

HUZOOR'S TOUR OF GERMANY

27 August - September 10 2016

PART 2

A Personal Account

By Abid Khan

Introduction

In part one of the personal account I wrote about Huzoor's tour of Germany in 2016 I mentioned Huzoor's activities during the first week of his blessed tour.

In this second part, I shall narrate Huzoor's activities on the final day of Jalsa Salana Germany, followed by his activities during the second and final week of his Germany tour.

Concluding session of Jalsa Salana Germany

On 4 September 2016, the final session of Jalsa Salana Germany took place.

Prior to the final session, a *Bai'at* ceremony was held in which several new Ahmadi converts had the opportunity to take *Bai'at* directly at Huzoor's hand. Thereafter, Huzoor proceeded to the stage and as he took a seat, Ahmadis raised extremely emotional and passionate *naaray* (slogans).

During his concluding address, Huzoor said that increasing numbers of people viewed religion as the primary source of today's wars and conflicts, yet in reality the opposite was true.

Huzoor said:

"At a time when the world considers religion and faith to be the source of warfare and conflict, we Ahmadi Muslims believe that the cause of such unrest is because people have abandoned faith."

During his address, Huzoor quoted from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as) regarding the objectives of religion. Thereafter, he concluded his address by reminding all Ahmadi Muslims of their duties and responsibilities.



Huzoor said:

“Today, it is the responsibility of Ahmadi Muslims to understand and act upon the true teachings of Islam and to inform the world about the need and importance of religion. This is the pledge that we have made to the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) that we will seek to spread the true and peaceful teachings of Islam far and wide.”

After the Jalsa concluded with a silent prayer, Huzoor also announced that, with the *Grace of Allah*, over 38,000 people had attended this year’s Jalsa.

Meetings with Ahmadi converts

After a short break, Huzoor returned to a meeting room where he held two separate meetings with new Ahmadi converts.

The first meeting was with Lajna members and the second was with male converts.

During his meeting with male converts, Huzoor first spoke to an African man and asked him when he had accepted Ahmadiyyat.

In reply, the African brother said:

"I accepted Ahmadiyyat 1 day ago."

With a smile, Huzoor responded by saying:

"So, it means you are 1 day old!"

The African brother then said:

"Huzoor, I wished to accept Ahmadiyyat much earlier as I knew it was true and felt contentment in my heart, however I had to wait because I faced a lot of pressure and opposition from my family."

Thereafter, a new Ahmadi of Dutch origin took the microphone and said:

"For a long while, I was looking for a peaceful interpretation of Islam and finally I found it when I came to know of Ahmadiyyat. The more I learned about true Islam the more spiritual contentment I felt. Since, I did Bai'at, I feel that all of my spiritual desires and needs have been fulfilled."

In response, Huzoor said:

“May Allah always strengthen your faith.”



A Syrian Ahmadi convert told Huzoor how he had come to accept Ahmadiyyat. He said:

“Some time ago, my sister saw a dream in which she was told that someone will teach us about Islam’s true teachings. A few months later we met an Ahmadi Muslim and he started preaching to us and instantly I knew that my sister’s dream had come true. The teachings of the Promised Messiah (as) have filled my heart with contentment and complete satisfaction.”

Thereafter, a German convert explained why he had accepted Islam. He said:

“When I learned about Ahmadiyyat, I was amazed and found something I did not expect. The media constantly speaks ill of Islam and portrays it as an extremist religion but Ahmadi beliefs are completely different.”

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“So, you came to the realisation that the media portrayal of Islam is wrong?”

The German Ahmadi convert responded by saying:

“Yes Huzoor, I soon realised that the true teachings of Islam were open, peaceful and logical. I was soon persuaded to the truth of Islam and have found true peace.”

Upon this, Huzoor prayed:

“May Allah always keep you in eternal peace.”

A Pakistani man, who had recently accepted Ahmadiyyat, informed Huzoor that it was the Jamaat’s response to persecution that made him realise the truth of Ahmadiyyat. He said:

“I had always heard bad things about Ahmadis in Pakistan and was told they were not Muslims. However, one day I came across a video of the 28

May Lahore attacks and I was left completely astounded. In that video, I saw Ahmadis lying on the ground and as they breathed their final breaths they were reciting Durood. I could not believe my eyes and became overcome by emotion."

The Pakistani Ahmadi convert continued by saying:

"The Pakistani Maulvis (clerics) had always said that Ahmadis are kafirs, yet Ahmadis are the people who give praise to the Holy Prophet (sa) even as they lay on the ground dying. It was then I realised that the Maulvis were the hypocrites and the more I learned about Ahmadiyyat the more I fell in love with its teachings."

An Arab convert said that he found it difficult to follow all of Islam's teachings and so he asked Huzoor's prayers that his standard of faith improved.

Very softly and kindly, Huzoor responded by saying:

"Nobody is perfect and so you should just try your best to follow Islam's teachings to the best of your abilities. Always remember that our deeds and acts are judged upon our intentions."

The next person to have the opportunity to speak to Huzoor was an Ahmadi convert, originally from Tamale in Ghana, but who only came to know of the Jamaat when he moved to Belgium.

Upon seeing him, Huzoor smiled and said:

“Our Jamaat has been preaching in Tamale for around 100 years but you only came to know about us when you moved to Belgium!”

A German man who had converted to Ahmadiyyat informed Huzoor that his parents and family remained Christians. He was now married to an Ahmadi lady and they were expecting their first child and so he asked Huzoor how best to raise his children and whether to keep close with his Christian family members.

In response, Huzoor said:

“In terms of your children it is your duty to train them in accordance with Islamic teaching. As for your parents, you must keep in contact with them, serve them and fulfil their rights. You can of course pray for them to accept Islam but, whether they accept or not, you must not break contact with them.”

Another German convert took the opportunity to explain his journey to Islam. He said:

“During my childhood, I faced a lot of difficulties and as I got older I became interested in philosophy and soon I became an atheist. However, after some time, I started to wonder again if there is a God and so I prayed asking God that if He existed He should show me a sign. Alhamdulillah, I then saw four separate dreams that proved to me that there is a God.”

The convert continued by saying:

“I continued to pray and came to know an Ahmadi who told me about Islam. Then, one day I saw a dream in which I saw the Promised Messiah (as) and a photo of someone I did not recognise. Later, I saw a photo of the Fourth Khalifa (Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh}) and realised he was the person I had seen in my dream.”

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Allah has Himself shown you signs of His existence and the truth of the Ahmadiyyat. Now it is your duty to forever have firm faith in a Living God.”

The convert also informed Huzoor that earlier that day, he had seen his prayers answered again. He said:

“Today, when the Bai’at ceremony was held I had a place in the fourth row but I was desperate to come forward and sit directly in front of you. I knew it is not good to move ahead myself and so I prayed to Allah that somehow I have the opportunity to do Bai’at directly at your hand. Alhamdolillah, just a few seconds later someone on duty came and ushered me to the front and I took Bai’at at your hand.”

A Turkish convert said:

“Today, when I saw you at the Jalsa I knew that you were the true Khalifatul Masih and so I did Bai’at this afternoon, Alhamdolillah. I

consider these moments, when I am able to sit before you and see you, as the most blessed of my life.”

The new convert said he often lost his temper easily and found it difficult to control his anger.

In response, Huzoor said:

“The Holy Prophet (sa) said that if you are angry then you should sit down and if you are already sitting then you should lie down and drink some cold water.”

Huzoor continued by saying:

“Sometimes some Ahmadi women complain to me that their husbands have bad tempers and become angry very easily and so I jokingly ask them to pour cold water on their husbands in order to cool them down!”

An Ahmadi convert, originally from Senegal but now living in Belgium, informed that he had accepted Ahmadiyyat seven months earlier.

Speaking about his experience at Jalsa, he said:

“I live in Brussels and these days there are armed police posted every 100 metres and still there are security threats. Yet here at the Jalsa, there were over 30,000 people present and no police and yet there was not a single disturbance and only total peace.”

Hearing this, Huzoor very beautifully said:

“Where there is Taqwa (righteousness) there is no need for the police!”

A 19-year-old German youth, who looked even younger than his actual age, took the microphone and said:

“Huzoor, with the Grace of Allah, I did Bai’at today and accepted Ahmadiyyat.”

Hearing this, Huzoor asked:

“How did you come to accept Islam at such a young age?”

In reply, the Germany youth said:

“I live in a town where there are many Ahmadis and so I had some Ahmadi friends in school. I became interested when I was thirteen and so started reading books about Ahmadiyyat and over time I came to realise its truth.”

Huzoor seemed very happy at the sincerity of the young Ahmadi covert.

Huzoor said:

“Masha’Allah, your interest in religion started at a very young age. May Allah bless you always.”

Various other converts from Germany, Pakistan, Afghanistan, France and Arab countries also took the opportunity to tell their stories about how they accepted Ahmadiyyat and to seek Huzoor's prayers. It proved to be an extremely emotional meeting for all those present.

Huzoor calling people to *Salat*

The plan had been for the *Qafila* to return to Frankfurt after the meeting and to offer *Maghreb* and *Isha* at Baitus Sabuh. However, there were reports of heavy traffic and so Amir Sahib suggested that *Namaz* be offered at the Jalsa Gah and Huzoor graciously approved this suggestion.

The change in plan also led to something very beautiful. It had earlier been announced that Huzoor would lead *Namaz* in Frankfurt and so many Ahmadis were leaving the Jalsa and returning to their homes. Thus, as he walked to the Jalsa Gah, Huzoor gestured to many Ahmadis unaware that *Namaz* was about to be offered, by raising his hands to his ears and calling them for prayers.

It was the first time I had seen Huzoor do this and I found it to be an incredibly beautiful scene, where Huzoor himself was calling Ahmadis for *Salat*.

As we entered the Jalsa Gah, I noticed that the German Jamaat had already taken all the barriers down and were already well on the way to completing the wind-up of the main Jalsa hall.

As I saw this, I thought that this was a sign of German efficiency within our Jamaat!

Huzoor enjoying Amir Sahib's comment

Huzoor waited a couple of minutes for Ahmadis to enter the hall and as he did so, Amir Sahib Germany informed him of a message he had just received.

Amir Sahib said:

“Huzoor, I just received a text message from Amir sahib UK (Rafiq Hayat sahib) in which he said that he was pleased that the UK Jamaat had been able to contribute 1700 Ahmadis to boost the attendance at Jalsa Germany.”

Amir Sahib continued:

“I wrote back to him saying, Jazak’Allah and I am also happy that Germany Jamaat was able to contribute over 4,500 Ahmadis to boost the attendance at the UK Jalsa!”

Huzoor enjoyed Amir Sahib's comment and laughed.

A real honour

As he walked back to his residence following the conclusion of *Namaz*, Huzoor looked in my direction and said:

“Abid, you must be tired after writing so many notes in this evening’s meeting.”

I replied by saying:

“Huzoor, it was a real honour to be present and to hear how people from many different nations had come to accept Ahmadiyyat.”

It was a brief moment but whenever Huzoor remembers you or asks if you are ok, it always provides a great boost and is a source of comfort.

Return to Frankfurt

A few minutes later, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor’s respected wife*) came down from their residence. Even then, after three very long and tiring days, Huzoor still took the time to meet some of the Ahmadis who were there to see him off.

Thereafter, we all returned to our respective cars and the Qafila departed from Karlsruhe at 9.25pm and we arrived back in Frankfurt just after 11pm.

Post-Jalsa delegations

For the past few years, it has become a tradition that on the day after the conclusion of Jalsa Salana Germany, Huzoor meets with various delegations from different countries.

The delegations comprise dignitaries, representatives of the media, non-Ahmadi guests, Ahmadi converts and sometimes older Ahmadis.

The meetings with larger groups take place in the Baitus Sabuh Mosque or the Lajna Hall, whilst smaller meetings take place in Huzoor's office or in the adjacent reception area.

Thus, on 5 September 2016, Huzoor held a series of meetings with such delegations

Syrian Delegation

The first meeting was with a delegation of around 100 Syrian Arabs and many of the Arabs became very emotional as they spoke to Huzoor, requested his prayers and sought his advice on various matters.

Two young Syrian teenage brothers asked Huzoor how they could ensure that they maintained their faith now that they were living in Europe.

In response, Huzoor said:

“The Promised Messiah (as) taught that we should always fear Allah and consider that He is watching us at all times. You should keep this principle in your mind because here in the West there are far more temptations and far greater materialism. If you fear Allah you will be saved from the bad influences that exist.”

Huzoor continued:

“Further, when you offer your prayers you should do Istighfar and repeat the prayer ‘La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah’ that ‘There is no might, nor power, except through Allah’.”

Addressing Huzoor, a Syrian man said:

“I saw a dream recently that Huzoor is at the front of a plane leading a huge delegation of Ahmadis for Hajj.”

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“You should pray that your dream comes true and that soon such days come to pass.”

An Arab Ahmadi lady informed Huzoor that she lived in Austria and there was no Ahmadi Mosque or Jamaat centre near her and so she was worried about the effect living away from a Jamaat centre would have on her teenage daughter.

In response, Huzoor said:

“I will ask the Jamaat to make special arrangements to help you so that it is easier for you and your family to stay linked to the Jamaat. However, for your daughter’s moral training you must ensure that your home life is in accordance with Islam.”

Huzoor continued:

“The role of Ahmadi parents living in the West is extremely important and they have to work ten times harder to train their children according to Islamic teachings than those families who live in Muslim countries.”



A young Ahmadi, aged twenty, informed Huzoor that he wished to do *Wasiyyat* but was not currently employed anywhere.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“If you are student then you can do Wasiyyat but if you are not then you should wait, either until you are employed or get married, because Wasiyyat is an additional sacrifice and so you should wait until you have the means to offer it.”

Question about Third World War

Huzoor's next meeting was with a delegation from Albania, including several non-Muslim guests.

A non-Muslim Albanian historian took the opportunity to ask Huzoor about a potential *Third World War*.

The historian asked:

“Your Holiness, it appears that we are edging closer to a Third World War and you have also written about this. What will be the future for the Muslim world and for Ahmadi Muslims specifically following the conclusion of such a war?”

Huzoor gave an extremely detailed answer in which he gave a great insight into the future and the potential growth of the Jamaat.

Huzoor said:

“I believe that if another World War occurs then it will be a cause of great destruction here in the West and will lead to a big change. When people are shaken, they will naturally yearn for true guidance and be more inclined towards God Almighty.

It is our belief that, we Ahmadis, will be at the forefront of guiding mankind towards its Creator and people will come to accept Islam as a universal teaching for mankind.”

Huzoor continued:

“In my view the future of Islam is not in the hands of Wahhabis or extremists, but, God Willing, is in the hands of Ahmadi Muslims. We are currently in a period where we are still introducing our teachings in this part of the world but one day people will join in large numbers.”



Huzoor continued:

“My only fear is whether we Ahmadis will be ready for that moment and be ready to absorb so many people and to facilitate their moral training. This is why I am constantly reminding Ahmadis of the importance of training their children so that our future generations are ready to assume their duties whenever that breakthrough occurs.”

As Huzoor concluded his answer, Amir Sahib Germany whispered to me:

“These words of Huzoor should be inscribed in gold letters! It was, Masha’Allah, such a beautiful answer.”

Amir Sahib was right, Huzoor had outlined a beautiful vision and his hopes and expectations for the spread of Ahmadiyyat.

We learned that when Huzoor asks Ahmadi parents to train their children, it was not only with the intention that those children stay firm in their faith, but so that they can be ready for the time when our Jamaat spreads much further afield, *Insha'Allah*.

One thing I have noted is that despite believing that another World War could lead to the faster spread of Ahmadiyyat, Huzoor constantly asks Ahmadis to pray that the world is saved from such a war.

Huzoor's love for humanity is such that he cannot bear the idea of the people of the world facing such misery and so he constantly prays that the world can avoid it and urges world leaders to act with justice in the hope that the world can be saved from a devastating world war.

True democracy

The historian then asked Huzoor if it would be better for Muslim nations to embrace secularism and follow *Western* ideals.

In response, Huzoor said:

“Even in the West there are double standards. For example, sometimes Western Governments will support a Muslim country because it facilitates their interests and yet will condemn another Muslim country

that is no different except that it does not bend to their will. This is not justice.”

Huzoor continued:

“Of course, Muslim governments have not acted correctly and are not following the true teachings of Islam, which are to govern with honesty and fairness.”

Speaking about what democracy should entail, Huzoor said:

“True democracy should mean that a person is free to vote for whoever he or she thinks is best placed to serve their nation. Then, it is the duty of whoever is elected to fulfil their responsibilities and duties to their people faithfully, with integrity and to act with justice. This is what Islam teaches and what Islam advocates.”

A blessed few minutes

Thereafter, a non-Ahmadi called *Adam Shaheen* informed Huzoor that he had first come to know about Ahmadiyyat a few months earlier and that reading the Jamaat’s literature and seeing the Jalsa Salana had had a great impact upon him.

Addressing Huzoor directly, Adam sahib said:

“Ever since I came into contact with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, I have been extremely impressed. I kept a copy of a book written by the

Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community with me for many months and I have found it to be a source of enlightenment. Now, during the Jalsa I listened to your speeches intently and I felt like you were my teacher and my personal guide.”

He continued by saying:

“I consider you to be a Khalifa who is for all people, whether rich or poor or from the West or East. Having studied the Jamaat and now having seen it in reality, I believe that Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a divine community who is faithfully following the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (sa).”

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“If you are now certain and feel contentment of heart then you should take Bai’at and join our Jamaat.”

Very emotionally, Adam sahib said:

“Yes, I wish to accept Ahmadiyyat and to follow the true Islam and to spread it far and wide!”

It was a truly inspiring and emotional few minutes, whereby it seemed that whilst Adam sahib had been convinced of the truth of the Jamaat after attending the Jalsa, being in the presence of Huzoor gave him the complete conviction and confidence to accept Ahmadiyyat. *Alhamdolillah.*

Bosnia Delegation

The next delegation to meet Huzoor was a group from Bosnia and the first person to speak was a Bosnian guest, who said:

“For 25 years I have attended various large-scale conferences and events through my work but I have never seen an event like this Jalsa. The way Your Holiness drew the attention of all participants towards the true teachings of Islam was wonderful and in these worrying times this message must be spread. I am happy to tell anyone that I saw no hatred or falsehood here, only love and truth.”



A Bosnian guest, from the Romani community, said:

“Your Holiness, because I am from the Romani community many people look down at me but this does not stop me from sharing Ahmadiyya literature. I am not a Muslim but I share this literature because I know that only your message can save the world from war.”

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“War continues to destroy the world, rather than save it. Even when wars come to an end the type of peace that is established is a temporary peace. For example, when World War Two ended it did not lead to long-term peace. The only way to achieve permanent peace is by winning the hearts and minds of people through love.”

The Bosnian man became very emotional after listening to Huzoor’s words.

As his voice trembled with emotion, he said:

“I only have one regret in my life which is that I only came to know of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in old age and so I do not have long left to serve your community and to help you.”

Another, Bosnian guest said:

“This Jalsa and the presence of Your Holiness has given life to those people who were previously dead and I include myself in this.”

No time for rest

As the meetings continued, an Ahmadi Muslim living in Germany, told me he was amazed by Huzoor’s relentless schedule. He said he noticed that the Germany Jamaat had arranged meetings with delegations all day and had not given Huzoor any time for rest after the Jalsa.

The Ahmadi said he felt ashamed that even though Huzoor came down exactly on time for the meetings, some of the senior office bearers, who had proposed the meetings, did not arrive until much later.

Having witnessed the way Huzoor works for many years, I thought that even if the Jamaat had proposed a break, more than likely Huzoor would still have instructed that meetings or Mulaqats be scheduled. Nonetheless, I wholeheartedly agreed that a period of rest after the Jalsa could at least have been proposed to Huzoor.

Malta Delegation

Huzoor's next meeting that morning was with a delegation from Malta, including a non-Muslim, Nigerian heart specialist who lived in Malta.

Addressing Huzoor, the Nigerian doctor said:

“Your Holiness, before attending this Jalsa I had lost hope for mankind because society has become so divided and fragmented. Yet, listening to your powerful and emotional words has given me renewed hope. I am not a member of your community but I truly believe that you are the means of salvation for mankind today.”

The words and emotions of the guest were extremely beautiful and had a great impact upon me personally.

It was inspiring to hear how a non-Muslim could be so captivated and so drawn to Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

After listening to the comments of the guest, Huzoor said:

“If you are interested then I would suggest you read the book ‘The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam’, as this will increase your knowledge and understanding of Islam a great deal.”

A female guest from Malta, explained her own emotions. She said:

“I was extremely touched by the way the Ahmadi ladies looked after me at the Jalsa and cared for me as though I was their sister. I felt as though everyone I met understood me.”

Huzoor was also introduced to another guest from Malta who was a draftsman. He told Huzoor that he felt that ***“he learnt the goodness of Islam through the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community”***.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“A person can only truly learn about something through practice. For example, when you studied you will have learnt the theory of drafting, however I am sure it was when you started working that you truly learnt the inner craft of your profession. It is the same with religion, whereby we learn more and more about religion by practicing it in our daily lives.”

A new Ahmadi convert, Naveed Ahmad, informed Huzoor that he was originally from Peshawar but now lived in Malta.

Naveed sahib said:

“Before I studied Ahmadiyyat, I only knew what the Maulvis (clerics) had told me. They tried to fill my heart with hatred for Ahmadis but I was curious and so I started watching MTA videos online about the teachings of Ahmadiyyat. The more I learned, the more I began to realise the truth of the Promised Messiah (as).”

In response, Huzoor said:

“This is why instead of blindly following Mullahs people should use their intelligence and seek the truth like you have done. Anyway, if you go back to Peshawar do not announce that you are now Ahmadi. You should not fear the opponents of the Jamaat but you should act with wisdom. May Allah continue to increase your faith.”

Kazakhstan, Estonia and Romania Delegations

Thereafter, Huzoor had further meetings with delegations from Kazakhstan, Estonia and Romania.

A guest from Estonia informed Huzoor that he was attending the Germany Jalsa for the third time.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“I am sorry that I did not recognise you.”

The guest said:

“Last year, when I came for the second time, you did recognise me.”

In response, Huzoor said:

“I am sorry this time I did not – perhaps I am getting old.”

Although, Huzoor made this comment with a smile, I felt incredibly emotional hearing it. The burden on Huzoor is beyond our comprehension and so we can only pray that Allah grants Huzoor a long and healthy life and that we, Ahmadis, are able to fulfil our duties to serve Khilafat and to be ready for every sacrifice for the sake of this blessed institution.

A young Ahmadi student, originally from Pakistan but now studying in Estonia introduced herself to Huzoor.

She asked Huzoor’s guidance if she should remain in Estonia or move to Germany. It seemed that she had been advised by others to move to Germany and told that if she did not get a student visa in Germany, she should claim asylum.

In response, Huzoor said:

“You can apply for admission for studies here in Germany but if you do not get it then you should stay in Estonia. If people advise you to claim asylum then they are foolish and ignorant. You should fulfil the purpose

with which you came from Pakistan. When your studies are completed then you should ask me again about how to proceed at that time."

Having briefly addressed the Ahmadi girl in Urdu, Huzoor turned back to the other members of the Estonian delegation and said:

"I am sorry that I spoke for a few seconds in Urdu to this Ahmadi girl who has come from Pakistan and who wanted guidance about her future."

Thereafter, a Palestinian lady living in Estonia, asked Huzoor a question about the existence of God. She asked:

"What or who was before God?"

In response, Huzoor said:

"There was nothing before God. He has existed always and always will. According to Islam, the final Being is God Almighty. Before the universe was created, God Almighty existed and after the Universe ends, God will continue to exist. In science, they use the term 'infinity' and so it can be said that God is infinite."

From Romania, an Ahmadi convert explained his feelings after attending the Jalsa for the very first time. He said:

"Being at the Jalsa was like a dream."

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Yes, it is a beautiful dream that is spread over three days and three nights.”

The convert informed Huzoor that he keeps a photo of Huzoor in his shop which he owns in Romania. He said it was a means of *Tabligh* as customers would ask him about the photo.

Upon hearing this, Huzoor said:

“You should also put a photo of the Promised Messiah (as) because that will be an even better means of introducing the Jamaat and new avenues for Tabligh will open.”

Nikah ceremonies

Following *Zuhr* and *Asr*, Huzoor led the *Nikah* (marriage) ceremonies of various Ahmadi couples. Most of the *Nikahs* involved students of Jamia Ahmadiyya Germany.

Prior to announcing the *Nikahs*, Huzoor gave a short sermon in which he spoke about the responsibilities of Missionaries and their family members.

Huzoor said:

“In order to keep your domestic life peaceful, you must display tolerance and understanding. It is the task of our Missionaries to do the moral

training of other Ahmadis and so it is extremely important that your lives at home are also a positive example for others to follow.”

Huzoor continued:

“The wives of Missionaries should also realise that their husbands do not have materialistic duties or worldly jobs and have to live within the limited allowance that the Jamaat provides. Thus, they should be ready to make necessary sacrifices.”

Bulgaria delegation

After a short break for lunch, Huzoor returned from his residence and held further meetings with different delegations.

The first meeting was with a group of guests from Bulgaria.

Initially a more senior Missionary did the translation but after a couple of minutes, Huzoor stopped him, and called a newly qualified Missionary named Abdullah to take over the translation duty. Both of Abdullah’s parents were Bulgarian and had converted to Ahmadiyyat some years ago and then dedicated their son to the cause of Islam.

After completing his studies at Jamia Germany, Abdullah had spent the past six months in London getting further training and was now being sent back to Bulgaria as a Missionary.

Seeing Huzoor call him, reminded me of how Huzoor places great emphasis on the continued training of the youth and always encourages them.

Later in the meeting, Abdullah's father said:

"Huzoor, I wish to thank you for the love you have shown my son and I am proud that he is now a Missionary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community."

In response, Huzoor said:

"Even though he is a Missionary, it is still your responsibility as his father to guide him and if you think he has any weaknesses then you should draw his attention so that he can improve. I will also continue to keep a close eye on Abdullah and will call him to London every six months so that he continues to increase his knowledge and training."

During the meeting, a Bulgarian guest, asked Huzoor if the Jamaat's objective was to be the biggest religious community in the world.

In response, Huzoor said:

"Our objective is that the majority of mankind comes to fulfil the rights due to their Creator and to one another. Our aim is not for numbers but is to create a Jamaat of pious people who abide by these twin objectives."

Macedonia, Hungary, Armenia and Kosovo delegations

Huzoor then met with delegations from Macedonia, Hungary, Armenia and Kosovo.

An elderly non-Ahmadi guest from Macedonia took the opportunity to ask Huzoor about the concept of *Khatme-Nabuwwat* (*Seal of the Prophethood*).

The guest asked:

“Most Muslims say the Holy Prophet (sa) was the final Prophet, yet they also claim that Jesus (as) will return to the world. How is this possible?”

In response, Huzoor said:

“You are right it is not possible. The Holy Prophet (sa) said that any future Prophet would come from amongst his Ummah (community) and so if Jesus (as) was to return then it would break the Seal of the Prophethood because Jesus (as) was followed a different Sharia (law).”

A Macedonian journalist asked Huzoor about the spread of Ahmadiyyat.

In response, Huzoor said:

“We, Ahmadi Muslims, are not seeking to conquer Europe, Asia, Africa, America or any other part of the world. We do not seek any power, rather all we seek is to win the hearts of people and to spread a message of peace to the corners of the world.”

During a meeting with the group from Kosovo, one of the guests asked Huzoor a personal question. He said:

“Huzoor, you never appear tired or fatigued – so what is your secret?”

In reply, Huzoor smiled and said:

“I am human and so of course I do get tired sometimes but at the same time, Allah enables me to conduct the work that He desires. Hence, I deserve no praise, it is all Allah’s doing.”

Huzoor’s humility always leaves a person emotional. Most of us are ever-ready to take credit for any small detail, yet our Khalifa constantly attributes any credit to Allah the Almighty.

Indonesian Delegation

In his office, Huzoor then met with a delegation of Ahmadis from Indonesia, most of whom were Lajna members. The delegation sought Huzoor’s prayers on various issues relating to their respective families and for the Indonesian Jamaat.

After a while, one of the Lajna members asked Huzoor if they had permission to visit some other nearby European Jamaats to see some of the Jamaat’s other centres and do some sightseeing.

With great affection, Huzoor said:

“Yes of course, you can go anywhere you want.”

Huzoor then turned to Majid sahib (*Additional Wakil-ul-Tabshir*) and instructed that the Jamaat should arrange a minibus and driver for the Indonesian delegation that would take them wherever they wished to travel.

In response, the Indonesians became extremely emotional and overwhelmed. They kept repeating their thanks and gratitude to Huzoor.

As the meeting came to an end, an Indonesian lady approached Huzoor and asked for his prayers and so Huzoor took out a pen and gave it to her as a gift.

Suddenly, out of pure love, all the ladies came forward with tears streaming down from their eyes asking Huzoor to also give them a pen. I doubt I will ever forget this spontaneous and emotional scene.

The Lajna members kept repeating the words:

“Huzoor – us too! Us too!”

Very graciously, Huzoor met each of them individually and gave them each a pen as a gift.

As I observed this scene, I thought that only Allah the Almighty could ever place such pure love in the hearts of Ahmadis for their Khalifa and in the heart of the Khalifa for Ahmadis.

Emotions of an Ahmadi

After the meeting concluded, I met one of the Indonesian ladies called Maryam, who was studying to become a dentist. As I talked to her, she had both a huge smile on her face and tears in her eyes.

Speaking about meeting Huzoor, Maryam sahiba said:

“I just cannot explain how I am feeling at this moment. Huzoor is so loving and kind. To come all the way to Germany was not easy and we had to make many sacrifices but we always kept in mind that whatever sacrifices we make are for the sake of Allah and today He rewarded us a million times!”

An arranged meeting!

This year, Dr. Muhammad Masud-ul-Hasan Nuri, the *Executive Director of Tahir Heart Hospital* in Rabwah, attended the Jalsa Germany and delivered a speech.

For many years, I had seen Dr. Nuri in London, as he attends the Jalsa each year but I had never spoken to him, other than to say *salaam*. On a few occasions, I did think to talk to him but I am quite reserved and so never did so.

Probably knowing that I am somewhat shy, that day Huzoor told me himself to meet Dr. Nuri. Unfortunately, I struggled to find him and so Huzoor then told Dr. Nuri during his Mulaqat to meet me. Unfortunately, we missed each other again and still did not meet.

Thereafter, that evening, whilst in the Mosque just before *Namaz*, Huzoor called me towards him and specially pointed out where Dr. Nuri was sitting in the Mosque. I immediately went and sat next to Dr. Nuri and after *Namaz* was completed, I spent some time in his company.

Dr. Nuri told me about his own reflections on the Jalsa Germany. He said:

“All the sermons and addresses by Huzoor were extremely spiritually uplifting. However, the English address to German and non-Muslim guests was an eye-opener, prophetic, inspirational, and armed with arguments based on Quranic principles and the conduct of the Holy Prophet of Islam (sa). It was comprehensive, forceful and passionate.”

Dr Nuri continued:

“To me that speech of Huzoor-Aqdas was out of this world. He spoke from his heart, with passion, and an inner empathy for the suffering humanity. Huzoor’s message of peace and justice seemed like a divine call. It sank deep in people’s hearts and was no ordinary speech, rather every word was divine, every message poignant. Surely, it left an indelible mark on everyone’s mind and heart.”

Describing his own Mulaqat with Huzoor that day, Dr. Nuri said:

“When you meet Huzoor, invariably he greets you by standing up, with a smile and with the greeting of ‘Assalamo Alaikum’ and shakes your hand and there is something unique about the way Huzoor shakes your hand. He holds your right hand with his right hand, his handgrip is

firm, uniformly distributed and prolonged. He does not let go till you let go and this has a profound impact.”

Dr. Nuri continued:

“After asking a person to sit down Huzoor listens intently and he speaks only after the person has finished. Thereafter, his words are such that transform one's life.”

Alhamdolillah, I was very glad and grateful that Huzoor prompted this meeting.

A surprise visit

On the morning of 6 September 2016, Majid sahib, Mubarak sahib and I were seated in our office by 10.30am.

Suddenly, at 10.40, with no forewarning whatsoever, we saw Huzoor suddenly walk into our office! All three of us jumped up like rabbits and reached for our *topis*!

Huzoor asked me what I was doing and so I informed that I had been drafting a Press Release. Thereafter, Huzoor noticed a long black sofa in our office and, whilst smiling, asked who amongst us used it to sleep!

After not more than a minute, Huzoor turned around and returned to his office and as he left, we shared our mutual joy and happiness at Huzoor's sudden and unexpected visit.

With the *Grace of Allah*, all three of us have had the opportunity to work under Huzoor for several years and to meet him regularly, yet that extra minute still filled our hearts with the unique joy that only Khilafat can inspire.

We continued to discuss that moment for the rest of the morning like excited children and felt overjoyed that we had those extra precious moments in Huzoor's company. *Alhamdolillah*.

Huzoor's guidance to a newly married couple

During that week, I met a young *Khadim* called *Safeer Loun* and his wife *Shazeen Mubashar*. They had very recently married.

Recounting her feelings after meeting Huzoor for the very first time, Shazeen sahiba said:

"When I entered Huzoor's room and met him I could not control my tears. I was completely overwhelmed but at the same time those minutes were the most peaceful and content moments of my life. When we sat down, Huzoor noticed I was still crying and so he very lovingly handed me a tissue to wipe away my tears."

Huzoor also noticed the honey I had brought for him to bless and perhaps to help me compose myself he smiled and said 'Put the honey on the table before your tears fall into it!' As soon as Huzoor said this I laughed and was able to gather my emotions."

Later in the Mulaqat, Safeer asked Huzoor for advice for ensuring a happy marriage.

In reply, Huzoor advised them:

“Remember neither of you are perfect and both of you have weaknesses and so you should both try to ignore one another’s shortcomings and instead focus upon each other’s good qualities.”

The couple also told me that they had sought Huzoor’s guidance about whether to have children immediately or whether to wait as Shazeen sahiba was undertaking a language course.

In response, Huzoor said:

“You should not wait just because you are studying. If you become pregnant you can continue to study side-by-side. Whenever you are blessed with children it will be due to the Grace of Allah and so you should not try to delay it purposely.”

Huzoor’s meeting with a guest

On 6 September 2016, Huzoor met with Mr. Thomas Gran, a senior medical executive in Germany.

Mr. Gran’s company had supplied the *Tahir Heart Institute* in Rabwah with medical supplies and equipment.

Having attended the Jalsa as a guest, Mr. Gran had asked to have the opportunity to meet Huzoor and Huzoor graciously accepted this request.

As he entered Huzoor's office, Mr. Gran was wearing an Afghani *topi* and upon seeing this, Huzoor said:

"I hope no one forced you to wear this cap."

In reply, Mr. Gran said:

"No, I personally asked if I could be given one of these caps to wear in your presence."

Mr. Gran informed Huzoor that he had visited the *Tahir Heart Institute*, an experience which he described as ***"mind-changing"***. He said he had found it to be a ***"world class facility"*** and was amazed by the ***"outstanding spirit of the doctors and staff"***.

Mr. Gran said:

"In my entire career, I have never seen the passion and spirit to serve others as I saw in the staff at the Tahir Heart Institute."

Upon this, Dr. Nuri, who was seated beside Mr. Gran, immediately interjected and said:

"We derive this unique spirit from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (aba)."

Thereafter, Huzoor said:

“If you have a genuine desire to serve humanity, as we Ahmadis do, then you can achieve many things.”

In response, Mr. Gran said:

“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is giving independence and true freedom to people living across the world.”

As the meeting continued, Huzoor turned in my direction and instructed that I get a copy of his book *“World Crisis: Pathway to Peace”*.

I went out and asked *Private Secretary*, Munir Javed sahib if he had a copy but he did not. I asked the Germany Jamaat officials and they also said that they did not have any copies to hand.

Just as I was becoming worried how I would acquire a copy, it occurred to me that perhaps Majid sahib may have one.

I ran to our office and asked him and thankfully in his briefcase he had a copy.

I took the book from him and returned to Huzoor’s office and presented it to Huzoor who signed it before giving it as a gift to Mr. Gran. Huzoor mentioned that the book comprised a series of lectures he had given about world peace.

Huzoor said:

“To achieve peace, we must try to fulfil the rights of others, rather than prioritising our rights. Selfishness is the root cause of many of the problems of the world and having a selfish attitude also causes heart problems!”

The guest laughed a lot and enjoyed Huzoor’s comment.

As the meeting concluded, it was clear that Huzoor had enjoyed the meeting and that meeting Huzoor had a profound effect on the guest.

Afterwards, Mr. Gran said:

“I have never met a personage like His Holiness. This was a chance in a lifetime for me. Never in my life has anyone had such a strong impact upon me as the Khalifa.”

Throughout the day, Mr. Gran kept the book Huzoor had gifted him in his hand. After a while, an Ahmadi suggested he put it in his car so that he did not have to carry it.

In response, Mr. Gran said:

“I do not want to take the risk of losing this book on the slight chance that my car is stolen.”

Trying to find fault

That day, Tahir Nadeem sahib, from the central Arabic desk, told me about the reflections of a Syrian non-Ahmadi guest who had attended the Jalsa for the first time.

The Syrian guest told Nadeem sahib:

“I came to this Jalsa as an opponent of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat and I came here with the intention of finding faults which I could then exploit and publicise. I even went as far as trying to provoke mistakes.

For example, I placed my mobile phone on a table and left it there for the entire day thinking it will be stolen and then I can say that Ahmadis are thieves.

However, when I returned at the end of the day, I was shocked to see that the phone remained in exactly the same place where I had left it!”

The Syrian guest continued:

“Throughout the Jalsa period, despite my best efforts, I could not find a single fault or anything which I could use against your Jamaat.

In the end, I am resigned to admit that that undoubtedly Ahmadis are good and sincere people.”

Inauguration of Salam Mosque in Iserlohn

On 6 September 2016, Huzoor departed from the Baitus Sabuh Mosque at 2.45pm for the inauguration of the Salam Mosque in the Germany city of Iserlohn.

The Qafila arrived in Iserlohn at 5pm and after a short break at a nearby hotel, the Qafila proceeded to the new Mosque which Huzoor officially opened by unveiling a plaque to commemorate its opening, followed by a silent prayer and then *Zuhr* and *Asr*.

The 'handshake' issue

At exactly 6pm, a formal reception, in which many dignitaries, guests and neighbours attended, took place.

One of the guest speakers was a German politician called Thomas Gemke. He initially congratulated the Jamaat on the opening of the Mosque and praised it for inviting non-Muslims.

However, his tone then changed and he condemned the fact that Ahmadi men did not shake the hands of women and similarly that Ahmadi women did not shake the hands of men. He said that, in his view, 'shaking hands' was a basic sign of respect and a necessary part of 'integration'.

When I heard this, I was somewhat taken aback. At almost all Jamaat events I have attended, wherever in the world, the comments of guests have almost always been extremely positive and in praise of the Jamaat.

Yet here, during a public event, a politician had raised an objection and openly criticised the Jamaat. Initially, it felt a little uncomfortable and I was saddened that the guest had chosen to target us publicly, rather than raising it more discretely. Other members of our Jamaat and even some of the guests also looked somewhat surprised.

As the politician continued to speak, I looked in Huzoor's direction. Like the rest of us non-German speakers, Huzoor was listening to the Urdu translation by Hasanat Ahmad, a *Waqf-e-Zindighi* and *Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Germany*.

I later told Hasanat sahib that I was really impressed by his translation. He did not seek to cover anything up or to 'sanitize' the criticism of the politician. Rather, he very clearly conveyed his views.

Anyway, as he listened to the translation, there was not even the slightest look of concern or irritation on the face of Huzoor. I did however, see him write down a few notes on paper and so I felt sure Huzoor would respond to these comments.

Huzoor's response

After the conclusion of Mr. Gemke's speech, Huzoor took to the stage and addressed the audience. After thanking the local community for its support and explaining the purpose of Mosques, Huzoor responded in detail to the handshake issue.

Extremely eloquently and without even a trace of anger, Huzoor responded firmly to the accusation that failing to shake hands with the people of the opposite sex was an obstacle to integration. He said that the handshake was not something that defined integration and that in a free society people had the right to greet others according to their customs or beliefs.



Huzoor said:

“As far as I am concerned true integration requires for a person to use all of his faculties and skills in the service of their adopted nation and to seek its betterment. It is to serve the nation and to be faithful and loyal to it.”

Huzoor continued:

“The fact that we do not shake the hands of people of the other sex does not mean that we are not integrated or that we do not respect others. Even if I do not shake the hands of a woman, I can promise you that I will be the first person present to help any woman if she is ever in danger or needs my help in any way.”

Huzoor continued by making the point that, in a free society, a person should not be forced into doing something, such as shaking hands, with which they were not comfortable. Huzoor also said that certain double standards or hypocrisy was evident when it came to Islam.

Huzoor said:

“There are some Jewish ladies who do not shake the hands of people of the opposite sex but people would not dare criticise them because they would be worried of being branded anti-Semitic.”

Huzoor continued by saying that the issue of the handshake ought not to be overblown and instead people should respect one another’s religious beliefs.

Thereafter, displaying his outstanding levels of grace, Huzoor said:

“If there has been any lady who was genuinely upset or offended by the fact that we did not shake their hand then I apologise to them and seek their forgiveness. Further, if there are any men who are upset that our ladies did not shake their hands then I also apologise to them for any hurt that they may feel.”

Alhamdulillah, the way Huzoor responded to the criticism levelled at the Jamaat was amazing.

The words I write in this diary can never do justice to the way Huzoor defended Islam that day. Through both his words and demeanour, Huzoor

proved Islam to be a religion of sensitivity, logic, wisdom and grace. I personally felt extremely emotional listening to Huzoor and as I looked around the room my impression was that the majority of guests had also appreciated his words very much.

Impact of Huzoor's words

I even met a Germany lady, Mrs. Espeloer, who had accompanied Mr. Gemke, and whose personal experience had sparked his criticisms. I initially spoke to her via a translator but after a minute she told me that she spoke English and so we were able to communicate directly.

Mrs. Espeloer said:

"I appreciated the fact that your Khalifa responded to the criticisms made in Mr. Gemke's speech and did not ignore them. This issue was very personal to me because last year I received a letter saying Ahmadi men will not shake my hand and to see this printed in black and white really upset me and shook me and I felt like crying. However, if someone had explained to me like your Khalifa did today, instead of sending me a harsh letter I would have understood."

Mrs. Espeloer continued:

"I still believe that you should shake hands, but the Khalifa changed my belief to the extent that we should not force our customs on others and should respect each other's beliefs. Hence, though I am not convinced that it is correct, I am at least convinced it is your right to hold this belief. Last time I went home upset but this time I am going home with a

smile on my face and with a lot of things to think about."

Many of the other guests, also spoke of their appreciation of Huzeer's words.

For example, I met a German man called Mr. Werner who said:

"The handshake issue should not be a cause of division especially after the beautiful and logical way your Khalifa described it. The Khalifa was absolutely right that there are many big challenges facing the world and we should not fight over such trivial matters."

A German lady, Mrs. Goebel said:

"A few years ago I visited Russia and the local people, who were not Muslims, refused to shake my hand. At first, I was insulted and offended, but later I realised this was their custom and otherwise they were very nice to me. I was reminded of this when the Khalifa said he does not shake hands but if a woman needs protection he will be the first there. Such issues only cause division if you don't explain them openly but your Khalifa did explain it quite wonderfully."

A guest, Sebastian Koch, said:

"Today I saw Islam as an open, tolerant and welcoming religion and not a closed religion that is boxed off. The Caliph spoke very openly, even boldly, but at the same time he spoke with love. I personally don't agree that Muslims don't shake hands with people from the opposite sex but I

now agree that it is your right not to."

Mr. Koch continued:

"One question in my mind is that your Khalifa says it is against Islam to shake hands but he is older in age. Will your youth also follow this? If so then I will respect you more because it will show all Ahmadis value their belief and have strong faith."

Subsequently, Huzoor mentioned Mr. Koch's comment during his *Friday Sermon* and said that it was up to younger Ahmadis to rise to the challenge of staying firm to their faith without fear or complex.

Another lady, *Mrs. Lidaa Remisch*, told me that she agreed wholeheartedly with Huzoor's comments about the handshake issue. She said:

"I know Muslims do not eat pork and so if I invite them to my home I will not cook pork, instead I will cook another meat that we can both enjoy. This is basic respect. Similarly, if Muslims do not shake hands then why should I try and force them to shake. It's the same principle as pork - I should be willing to greet them in a way that we are both comfortable."

Apart from the handshake issue, many of the guests also spoke of their appreciation at other parts of Huzoor's speech.

For example, a Germany man. *Rudolph Remisch*, said:

"The words of the Khalifa have touched me, moved me and I agree with

every word he spoke. He is a walking, talking man of peace.”

Emotions of a Khadim

On the morning of 7 September 2016, whilst Huzoor met dozens of families in Mulaqat, I spent a few minutes with *Luqman Bajwa (27)*. As a member of Germany Khuddam’s *Hifazat-e-Khas* security team, Luqman was living on-site at the Mosque, throughout the period of Huzoor’s stay in Germany.

Luqman told me he had come to Germany from Pakistan in December 2011 and initially found it very difficult to adapt as he did not speak any German. Though he now spoke reasonable German, he was still unable to find a job suited to his qualifications and so in order to financially support himself he was working as a manual labourer.

Speaking about this, Luqman said:

“I currently work six nights a week and my shift starts at 10pm or 11pm at night and continues until 9am or 10am without any proper breaks. My duty is simply heavy lifting, whereby cargo and shipments are delivered and it is my job to unload whatever has been delivered and to set it up. Most of the items are extremely heavy and so it is real back-breaking work and by the end of my shift I am physically shattered.”

Luqman continued:

“When I started this job, I told my employers my only demand was that they give me holiday at Jalsa Germany or at any other time when

Huzoor may visit Germany. Initially, they were not happy and even sacked me on two occasions because of this. However, they knew I was an honest and hard-worker and so they invited me back and have now agreed to my terms. The fact that I am considered honest and hard-working is only because of the training I have received from the Jamaat and Khuddam duty.”

As we ended our conversation, Luqman smiled and said:

“I am a Waqf-e-Nau and so it is my dream to fulfil my pledge and to serve the Jamaat full-time. I know the Jamaat can send me anywhere but it is my heartfelt dream to one day become a permanent member of Huzoor’s security team.

A while ago, I filled out a form for my Waqf and I was called for an interview by the Jamaat and I passed. Also, last year Ahmad sahib (Head of Huzoor’s security on tour) did a physical test for all of the German security Khuddam and Alhamdulillah I came first.

I do not know if or when I will ever be called for that blessed duty but each day I hope and pray for the call. Nevertheless, I know my first test is to not be impatient.”

Huzoor’s intuition

As Huzoor’s Mulaqats concluded he called me to his office for a few minutes and Huzoor mentioned the Mosque opening in Iserlohn the previous day.

Huzoor said:

“I had a feeling they would raise the handshake issue in Iserlohn and so when the politician did raise it, I thought it was a good opportunity for me to spread the true teachings of Islam and to speak about the need for people to respect one another’s beliefs and values.”

Failure to verify

During the days of Jalsa Salana Germany, there had been an incident on social media whereby a tweet was made by a *Twitter* account that claimed to represent Huzoor and so many people emailed or messaged me to ask if the account was a genuine account or not.

There is no official social media account representing Huzoor’s office and the tweet was the result of an overly excited Khadim in the United States who had tweeted something without fully appreciating the consequences.

As is the way with social media, in a matter of minutes, like wildfire, the tweet had spread far and wide and even a senior Jamaat office bearer had promoted the Twitter account without checking to see if it was authentic.

As it was the middle of the Jalsa Salana and Huzoor was so busy I did not mention it to him at the time, though I did ask for the tweet to be deleted immediately, which it was.

That afternoon, I finally mentioned the incident to Huzoor.

Upon hearing about it, Huzoor said:

“Write to the office bearer concerned and tell him that in future before tweeting or retweeting anything that seeks to represent me, he should verify its authenticity, either by writing to me directly or through you. Remind him that when it comes to matters of Khalifatul Masih it is important that due caution is exercised at all times to ensure that there is never a miscommunication or error.”

I did convey the message and the office bearer was extremely apologetic and accepted his mistake immediately.

The entire issue though was reflective of a growing trend whereby people often seek to break news or forward news on social media without checking its veracity or source. Increasingly, there is a rush to be the first one to spread information about the Jamaat or about Khalifatul Masih but, as Huzoor instructed, due caution is necessary to prevent any misinformation being shared.

A source of joy

Huzoor then mentioned the diaries I write about Huzoor’s activities and tours abroad. Huzoor said:

“You are still to complete the Jalsa UK diary and once we return to London you will have just a couple of weeks before you travel with me to Canada. Hopefully, you will find some time in Canada to catch up.”

As Huzoor said these words, I felt elated. It was the moment I found out that I would have the blessed opportunity to travel to Canada with Huzoor on what promised to be an extremely historic tour. Nonetheless, as I write these words in January 2017, I feel regretful that I was not able to catch up with the UK and Germany diaries during the Canada tour.

Those few moments with Huzoor were extremely precious. Huzoor had been so busy throughout the Germany tour and so it was after a few days that I had the blessed chance to spend some personal time with him.

Inauguration of Subhan Mosque in Morfelden-Walldorf

On the afternoon of 7 September, Huzoor travelled to the German city of Morfelden-Walldorf to inaugurate the Subhan Mosque. The Qafila departed from Baitus Sabuh at 5.25pm and arrived at the new Mosque at 6.15pm.

After arriving, Huzoor unveiled a plaque and led a silent prayer to officially inaugurate the Mosque before leading the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers.

Formal Reception

Thereafter, Huzoor addressed a special reception at the Mosque attended by more than 150 dignitaries and guests, as well as many members of the local Jamaat.

During his keynote address, Huzoor spoke about the objectives of Mosques and also spoke about the concept of *Jihad* in Islam. Huzoor also spoke about the need for inter-faith dialogue and understanding.

Huzoor said:

“Dialogue between different communities and groups is extremely important and the way to break down barriers and to foster mutual understanding. We should remember that we all make mistakes and have weaknesses and so it is better to focus on each other’s qualities and try to ignore their shortcomings. This is the way to build bridges and the means for peace.”



Huzoor also spoke about the humanitarian work conducted by the Jamaat in Africa and other deprived parts of the world.

Very movingly, Huzoor spoke of the plight of those African people who lived in remote and deprived villages and had no access to clean drinking water. Huzoor said he had seen with his own eyes young children who walked for many miles each day in order to collect dirty, contaminated pond water which they would bring home and use for drinking, cooking, washing and bathing.

Huzoor informed the audience that the Jamaat was engaged in various projects to provide such deprived people with clean drinking water and other basic facilities.

Impact of Huzoor's address

Following the conclusion of Huzoor's address, I met a number of guests, each of whom were extremely grateful for the opportunity to attend.

A German lady, Mrs. Doris, said:

"I personally have no religion or faith but there was something extremely appealing about the Khalifa. His words, presence and personality are such that naturally attract. He is very pure."

Mrs. Doris continued:

"People today are defaming Islam and branding it as a terrorist religion because of ISIS but on other hand the Khalifa is playing the foremost role in challenging these views and presumptions and proving them to be false."

A neighbour of the new Mosque, a German man called Jurgen said:

"It was particularly emotional when the Caliph described young children walking long distances in search of water and how they had to drink water that was badly contaminated. If service to humanity is part of your religion then there is no need to fear Islam."

A German lady, Mrs. Kurala said:

“I feel regret that your Khalifa had to say so many times that Islam is a religion of peace. However, I also understand that in the current climate, when there is so much negative propaganda about Islam that he had to make it clear and remove people’s misconceptions. Certainly, he did his job of clearing Islam’s name meticulously and in a way that no one can argue with.”

I was also introduced to a Spanish man, *Jacinto Cano*, whose son had converted to Ahmadiyyat some time ago. He told me that after years of anger and resentment at his son’s decision, seeing and listening to Huzoor had put his mind at ease once and for all.

Mr. Cano said:

“When my son became an Ahmadi it disturbed me a lot because I am a practicing and very active Catholic. I was worried about where my son had ended up and thought that Islam was dangerous. However today when I saw and heard from the Khalifa I felt a true spirit of peace. I now know that my son is in good hands and I feel reassured.”

A lesson learned

With the *Grace of Allah*, throughout the tour, *MTA News*, for which I am responsible, broadcast regular reports of Huzoor’s activities. With the help of the local *German News* team, we were able to broadcast more detailed coverage of Huzoor’s activities compared to previous tours.

Thus, following the opening of the Mosque in Iserlohn, *MTA News Germany* produced a report and sent it to me to check. It was near to broadcast time and so I had a quick look and it seemed ok and so I said they could send it to our team in London who would include it in the day's news.

It did occur to me that our report did not mention the 'handshake' issue that had arisen in Iserlohn, however as time was tight, I approved the news as it was, and it was broadcast on MTA International.

Later, I shared the clip of the news report with Huzoor and even now, months later, when I recall Huzoor's response, I tremble with shame and embarrassment.

Huzoor said it seemed we had intentionally omitted to mention the handshake issue and this was entirely wrong. Furthermore, Huzoor said that I had not fulfilled my responsibilities and that whenever I was present with him, it was my duty to provide key points for reports that related to his activities.

I felt completely ashamed, embarrassed and devastated. In *part 1* of this diary, I mentioned how Huzoor is extremely patient and very rarely exhibits any anger, yet it was clear on this occasion that Huzoor was very disappointed with us. Knowing that Huzoor is extremely patient made me feel even more guilt-ridden. I felt I had let him down a great deal.

Huzoor's disappointment, was based on the fact that he never wishes for any opportunity for *Tabligh* or *Tarbiyyat* to be wasted. Thus, he did not wish to hide or bury the 'handshake' issue but desired for it to be broadcast

so that more people would be aware of our beliefs and the reasons for our beliefs.

Similarly, Ahmadis would see Huzoor's view on this issue and realise that there was no need for an Ahmadi to bear any complex or embarrassment about our teachings or faith.

I immediately contacted Asif Farhad, who was in charge of MTA News in Germany and asked him to meet me as soon as possible.

Thereafter, we got together and I suggested we prepare a new report, which would air that day on MTA News focusing exclusively on the handshake issue. We would include excerpts of Huzoor's address and the reaction of some of the guests.

As the time was short, I decided that I myself would appear on camera and mention the positive reaction of the people I met.

Normally, I do not like coming on camera and always become tense and nervous when doing so, yet Huzoor was not satisfied by our earlier report and so desperate times called for desperate measures!

We spent all morning working on the script, locating the relevant clips from Huzoor's address, subtitling them and recording my interview. Thereafter, Asif sahib spent the next hour editing the clip and when he was done, I came back to check it and after some further edits, a 5-minute report was produced.

Huzoor's reaction to new report

I still felt extremely sad that Huzoor had been unhappy and I remained anxious not knowing if the new report would be to Huzoor's satisfaction.

Nonetheless, with great trepidation and nerves, I showed Huzoor the report and after viewing it, he simply said:

"Jazak'Allah, kamal ker diya"

Meaning:

"Jazak'Allah, it is excellent."

That moment was truly priceless and I felt a surge of relief. Yet, again I witnessed Huzoor's kindness, mercy and forgiveness. I immediately went and told Asif that Huzoor had liked the report. He too was very relieved, as he was the only one who knew about Huzoor's earlier comments.

Later, in the day, Huzoor called me to his office and as soon as I entered, Huzoor smiled and laughed. He quoted a Punjabi saying, which I did not understand fully.

Explaining its meaning, Huzoor said:

"It means that sometimes you have to push someone firmly in order to get a result and that is why I gave you a strong push earlier! Your first news report was 2 or 3 minutes long and did not mention the key issue

but after I gave you the push the next report was much longer and focused solely on the handshake issue which was the real news from the event.”

I thanked Huzoor for his guidance and apologised again for our mistake. I said:

“Huzoor, Jazak’Allah for your guidance and certainly I really needed that push!”

Hearing this, Huzoor laughed and after a day of tension and worry, I was extremely grateful for those moments where I could see Huzoor’s smile and hear the kindness in his voice.

Huzoor’s comment was also instructive, whereby he reminded me that MTA News should keep in mind its journalistic objectives and seek to highlight key points and look for stories that are interesting and insightful and not to play it safe by shying away from controversial topics.

A few blessed moments

Thereafter, Huzoor asked me how I was and who I had met recently.

I mentioned that a few Ahmadis had asked me Huzoor’s reaction when Mahmood Khan Sahib had been injured in a cycling accident early in the tour. One Ahmadi even asked me if the accident had caused a ‘panic’ in the Qafila.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

“Why would we panic? Yes, Khan Sahib broke a few bones but there are so many worse things and more serious accidents that happen every day in the world. When you believe in the power of dua (prayer) then there is never any need for panic because we have complete trust in the Will of Allah the Almighty.”

Huzoor then spoke about cycling more generally. Huzoor said:

“I remember in Pakistan people often cycled on the highway and even would go in between lorries in desi style! I used to cycle as well and we cycled last year in Holland. Hence, there is nothing wrong with cycling itself.”

I also mentioned to Huzoor that recently I learned from social media that a young man, who was born and raised an Ahmadi, but later left the Jamaat, had developed cancer. After leaving Ahmadiyyat he had spoken against the Jamaat quite a lot and so a few Ahmadis had suggested that his illness could be a punishment from God.

In response, Huzoor said:

“We can never have any happiness that someone is ill and we cannot claim that this is a sign from God. Only in cases where there is a formal Mubahila (prayer) challenge can you claim that a result is a sign from God Almighty. However, this was not the case here and his illness can only be deemed a tragedy for him. May Allah grant him full health and a

quick recovery.”

Thereafter, Huzoor mentioned his tour of Germany, which was now reaching its end. Huzoor said:

“Alhamdolillah, all of the major events of this tour have been concluded successfully.”

Visit to the home of a young Missionary

A day earlier, *Muhammad Jeryullah Khan*, a graduate of *Jamia Ahmadiyya UK* and now the *Assistant General-Secretary* of Germany Jamaat requested Huzoor to visit his home, a small flat within the Baitus Sabuh complex.

Most graciously, Huzoor accepted Jeryullah’s invitation and visited his home that evening and spent time with him and his family.

Later, Jeryullah told me:

“It was a great honour and incredible blessing for us that Huzoor visited us. We can never be grateful enough for this privilege and blessing.”

Jeryullah continued:

“Alhamdolillah, we had the opportunity to show Huzoor our home and after viewing it, Huzoor said that our flat was in far better condition than the house in which he had lived in Africa. It was very emotional to

hear this.”

Jeryullah continued:

“Before Huzoor came to our home, I asked you Abid sahib and also Muhammad Ahmad sahib which cakes Huzoor likes and you both said ‘cheesecake’. In the end, we brought a few different types of cake but Huzoor only tasted the cheesecake.

Apart from this, we had prepared samosay, pakoray and other savoury things and most graciously Huzoor took a small bite of each item.”

Upon return to London, I mentioned to Huzoor that one day in Germany I had eaten a very delicious samosa.

After hearing this, Huzoor said:

“The samosa I ate at Jeryullah’s home was also extremely good tasting.”

Understandably, Jeryullah and his entire family were extremely emotional after Huzoor’s visit.

Jeryullah said:

“We could not believe that Huzoor-e-Anwar, the spiritual king of the world, had blessed our tiny and humble home with his footsteps. We will never ever forget this blessing.”

After a few minutes, Huzoor left Jeryullah's home and entered the part of the building where I was staying and briefly entered the room that Mubarak Zafar sahib and I were sharing.

Upon seeing it, Huzoor said:

"You have decorated your room a lot!"

I thought that Huzoor's comment meant that it was reasonably tidy, *Alhamdolillah*.

A message to Lajna

As Huzoor returned to downstairs to the Mosque, he passed the German Lajna offices where some Lajna happened to be present.

Upon seeing Huzoor the ladies became extremely emotional and overjoyed.

As Huzoor walked past, a Lajna member said:

"Huzoor please give us some instruction or message."

Whilst continuing to walk, Huzoor said:

"I have already given many instructions and so my message is simply that Lajna should fulfil its duties given to it in the best way possible."

Lajna unable to attend Jumma

On 9 September 2016, Huzoor delivered his weekly Friday Sermon from the Baitus Sabuh Mosque.

A few minutes prior to Huzoor's arrival in the Mosque, Amir Sahib Germany addressed the Ahmadis present.

He said that due to some Council restrictions, *Baitul Aafiyyat*, the Lajna and Ansar building opposite Baitus Sabuh, could not be used for *Jumma* like it had in 2015 and for this reason, the Germany Jamaat had taken the decision to request Lajna members not to attend *Jumma* due to a lack of space.

I did not know the exact details and do not know if there were any other genuine options but I did think it seemed a little unfair.

Later, Huzoor referred to the decision during his Friday Sermon. He said that the Jamaat ought to have resolved any issues with the Council during the past year.

Very firmly, Huzoor said:

“You should stop being lazy and fulfil your duties.”

It was clear from both the words Huzoor used and his tone that he was disappointed that Lajna had not been able to attend and felt that the Jamaat administration had let them down in this matter.

Tour report

During the rest of Huzoor's sermon, he narrated various incidents from his tour of Germany and spoke about the positive effect of the Jalsa and Mosque events on many guests.

Huzoor seemed pleased with the Jalsa arrangements, though he also said:

"We should always keep an eye on our weaknesses and shortcomings. No organisation can ever arrange an event perfectly and so our teams should critically assess what improvements can be made in future."

Huzoor also referred to the handshake issue that had arisen at the inauguration a few days earlier.

Very beautifully, Huzoor said:

"Religion is a matter of the heart and so we can never force anyone to accept our faith but at the same time we will never forget our own beliefs and traditions. It is up to us to show the world that we have complete conviction in the teachings of Islam and nothing can ever weaken our faith."

Emotions of an Ahmadi family

Later that day, on the final night of Huzoor's visit to Germany, he met dozens more families in Mulaqat.

Soon after her first ever Mulaqat with Huzoor, I met a lady called *Sadiqa Aslam*, who was with her husband.

Speaking about her Mulaqat, Sadiqa said:

“Huzoor is like an angel, filled with purity and love. However, at the same time I feel sadness knowing that Huzoor is leaving tomorrow and when he does our lives will feel empty and our hearts will be consumed by grief.”

Sadiqa sahiba continued:

“It is my dream to be able to offer some service to Apa Jan (Huzoor’s respected wife) because each day she serves and cares for that person who we love more than our own parents.”

Sadiqa sahiba continued:

“Abid sahib, meeting you is also a fulfilment of my prayers because I read one of your diaries last year in which you wrote that Huzoor reads your diaries before you publish them. Ever since then, I prayed that one day I could meet you so that you could convey my love to Huzoor through your diary and that perhaps my Khalifa would pray for me and my family.”

It was interesting to hear this because when Sadiqa sahiba and her husband walked out from their *Mulaqat* I was engaged in a conversation with someone else. Normally, I would not leave a conversation mid-way but

for some reason when I saw them, I excused myself and went to meet Luqman sahib and Sadiqa sahiba.

A lot of Nikahs!

That evening, after *Maghreb* and *Isha*, Huzoor remained present in the Mosque whilst Imam Haider Ali Zafar sahib led the *Nikah* (marriage) ceremonies of several dozen people.

I had never witnessed so many *Nikahs* in one session and I remember thinking to myself that I have to pack my suitcase tonight but I am not sure if these *Nikahs* will ever end!

At one point, I felt myself almost falling asleep, however I was seated just a few feet from Huzoor and so I literally had to pinch myself in the arm to stay awake!

As the marathon session of *Nikahs* finally reached its conclusion, Huzoor smiled and said:

“Are we finished already? It seemed as though Imam Sahib was determined to lead the Nikah of every unmarried member of the Jamaat this evening.”

As Huzoor returned to his residence, I returned to my own room and packed my suitcase looking forward to returning to London the next day.

None of us could have any idea of or be prepared for the extremely painful

news that we would receive on our journey home.

A tragic accident

On 10 September 2016, Huzoor and the Qafila members departed from Baitus Sabuh, where hundreds of local Ahmadi Muslims had gathered to see Huzoor off, at 10.05am.

Soon after, the Qafila departed from Frankfurt, I received a message from a friend in London saying that there had been an accident on a *Jamia UK* hiking trip to Italy.

As I scrolled down the message, I read that a young student of *Jamia Ahmadiyya UK*, Raza Saleem, son of Saleem Zafar sahib, who has served in the Private Secretary's office for many years, had fallen and died. The message concluded with the words "*Inna lillahey wa inna illehey rajeoon*".

I was completely stunned and thereafter most of the morning was spent in a state of bewilderment, as I tried to ascertain more details of what had happened. Initially, all sorts of messages were flying around on *WhatsApp*, many of which I later found out were not accurate.

The Qafila continued its journey until we stopped at a service station for *Namaz* and lunch at 2pm.

As soon as I stepped out of my car, I looked in Huzoor's direction and it was immediately apparent that he felt great pain and sadness. Throughout the lunch break the mood in the Qafila was extremely sombre.

As Huzoor came to lead the prayers at the service station, he paused for a minute and spoke to Amir Sahib Germany about what had happened and about Raza himself.

Huzoor said:

“Raza was a very sincere, hard-working and devoted boy.”

Thereafter, Huzoor led the *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers and each *sajdah* (prostration) was longer than normal.

God knows better, but in my heart I felt sure that those extra prayers were dedicated to Raza, his loved ones and those who had been with him at the time of the accident.

It was very clear that Huzoor felt extremely grieved to hear the news of Raza’s sudden death and this was further illustrated to me the next day when I met Huzoor in London.

During Mulaqat, Huzoor said to me:

“Kal tu saara dinn hi Raza ka chehra damagh mein ghoom ta raha”

Meaning:

“Yesterday, all day Raza’s face kept rotating in my mind.”

I have never seen anyone control his emotions better than Huzoor, yet his comment showed his love for Raza. This would not surprise anyone who

listened to Huzoor's *Friday Sermon* a few days later, when he paid tribute to Raza in the most beautiful and emotional manner.

After delivering that Friday Sermon, Huzoor said to me:

"I am normally able to control my emotions, however early in today's sermon when I spoke about Raza's mother and her reaction to his passing, my voice faltered and it became difficult to control my emotions. Hence, I paused for a few seconds until I was able to compose myself."

It is very rare, if not entirely unique, to hear Khalifatul Masih speak so lovingly of someone so young.

I personally did not know Raza that well. I had met him a few times and always found him to be incredibly polite and humble in nature. Yet, like millions of other Ahmadis, I came to truly know him through the words of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba).

Turning fear into peace

Despite the fact that Huzoor had obviously felt a great deal of pain at Raza's passing, the way Huzoor responded to this tragedy was the means of recovery for those who had known and accompanied Raza on the hiking trip.

A few days after his return to London, Huzoor visited Islamabad to offer his condolences to Raza's parents and family members. Also present at

Islamabad that day were most of the Jamia delegation who went on the hiking trip, including my friends *Abdul Quddus Arif, Nauman Hadi* and *Fatir Tahir Momin*.

Quddus had assisted me in our *Press & Media* team for the past couple of years, whilst both Nauman and Fatir had been sent to do *Waqf-e-Arzi* in my office a few years ago.

In the days that followed, they each told me how Huzoor had given them the strength to move forward and had turned their grief and heartache into a state of peace that enabled them to recover.

Speaking about returning to London after the accident, Abdul Quddus Arif said:

“As soon as we arrived back in London, I got changed and went straight to Islamabad, where I met Raza’s family including his mother. This was the time where I could not hold back my emotions and broke down and this state continued until the day after Eid when Huzoor came to meet Raza’s parents at Islamabad.”

Quddus continued:

“That day, all of us who had been with Raza in Italy saw another great example of how Khilafat transforms even the most severe grief imaginable into a state of peace and harmony. Before Huzoor came there had been a continuous atmosphere of sorrow at Islamabad but

after meeting Huzoor both Raza's family and all of us who were with him felt instantly reassured and peace in our hearts."

Also speaking about the accident, Nauman Hadi told me:

"As you can imagine when the accident took place the entire team was shocked and stunned... The only thing that was giving us comfort was knowing that our beloved Huzoor was aware and was praying for Raza and for us."

Speaking about meeting Huzoor for the first time after the accident, Nauman said:

"The manner in which we were personally comforted by Huzoor has shown us a new meaning of how grief is turned to peace through Khilafat. At Islamabad, from the moment Huzoor started to speak to us it was as if all our troubles were being wiped away."

Addressing the entire hiking group, Huzoor said:

"Now you have to move forward and continue with more strength and resolve and put even more effort into your Jamia studies and try to fulfil the purpose of your Waqf. Now you have to fulfil not only your own hopes and desires but also fulfil the hopes and desires that Raza had. That is the means of fulfilling your friendship to him."

Fatir Tahir Momin also told me about Raza's passing and the accident itself.

Fatir said:

“I was with Raza at the back of the line whilst we were descending the mountain. All of a sudden, I saw Raza zoom past me at speed, as he had slipped and lost control. We tried our utmost to get to him, but it was Allah's Will and too late. The memory which is most vivid in my mind is the sound of prayers and Durood of the entire hiking group after Raza fell - all we could do was pray to Allah.”

Fatir said that despite being aware of Huzoor's love and mercy, in his heart he still had a fear that Huzoor might be upset with them. However, the moment he met Huzoor such fears vanished instantly.

Fatir said:

“As soon as he met us, Huzoor told us not worry. He said that we tried our best to save Raza and that such accidents can take place at any time. Huzoor said it was the Will of Allah.”

Speaking about the grief he initially felt and his subsequent recovery, Fatir said:

“I had never experienced anything like it. Losing a friend who I had grown up with in front of my own eyes was extremely traumatising.

For days afterwards, I had flashbacks of the moment when I went to officially identify Raza's body and I could hear the echoes of our prayers in the mountains. People were even suggesting that we should see

specialist psychiatrists for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. However, Huzoor's love and words cured us more than any psychiatrist could ever have done. It was as if we were given life again. Huzoor's love, compassion and holy spirit is something which no one else can compare to."

Break at Calais

At the service station where we offered Namaz, we all ate a light lunch and thereafter, Huzoor individually met the members of the Germany Jamaat who were present, before the Qafila proceeded directly to Calais, where we arrived at 5.05pm.

There was quite a bit of time until our shuttle and so Huzoor and Khala Saboohi passed the time by waiting at a small seating area in the main service area.

On the return journey home, there was an extra space in the Qafila because Mahmood Khan Sahib was still in hospital and so Huzoor had graciously permitted, Zafrulah Khan, a young Khadim to travel back with the Qafila.

Zafrulah was in Germany to attend a wedding and was scheduled to return to London by air but had sought Huzoor's permission to avail the extra seat.

Whilst we waited at the service area, Zafrulah came up to me and said:

“Abid sahib, perhaps for you it is now normal but for me seeing Huzoor in this informal environment walking in the service area and now sitting in the lounge area is completely incredible.”

I replied:

“You are right it is incredible to see this and no matter how many times you have the privilege to travel with Huzoor such scenes never ever become normal.”

As the time for our shuttle drew near, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi walked out to the Qafila cars. Khala Saboohi has a knee injury and because of this she walks slowly, and so Huzoor slowed his own pace and walked just behind her.

As they walked, Huzoor noticed that I was writing something in my notebook and so he smiled and said:

“Are you writing that we are walking at an extremely slow speed?”

I replied by saying:

“No Huzoor, I was writing that as Huzoor walked towards his car he pointed out and showed Khala Saboohi a ‘pet’s play area’ that they have here in the car park.”

Huzoor again smiled and said:

“Yes, I do not see any children’s play area here but they certainly have a pet’s play area!”

Seeing Huzoor smile after the long day that everyone had encountered was a great comfort.

Arrival in London

We returned to England via the *Channel Tunnel* and thereafter the Qafila proceeded directly to Masjid Fazl, where many Ahmadis had gathered to welcome Huzoor home.

After just a few minutes in his residence, Huzoor came down and led the Maghreb and Isha prayers.

Conclusion

Alhamdolillah, Huzoor’s tour of Germany had proven extremely blessed and successful once again.

Huzoor’s addresses at the Jalsa Salana and Mosque ceremonies were truly magnificent and uplifting. Furthermore, the media coverage exceeded past tours of Germany and in this way millions of people came to know of the true and peaceful teachings of Islam.

As I drove home with my family that evening, I thought of how Huzoor never seemed to have time for even a short break or period of rest.

In the past few months alone, Huzoor had visited Scandinavia and then after Ramadan there was the UK Jalsa, followed immediately by the Germany tour.

Looking forward, there was another tour soon on the horizon, one that would prove extremely historic and blessed.

The tour, of course, was to be a six-week visit to Canada.

End

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