 non-Ahmadi guests attended the event, including the *Lord Mayor* and members of the National Parliament.

After a welcome address by Ameer Sahib Germany, a number of guest speakers took to the stage. They congratulated the *Jamaat* on the opening of the Mosque and also spoke of the good work conducted by the *Jamaat* towards promoting peace in Germany. The guest speakers all seemed very sincere.

Huzoor's address at Mosque Opening

Thereafter, Huzoor addressed the audience and commended the local people for their tolerance and inclusive nature. He said that he had heard that around 127 different races or ethnicities lived in the city, despite the population only being around 90,000.

Huzoor said this proved that the local people were very '*open-hearted*' and he prayed that this spirit would last forever within them.

Huzoor referred to the fact that the site had previously been home to an *Aldi* supermarket.

Huzoor said:

"Before this building was converted into a Mosque it was home to a supermarket where people would purchase groceries. However, now it

has become a House of God where people will join together to worship God Almighty, to care for mankind and to foster peace. Thus this building will now provide love, care and peace for free to our neighbours and indeed to all people.”



Huzoor spoke of the need for all people to play their roles towards establishing peace in the world. He said that mutual respect was essential and that Islam taught Muslims to respect the founders of *all* religions and in the same way Muslims desired that others respected the Holy Prophet (sa).

Huzoor concluded by reiterating that the new Mosque would be a place of peace.

Huzoor said:

“The minarets of this Mosque are not erected for mere beauty or aesthetic reasons, but rather as a symbol of peace and of love for all of mankind. Thus, I pray that may this Mosque prove to be a beacon of peace in the world.”

Impact of Huzoor's address

Over the past year an anti-Islam nationalist group known as *Pegida* has gained significant media coverage in Germany and although it is said that the group's support has lessened over the past few months, it remains that there is considerable mistrust and fear of Islam in Germany.

Thus, Huzoor's message was a rebuttal to those who claimed Islam to be extremist and a means of reassurance for the local people. This was something that was very apparent when I met a number of guests after the event.

Some of the guests spoke very good English but in order to communicate with those who only spoke German, I enlisted the help of *Salman Shah Sahib*. He is a friend of mine who qualified from *Jamia UK* last year. He is now posted as a *Missionary* in Germany.

One person I met was a very elderly German man called *Gunther Jocher*. After hearing Huzoor's address, he said:

"I have seen World War 2 myself and so I know the consequences of warfare. Hence the message of the Khalifa was so important - that we should not brandish swords but should show love. He has touched the most inner part of my heart because he has invited people of all religions towards peace and not just Muslims."

I met a lady called *Helga Daschelt*, who said:

“I feel that your Khalifa is a man who does not give guidance but he acts upon and lives his life according to what he preaches. I am honoured that he has travelled from so far in London to shine a light on peace and this proves how much he values peace.”

I met a lady, called *Paula Kunz* who said:

“The Khalifa’s speech touched my heart and so I am grateful to have had the privilege to be in his presence. Truly, I have never seen such an event of such goodness in my entire life. I am a Christian but today the Muslim Khalifa has entered my heart and his message will stay there forever.”

Her husband, *Martin Kunz* added:

“When I see your Khalifa all I see is grace, wisdom, radiance and above all peace. My heart and mind feels content when I sit before him.”

A case of role reversal!

As I walked round meeting different people, I also met a journalist called *Steffen* who was representing the *Hanau Post*. He told me he had been amazed at the devotion and love he had seen in all of the Ahmadis for Huzoor. He said this had really touched him.

As a journalist though he did not waste any opportunity and so said to me that you have asked me a couple of questions and now I will ask you some!

In the same way that I take notes when I am covering Huzoor's events, the journalist took out his notepad and proceeded to ask me various questions. I can't remember all of them but I remember that he asked me about my feelings for *Khilafat* and also about why the opening of the Mosque was a day of happiness for the Jamaat.

Jumping onto the stage!

Whilst, I was involved in meeting the guests, I noticed from afar that Huzoor had stood up from his table on the stage and was being interviewed by a media outlet. I briskly walked towards the stage and climbed the steps but there were so many people in the way that I could not get near.

I try to be as close to Huzoor during his interviews because occasionally if Huzoor does not understand the accent of the interviewer, I seek to clarify the question. Also, sometimes in interviews or meetings, Huzoor refers to media events or reports and so occasionally he asks me to remind him of the reference.

Anyway, as I could not get near Huzoor from that side of the stage, I decided to try from the other side but there were no steps. At that point, Huzoor's security guards, Mahmood Khan Sahib and Nasir Saeed Sahib told me to climb on the stage from the side. To do so I had to make a bit of a jump and I was worried in case I fell or made an unnecessary commotion!

However, with the encouragement of the security guards I somehow managed to jump and roll onto the stage from the far side!

I then quickly straightened my coat and went and stood directly to Huzoor's right as his interview continued.

Huzoor's interview with RTL

The interview was with the highly respected *RTL Television*. The interviewer asked Huzoor's views on tolerance and inter-faith dialogue.



In response, Huzoor gave the example of the Holy Prophet (sa) who was only given permission for war in order to protect the places of worship of *all* religions. Huzoor said that this proved that Islam advocated true religious freedom and freedom of conscience.

Huzoor said the *Jamaat* had always sought to promote interfaith dialogue and one recent example was the *Conference of World Religions* that the *Jamaat* had organised last year at *Guildhall* in London.

The journalist also asked Huzoor in which language Ahmadi *Imams* delivered their sermons. Huzoor responded by saying that they gave their sermons in the local languages so that the local people could understand.

Huzoor said that using the local language was an example of how Ahmadis sought to integrate into their local societies.

Huzoor said that whilst he gave his own sermon in Urdu, it was simultaneously translated into 8 languages so that his message could reach as far an audience as possible.

A very emotional meeting

As Huzoor left the stage, one of the *Jamaat's* young Missionaries, Safeer-ur-Rehman Sahib informed that a Bosnian non-Ahmadi lady, who was stood next to him, desired to meet Huzoor.

Huzoor met the lady, who was extremely emotional and had tears streaming down her face.

Safeer-ur-Rehman Sahib introduced the lady to Huzoor and explained that the lady, *Fatima Sahiba*, was a neighbour of the Mosque and so had been invited to the inauguration but she knew nothing at all about Ahmadiyyat.

She was seated at the back of the hall next to him and had been sitting quietly until Huzoor entered. As soon as she saw Huzoor she became extremely anxious and started saying "***I want to meet him***", "***I have to meet him***".

She then narrated that 2 years ago she had seen a dream in which she saw the face of a person she had never seen before. He was wearing a *paghri* (turban) and had a long beard.

She said that in her dream she had been crying and emotional and so ever since she had wondered who that person was that she had seen. Then, when Huzoor entered the hall that evening she suddenly became emotional because he was the person she had seen in her dream 2 years ago.

Safeer-ur-Rehman Sahib then narrated another dream the lady had seen on a number of occasions during the past 12 years. He said that she wanted to ask Huzoor for his interpretation.

In the dream she had seen a white horse descending from heaven and as it came down she was told that the horse had been entrusted to her and she must protect it and care for it.

Upon hearing this dream, Huzoor said that a horse is used both for protection and also for travel.

Huzoor said that in this era there was no longer a *Jihad by the sword*. Rather, now it was the era of *Jihad by the pen* and so she had been told to acquire knowledge and to seek the truth.

After hearing both dreams, Huzoor prayed:

“May Allah bless your dreams and enable you to accept Ahmadiyyat.”

I felt extremely fortunate to be present and to be one of many people to witness this exchange. I can never forget the look on her face as she saw Huzoor.

When you are with *Khalifa-Waqt* you see many incidents that reaffirm and strengthen your faith in the truth of Ahmadiyyat and this certainly was one of those incidents.

I spoke to Safeer-ur-Rehman Sahib later and he said that the *Jamaat* was now in regular contact with the lady.

Huzoor’s drawing

As Huzoor left the marquee he went and looked at the Mosque from the outside and having done so Huzoor spoke of how the Mosque could be further redesigned to make it look even more like a traditional Mosque.

Huzoor was pointing to the roof and explaining but it seemed that the local *Jamaat* officials were unable to grasp what Huzoor meant.

Huzoor himself could tell that they did not understand and so he asked for a piece of paper. Upon receiving it, Huzoor stood there and sketched a small drawing to explain what he meant.

When Huzoor showed the drawing the local Jamaat finally were able to understand Huzoor's concept and suggestion. They were extremely delighted and honoured to have gained such specific guidance there and then.



When we returned to London, Huzoor told me that the local Jamaat's architect had used Huzoor's drawing as a basis and had submitted proper architectural drawings and plans whilst Huzoor was in Germany.

Meeting Sadr Sahib Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya

On Thursday, 28 May, I was invited by *Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Germany*, Hasanat Ahmad Sahib to see the Khuddam offices at *Baitus Subuh*. Spending an hour or so in his company was extremely enjoyable.

Hasanat Sahib told me that after completing his studies, Huzoor had graciously approved his *Waqf* and so he was now serving the *Jamaat* as a *Waqf-e-Zindighi*.

Hasanat Sahib was just 27 when he became *Sadr*. He told me that he had not received the most votes but that Huzoor had approved his name. He said that finding out he had been appointed *Sadr* was the biggest shock of his life.

Describing his feelings and experiences at that time, Hasanat Sahib said:

“When I learned that Huzoor had appointed me as Sadr Khuddam I felt as though I would collapse and was in a state of total shock.”

He described how ever since his appointment, Huzoor had guided him at every step. This was something I myself could relate to.

Hasanat Sahib said:

“Due to Huzoor’s guidance and personal interest, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Germany has improved a great deal. With the Grace of Allah, the Majlis has increased in its love and attachment to Khilafat in recent years.

Whenever Huzoor comes here, I have seen Khuddam who were distant from the Jamaat become immediately reformed. And they do not just reform themselves but they come to reform 10 other people as well.”

Hasanat Sahib continued:

“The spirit in our Khuddam is such that I swear we will die before we stop fulfilling the wishes of Khalifatul Masih.”

He also narrated, how when he had expressed his desire to do *Waqf*, Huzoor had asked him if he would be ready to serve in the remote villages of Africa. Hasanat Sahib said that without any hesitation, he replied that he was ready for anything that Huzoor desired.

Very emotionally, Hasanat Sahib also spoke of Huzoor’s love and kindness. He said:

“When beloved Huzoor looks in my direction, I feel as though the most illiterate and most sinful person in the world has been given the greatest and most beautiful wealth a person could ever possess.”

Reflections of Lajna about Begum Sahiba

During the tour, a number of Ahmadi ladies spoke not only of their love for Huzoor but also the kindness of Khala Saboohi (Huzoor’s respected wife).

A young Ahmadi lady, *Mrs Uzma Shezadi Ahmad*, said:

“Being able to meet Aapa Jan is a real honour and blessing because she answers all of our questions openly and in a way that we can all understand...”

We can ask about our home lives or questions about religion and she explains the answers in a very loving way. In particular, she explains how we can serve the Jamaat as members of Lajna and also how we can be good wives and mothers. She tells us how we should balance our home lives with our Jamaat work."

Another lady, a young Ahmadi mother, said:

"I could not believe that Aapa Jan remembered me from Rabwah after all these years. When you sit with her she gives us guidance in the most loving way and she tells us the way we can fulfil our duties as mothers and daughters."

I spoke to one lady, *Mrs Saadia Farooq*, who was with her family. She told me that she had worked with Khala Saboohi in Rabwah many years ago.

Saadia Sahiba said:

"I always found Aapa Jaan to be extremely kind and loving. I worked in the Lajna offices when she was Sadr Lajna Rabwah and she always took great care of us. I always found her to be extremely humble. One memory I cherish a great deal was that she once called me at a Jamaati picnic to see how I was."

I met another lady, *Ismat tun Nissa Sahiba*, who had also worked with Khala Saboohi in Rabwah.

She said:

“I was Assistant General-Secretary Lajna in Rabwah and so during that period I was very fortunate to work with Aapa Jan. I found her personality to be extremely sweet and pure. She is simple in her manner and expresses great love for all people. She has always been extremely humble, despite her status and the fact she is from Khandan.”

Ismat Sahiba continued:

“Whenever we used to work late in the office in Rabwah, Aapa Jan would always make sure we had dinner and would serve us with her own hands. She would even wash the dishes afterwards. I sometimes forgot to eat and she would always remind me. Of all the women I have met she has been the most kind.”

Lajna member with a good memory

As Ismat Sahiba left with her husband, I asked if she knew my *mother-in-law*, because she too had worked in the Rabwah *Lajna* offices for a number of years.

She immediately said she did and to my surprise, she then said *“Is your wife called Dure Jamal Mala?”*

I said yes but was surprised as most people know my wife only as *‘Mala’* and few know her full name! She said she had met Mala in Rabwah once or twice before we had got married.

Lunch time coffee

Throughout the tour, 2 *Jamia Germany* students, *Basil* and *Shoaib*, were assigned to assist Majid Sahib. As Mubarak Sahib and me were working in the same office, we were also able to arrive benefit from their help. Many times, they translated from German or located references or printed documents for us.

Early in the tour, they both asked if I would go and have coffee with them at least once during the tour. Thus, on the afternoon of Thursday, 28 May, we skipped lunch and went to a local German coffee shop, which had been recommended by the *Jamaat's General Secretary*, Ilyas Majoka Sahib.

During, our visit they asked me about my own background and about the times I had spent in Huzoor's company. I don't think I had ever been quizzed like this before – they came at me with question after question!

At one point they asked me if I had any advice for them, as they were young *Waqf-e-Zindighis* who had their lives ahead of them. In response, I said I only had one piece of advice and that was that they should always seek to listen to and understand everything that *Khalifa-Waqt* says and look only in his direction and not be influenced by other people.

It was a very enjoyable hour and the coffee and cake were also excellent! There were many types of cake on offer and so it took me a while to decide but in the end I went with a slice of traditional apple pie. It was truly delicious and proved that Germans really know how to make pastries!

Friday Sermon in Frankfurt

On 29 May 2015, Huzoor led the *Friday Sermon* at the *Kalbach Sports and Recreation Centre* in Frankfurt. It was the same place where Huzoor had delivered a *Friday Sermon* during his tour in 2014. The Centre is very large with a full running track encircling the main part of the hall.



Last year in Germany, Huzoor delivered a very emotional and inspiring sermon about *Khilafat*, during which he very movingly expressed his love for every Ahmadi throughout the world. It so happened that this year, Huzoor once spoke about *Khilafat* during his sermon.

Speaking about, the about the importance of obedience to *Khilafat*, Huzoor said:

“Religious prosperity is directly linked to the institution of Khilafat and so religious success cannot now be achieved without Khilafat. Most certainly, the unity of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community can never remain without Khilafat.”

For me the most emotional part of the sermon was when Huzoor described his own role as *Khalifatul Masih*. Huzoor said:

“I am a humble human being and I am fully aware of my own state. I do not possess any special quality or excellence. However, Allah the Almighty has promised to support and help Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya and most certainly God Almighty is truthful in his promises. He has always supported Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya and, God Willing, He always will.”



Surely, every Ahmadi Muslim bears witness that our *Khalifa* is he in whom Allah has bestowed countless qualities and excellences.



One of those qualities is his unique humility and so whilst Huzoor describes himself as a person who does not possess any “*special quality*”, Ahmadi Muslims bear witness to his love, grace, kindness and wisdom.

Huzoor enquiring about MTA broadcast

After the *Sermon* and *Namaz* had concluded, Huzoor walked back towards his car. During Huzoor's tours, after Friday Sermons or Jalsa addresses, MTA's *Director Production*, Munir Odeh Sahib, normally gives Huzoor a short briefing about the transmission.

Thus, Munir Sahib approached Huzoor and immediately Huzoor asked how the transmission had been to which Munir Sahib responded that *Masha'Allah* the transmission had been very clear and stable.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor looked in the direction of the transmission uplink truck that *MTA International* had acquired not long ago and said:

"Aaj iss ki keemat poori hogaei hei".

This meant that today the truck had proved its worth today and justified its cost.

Thereafter, Huzoor asked Munir Odeh Sahib about the arrangements for *Jalsa Salana* and instructed that it was important that they found a suitable place to position the uplink truck to ensure that the broadcast was smooth.

Impact of Huzoor's Sermon on Ahmadis

Huzoor's sermon that day had a very strong effect on the members of the *Jamaat*. In the evening I met various Ahmadis who had met Huzoor in

Mulaqat and many of them referred to the sermon and said how they were determined to take heed of Huzoor's words.

One young man, *Amir Adnan* (24) had just met *Khalifatul Masih* for the very first time in his life. He said:

“Having heard Huzoor’s words today and having had the honour of just meeting him, I swear that I will always seek to obey Khilafat. I am quite young but I am old enough to realise that Huzoor’s prayers are the means of protecting me and my family throughout our lives.”

Another Ahmadi, *Daud Ahmad* (32) said:

“I heard Huzoor’s sermon today and Insha’Allah until my last breath I will obey Khalifa-Waqt and follow whatever he says to me.”

Meeting a young Khadim

As I was walking back to my office that evening, I was stopped by a young man who asked if I was called ‘Abid Khan’ to which I replied I was.

He said his name was *Zeeshan Mahmood* (20) and asked if he could speak to me for a few minutes.

He told me that he was desperate to join *Jamia Ahmadiyya*, however last year he had not fulfilled the necessary academic criteria and so had not been granted admission. He said he was reapplying this year.

He said that his brother was part of the *Waqf-e-Nau* scheme but that he was not and so from a very early age he used to complain to his mother that they had not requested for him to be part of the scheme.

He said that once his mother went to meet Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ra) and informed him that her child would cry because he had not been included in the *Waqf-e-Nau* scheme. He said that Huzoor (rh) had responded by saying that she should do his *Tarbiyyat* in a way that when he enters adulthood he desires to devote his life himself. Zeeshan said that now he was an adult and it was desire to serve the *Jamaat* and to devote his life to its service.

Zeeshan said:

“If Huzoor tells me to go to the most remote part of Africa then I will go and I will be the happiest person in the world knowing that I have fulfilled the desire of my Khalifa.”

At the end of the conversation, I told Zeeshan that he should continue to write to Huzoor regularly for prayers and study hard so that when he applied for admission to *Jamia* this year hopefully they would consider him.

A personal moment with Huzoor

A day or so later, I had the opportunity to spend some time with Huzoor in his office. Normally, I find it very difficult to convey my own feelings about *Khilafat* to Huzoor verbally.

If I have ever conveyed my personal emotions it has generally been through the means of a letter. However, on that day, without planning to, I suddenly found myself expressing my own feelings to Huzoor.

Looking down at my lap, rather than in Huzoor's direction, I said:

“Huzoor when you said in your sermon that you are person without any special qualities I felt like standing up and proclaiming before the entire world that ‘O my Huzoor, you are everything to me and have every quality that a human should have.’ And it is only due to your prayers and your guidance that we are surviving and seeing blessings in our lives.”

After saying these words, I noticed that Huzoor looked up from the mail that he had been reading and gave a small hint of a smile. Thereafter, Huzoor looked down again and continued to read his letters.

Week of blessings

Our first week in Germany had reached its conclusion. It had been a week of blessings, a week of joy and a week of emotion. I looked forward with great anticipation to the rest of the tour and especially to the *Jalsa Salana*, which was to begin the following week.