

# **HUZOOR'S TOUR OF GERMANY & BELGIUM 2018**

## **Part 1**

### **A Personal Account**

*By Abid Khan*

## **Introduction**

On 1 September 2018, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) embarked on an 18 day tour of Germany and Belgium, during which he would grace the Jalsa Salanas of both countries with his presence.

Apart from Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*), there were 14 members of Qafila who travelled as part of Huzoor's entourage, including Huzoor's eldest grandchild Mansoor Ahmad Dahri (*son of Fateh Ahmad Dahri sahib*).

There were seven security staff – Muhammad Ahmad, Nasir Saeed, Sakhawat Bajwa, Mahmood Khan, Abdul Qadous Khawaja, Mohsin Awan and Mirza Laeeq Ahmad.

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

Nadeem Amini, Nasir Amini and Abdul Rehman had volunteered to drive their personal cars as Qafila cars and Huzoor had graciously accepted their requests.

In addition to those who travelled with Huzoor, there were other central workers who travelled in advance. These included representatives of *Private Secretary's Office*, *MTA International*, *Makhzan-e-Tasaweer* and *Review of Religions* amongst others.

### **Preparing his notes**

A few days before the tour, on 29 August 2018, Huzoor called me to his office to take dictation for an address he was to give at the Germany Jalsa in English to non-Ahmadi and non-Muslim guests.

Before dictating, Huzoor enquired what the main political or social issues were currently in Germany. I mentioned a few, one of which was *immigration*.

Upon this, Huzoor said:

***“Yes, the immigration has mainly been from Muslim countries in recent years and so the real reason for the disturbances is not the influx itself, it is a fear of Islam and a fear of Muslims.”***

Thereafter, Huzoor took out a small notepad and started to make some notes.

A few minutes later, Huzoor looked up and told me to start typing and over the next hour, Huzoor dictated a very faith inspiring speech in which he analysed the immigration crisis and responded to various allegations that had been levelled at Muslims.

For example, Huzoor refuted the allegation that Muslim men were inclined to abuse or harass women by describing such acts as ‘*evil, immoral and reprehensible crimes*’ for which Islam had mandated extremely severe punishments.

Furthermore, Huzoor explained the responsibilities of immigrants to their adopted nations and the duties of host nations towards people who were genuine refugees.

Huzoor concluded the dictation by urging mankind to turn towards God Almighty. He said that day by day people across the world were moving away from religion and spirituality and that the results had been *'terrifying'*.

I mentioned that Huzoor's conclusion was extremely powerful, whereby after highlighting the problems faced by society, Huzoor had made it clear that such issues were a result of turning away from God.

Upon this, Huzoor said:

***"Our Jalsa Salana is not a political event or even a function like the Peace Symposium in which we invite people to speak about world issues, rather the Jalsa is a purely religious event and so it is necessary that I tell them about the vital need for religion and spirituality in society."***

For a few days before, I had been wondering if I would have the privilege and blessing to travel with Huzoor to Germany. Consequently, it was a cause of great joy when Huzoor indicated to me during the Mulaqat that I should get ready to travel with him.

Huzoor's way of informing was very beautiful, whereby I had mentioned an Ahmadi Muslim from Germany who I had met at Eid a few days before.

Upon this, Huzoor said:

***“You will see him in a few days in Germany when you travel with me.”***

As he said this, Huzoor smiled and, at that very moment, I felt extremely emotional and happy. Being able to travel with Huzoor is always a means of joy and delight and no matter how grateful a person is to Allah the Almighty, it can never be enough. Nonetheless, finding out I was going to be a part of Huzoor’s Qafila was perhaps even more emotional for me this time.

One reason was that I had not travelled with Huzoor for a year, since the last Jalsa Germany tour. The fact that I had not been with Huzoor in Spain earlier in the year had reminded me that such blessings were never ever to be taken for granted.

Secondly, a few days after the UK Jalsa Salana I had not been feeling very well and briefly, I was slightly concerned I might have a more serious illness. *Alhamdolillah*, a test soon confirmed that it was not serious and soon I was feeling much better.

However, those few days of relative uncertainty had shown me that the opportunity to serve Khalifa-Waqt closely could be lost at any time and so there ought never to be a moment or a day when such blessings were taken lightly.

As I left Huzoor’s office, I offered thanks to Allah the Almighty and prayed that the tour would be blessed in all respects and that I would be able to serve Khilafat in the best way possible.

## **Departure from London**

On 1 September 2018, I reported to the Fazl Mosque early morning and I handed over my luggage which was duly packed, along with the cases of other members of Qafila.

I was informed that I would be sitting in the car directly in front of Huzoor's car, which was to be driven by Nadeem Amini. Also in the car were Abdul Qadous Khawaja and sitting next to me in the back was Huzoor's grandson, Mansoor.

I was very happy to be in that car, as I was sure the company of my fellow passengers would make the long car journeys very enjoyable and so it proved.

I had travelled with Nadeem Amini and Qadous sahib many times but it was to be my first trip with Mansoor. Though he was the youngest amongst us, over the coming weeks, he would often impress us with his general knowledge and particularly his excellent grasp of history and languages.

As always, Nadeem also kept us very entertained with stories, jokes and anecdotes from his life!

At exactly 9.30am, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi (*Huzoor's respected wife*) came out of their residence. Many Ahmadis, both those who lived nearby and also some remaining Jalsa guests, came to see off Huzoor and after a silent prayer, Huzoor waved goodbye to them all before departing.

### **Struggling with the sugar**

We drove straight to Folkestone from where the Qafila would cross into mainland Europe via the Channel Tunnel.

Upon arrival at Folkestone there remained some time until our train and so, after clearing the passport checking, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi spent the next twenty minutes at a lounge at the service station.

As Huzoor came out of the car, I noticed that he had taken off his *paghri* (turban) and was now wearing an *Afghani topi*.

As Huzoor entered the lounge, he called me and asked if our car had been stopped by security. I responded by saying that we had not been stopped.

Upon this, Huzoor said:

***“This time they checked our car thoroughly. They even lifted up the bonnet and Ahmad was told to get out!”***

I felt regret that Huzoor and Khala Saboohi were placed in any type of inconvenience. Nonetheless, Huzoor did not express any anger or even irritation.

Instead, Huzoor smiled and said:

***“I think they were checking to see if we were carrying any contraband items!”***

Thereafter, Ahmad bhai called me and said I should assist him as he was getting some *cappuccinos* and snacks to present to Huzoor and Khala Saboohi. When the coffees were ready, Ahmad bhai also asked me to bring some sachets of sugar.

As Huzoor took his coffee he asked if there was any sugar. I was standing next to Huzoor and so I started to open a sachet but as I did, I could feel myself physically tremble. My fingers were shaking and I found it genuinely difficult to open the packet.

On the one hand, I was trying to be as quick as I could but on the other I could not make my hands or fingers work any faster.

For a few seconds, it genuinely felt as though my hand was paralysed!

As I continued to struggle, I could see Ahmad bhai looking at me in a way that suggested he was regretting giving me the responsibility to bring the sugar and on the other side, Huzoor was continuing to wait.

I had only opened the sachet half-way when Huzoor smiled and said:

***“Give it to me! You are opening this sachet slowly like a European but it needs opening like a Punjabi!”***

I handed Huzoor the sachet and in a second he opened it and poured it into his coffee. He then asked for another sachet and another and then another!

As I felt my hands still trembling, I managed to speak and said:

***“Huzoor, how many sugars do you take in coffee?”***

Huzoor smiled and said:

***“With the Grace of Allah, I don’t have diabetes or any sugar related health issues and so I can take even four or five sugars on occasion!”***

As Huzoor said this he smiled beautifully and Mansoor, who was also standing nearby, laughed and enjoyed those precious moments with Huzoor.

Despite my continued embarrassment at failing to open a packet of sugar properly, I was very happy to learn that, with the *Grace of Allah*, Huzoor had no problems taking sugar.

A few minutes later, Huzoor and Khala Saboohi returned to their car and I also returned to mine. I kept wondering what had happened and why I had been unable to open a simple sachet of sugar.

The only conclusion I could reach was that because I was travelling with Huzoor after quite some time, my nerves and emotions simply got the better of me for those few moments.

### **Stop in Calais**

The journey across the *Channel* took around 35 minutes and so by the time the Qafila crossed into France it was 1.45pm local time.

The Qafila cars drove to a nearby petrol station in Calais where members of the German Jamaat, including Ameer Sahib Germany, were waiting to escort Huzoor and the Qafila onwards.

A few minutes later we stopped at a *Holiday Inn* hotel for *Namaz* and lunch, which had been arranged by the French Jamaat.

After *Namaz*, Huzoor ate lunch with Khala Saboohi and Mansoor in a nearby room, whilst the rest of us ate our lunches in a small private dining room.

The food arranged was a *buffet* and it included a well-known Moroccan dish called *tagine*. I had never tried it before and was unsure what it was until a fellow *Qafila* member helpfully described it as '*Moroccan aloo ghosht*'.

It turned out to be an accurate description, as it consisted of lamb and potato cooked in a special pot known as a tagine. I do not tend to eat a lot at lunchtime but the tagine was very good and so I helped myself to two portions.

The buffet also included some *grilled chicken* and *grilled lamb* and *sushi* and following dinner we were also given some *Moroccan green tea*, which was deliciously sweet and refreshing.

A few minutes after lunch, Huzoor came out to the lobby area of the hotel and Ameer Sahib France had the opportunity to sit with Huzoor for a few minutes, during which Ameer Sahib took Huzoor's guidance on certain Jamaat projects in France.

After Huzoor was informed that all members of the Qafila and all the Khuddam on duty had eaten, Huzoor returned to his car at 3.10pm and the Qafila continued its journey to Germany.

### **'Pause and wait'**

Before reaching Frankfurt late evening, the Qafila made one more stop, at a petrol station at 7.40pm.

As members of the Qafila took the opportunity to use the bathroom, Huzoor browsed the shop at the petrol station. It was a very beautiful scene, where our beloved Khalifa looked at the items on display, which consisted mainly a range of snacks and chocolates.

Earlier in the day, I had informed Huzoor that *Atif Mian*, a well-known Ahmadi Muslim economist from the United States, had been appointed to Pakistan's newly formed *Economic Advisory Council*.

At the petrol station, Huzoor asked me if there had been any reaction to Atif sahib's appointment.

I mentioned I had received some messages from Ahmadi Muslims and seen some social media posts in which a few individual Ahmadis had praised Pakistan's Prime Minister and the Pakistani Government over the appointment.

At a Jamaat level, I had also been approached by some Jamaat *office bearers* asking if they should issue a statement praising Pakistan's Government.

Hearing this, Huzoor said:

***“There is no need for the Jamaat or even individual Ahmadis to issue any statements or comments on this matter. It is always better to wait and observe how the situation unfolds before commenting. Sometimes, Ahmadis get excited too easily. In this Atif Mian case, they should pause and wait and they will soon see the reality.”***

In just a few days, it would become crystal clear how prescient and far-sighted Huzoor’s words at the petrol station were.

### **Arrival at Baitus Sabuh**

With the *Grace of Allah*, the Qafila arrived safely at the *Baitus Sabuh Mosque* in Frankfurt at 9pm, where Huzoor was welcomed by thousands of Ahmadi Muslim men, women and children.



The *naaray* and welcome in Germany is always extremely passionate and this was no exception. Many of the Ahmadis present were those who had arrived in Germany during the past year from Pakistan and so it was their first ever glimpse of Khalifatul Masih.

After a few moments in his residence, Huzoor returned to the Mosque to lead the Maghreb and Isha prayers.

Apart from the Mosque itself, the entire Mosque's premises was filled with Ahmadis offering Salat behind Huzoor.

Following Namaz, Huzoor returned to his residence, whilst the rest of the Qafila members went to the dining hall for our evening meal and, after dinner, I was taken to my room.

I was staying on the fourth floor of *Baitus Sabuh* in a room next to where Majid sahib was staying.

I spent the rest of the evening unpacking, ironing clothes and calling home before heading to bed, knowing that Huzoor's meetings would start the next morning.

### **Reducing the word count**

The next morning, Huzoor had a session of *family Mulaqats*, in which the majority of Ahmadi Muslims were those who had come to Germany in the recent past and were meeting Huzoor for the first time.

Before the Mulaqats started, Huzoor called me to his office for a few moments.

Huzoor told me that he had spent two and a half hours of the journey to Germany editing his Jalsa speech for which I had taken dictation a few days earlier.

The initial word count had been around 4,900 words and during the car journey, Huzoor had reduced the word count by around 1200 words.

Huzoor went through the script with me and showed me which parts he had cut and which parts he had re-drafted.

The bulk of the words cut were from the latter part of Huzoor's address, in which he had mentioned the perilous state of the world and the risks of a *Third World War*.

Huzoor had spoken of how world governments and leaders were being blinded by self-interest and had forsaken morality.

Huzoor said:

***"The main issue over here is integration and immigration and so I will focus on that. I have kept all the quotes of the Holy Quran because they were necessary and most important to include, however I have cut out several paragraphs of my own words."***

I am not sure if it was appropriate but I could not help but express my regret that Huzoor had chosen to remove those beautiful and faith inspiring 1200 words. I asked if Huzoor would perhaps use those passages in a future address.

Most graciously, Huzoor replied:

***“Yes, if it is possible and appropriate I will include the omitted parts at another time.”***

The reduced word count was mainly due to the fact that Huzoor had removed much of the final part of his address, however I also noted how Huzoor had very carefully edited the rest of the script.

Thus, where two or three words could be replaced by one, Huzoor had done so.

Huzoor handed me the edited script and said that I should correct the typed version and print out a revised version.

As I left Huzoor’s office, I mentioned I had noticed that some local Germans had seemed quite perturbed by the *Qafila*’s presence at the petrol station the day before.

I had noticed one lady who seemed nervous and even angered by the presence of a large group of Muslims. Thankfully, Ameer Sahib Germany spoke to her and after a few minutes she seemed reassured.

Similarly, as we were leaving the petrol station, another German man had spoken something under his tongue which I could not fully understand but suggested that he too was irritated at the presence of a group of Muslims.

We had stopped at many German service stations during the past few years during Huzoor's tours and never experienced any hostility.

It certainly suggested that anti-Muslim or anti-immigrant sentiment was on the rise and so I hoped and prayed that Huzoor's speech which directly addressed the concerns of such people would be heard far and wide.

### **Emotions of Ahmadis**

As the *family Mulaqat* session started, I went and stood outside and met with some families who had the opportunity to meet Huzoor that morning.

One person who met Huzoor for the very first time was a young doctor, *Musawar Ahmad (33)* from Kaiserslautern. He had moved to Germany in 2014 from Pakistan.

Musawar sahib said:

***"I cannot imagine anything else would bring greater joy and happiness than me and my wife just experienced. We were with our Khalifa for two minutes and those two minutes will forever be etched in our memories and will stay with us throughout our lives."***

Musawar sahib continued:

***“When I was in Pakistan it seemed inconceivable that I would ever have the chance to meet Huzoor. I recall the feelings of desperation that we could not even hold central Ijtemas or Jalsas. Yet Allah the Almighty has removed all our pain and what seemed impossible has become a reality. Here, we have religious freedom, we can partake in the Jalsa and meet our spiritual leader. What we gained today are far beyond all the riches of the world.”***

I also met with *Patrick Lakakosz (31)* and his wife *Rukhshanda Awan*. They had married in 2013 and were both working as social workers.

Their emotional state after meeting Huzoor for the first time was clearly evident.

Rukhshanda sahiba said:

***“Before I entered Huzoor’s office, I was incredibly nervous and the moment I entered I became completely overwhelmed and speechless. It was a ‘wow’ moment. It was unique and there are no words to describe how I felt. Huzoor’s way of meeting us and his personality was so kind, soft and loving. He asked about our lives and encouraged us and took great interest in us. You can see the tears I have in my eyes but these are happy tears. Having met Huzoor I am determined that I live my life in a way that will bring me closer to Allah.”***

Her husband Patrick said:

***“I wished to tell Huzoor my life story. Especially, I wanted to tell him that I completed my studies in social work but my marks were just shy of what was needed to get an academic award from Huzoor at the Jalsa. The fact I missed out by such a small margin was devastating but during the Mulaqat Huzoor gave me a ring as a gift and so I consider that to be my award!”***

As his voice cracked with emotion, Patrick said:

***“In my life I have faced a lot of struggles but somehow I have slowly recovered and built myself up. I wanted to tell Huzoor about this because whenever I was at my lowest I would write to him and his letters used to heal my pain and encourage me. His prayers helped me at every stage of my life. Now, I want to make sure that I use all of my skills and work training in a way that can help the Jamaat.”***

I also met an Ahmadi called *Shahid Arshad (28)* who had migrated from Jalalpur in Pakistan to Germany three months earlier. He told me he and his family had faced a great deal of opposition due to their faith.

His father had converted to Ahmadiyyat and then they were subjected to social boycotts and his father's family turned against them.

For example, their father was cut off from their family inheritance and all contact with their family ended.

Shahid sahib said:

***“I watched and observed as my father’s family sought to pressure him and tried to force him to recant his faith in the truth of Ahmadiyyat. Yet, no matter what, nothing can take our faith away. Even though they cut my father’s inheritance, our family is financially doing well, whilst my father’s family are struggling.”***

When I mentioned the fact that he had just met Huzoor for the first time, Shahid sahib’s face instantly lit up.

Shahid sahib said:

***“Huzoor met me and my wife in a way that manifested every type of love that is possible. It felt like he was our father, our mother, our brother and our friend all rolled into one. Having attained this blessing, I know my responsibilities have increased. If I fail to improve and fail to spiritually reform then what purpose will this meeting have served?”***

Another person to meet Huzoor was *Osaf Ahmad* (32), originally from Dera Ghazi Khan in Pakistan. Later, he had relocated to Rabwah before moving finally to Germany in 2012.

He told me his mother, who had died in 2013, had been a convert to Ahmadiyyat.

Osaf sahib said:

***“After accepting Ahmadiyyat, my mother was extremely firm in her faith and I vividly remember that before Huzoor’s Khilafat, she once said ‘Don’t tell anyone but this man Masroor (Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad) will one day be the Khalifa’. I don’t know how she knew this, if she had seen a dream or not. However, I never forgot those words and of course it came true. Today when I met Huzoor, I wished that my mother was here so I could share the tabarruk I received with her.”***

### **Keeping his concentration**

During the afternoon break, I ate lunch with *Ahmad bhai*, Huzoor’s head of security on the tour.

He asked me about the journey from London the day before and if I had managed to sleep in the car. I told him that it was very rare for me to be able to sleep in a car.

I was more intrigued to know if he had any tricks or methods that enabled him to stay awake and alert during the journeys, as he had the privilege of sitting in the front of Huzoor’s car during the tour.

Ahmad bhai told me that he kept a bag of chocolates in the car and if he ever felt sleepy or tired he would take a bite or two and that was enough to keep him fresh and alert. I remember thinking that it was a good excuse to eat copious amounts of chocolate!

## **Emotions of Ahmadis**

After lunch, Huzoor held another session of *family Mulaqats*, which continued from late afternoon until Maghreb and Isha.

One individual who met Huzoor was *Harris Shakeel (32)* who had come to Germany in 2014. He had grown up in Rabwah before moving to Dubai in 2008 and then coming to Germany.

After meeting Huzoor, Harris sahib said:

***“I personally feel great pain for Huzoor because I am from Pakistan and I miss it deeply every day. Yet we tend to overlook this great sacrifice of beloved Huzoor that he is unable to go back to the country where he was born and raised. No matter how well a person integrates into their adopted country, a person’s home is home. Hence, I regularly pray that conditions in Pakistan improve so that one day Huzoor can return to Pakistan, even if it is just for a short visit.”***

I found myself reflecting later on what Harris sahib had said.

I have no doubt that Huzoor does miss Pakistan a great deal. On many occasions, Huzoor has told me stories about his life in Pakistan and especially about Rabwah.

Many times, I have heard Huzoor comment or speak in a way that illustrates his immense love and everlasting affinity to Pakistan.

For example, several times, Huzoor has said to me something along the lines of *'You are English but I am Pakistani'*.

Through the decades-long cruelty and injustice of its leaders and clerics, Pakistan has forsaken the honour and unparalleled privilege of being home to Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

Yet, despite the cruelties of the rulers, the deep love that Huzoor has for his people and his nation forever endures.

Another person to meet Huzoor was *Tahir Ahmad Phool* (49). He had moved to Germany in 1984 but had never met Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba). I was surprised to hear this and asked why his turn for Mulaqat had come after so long.

In reply to my question, Tahir sahib said:

***"I myself never applied for Mulaqat until now because I wanted my children to reach an age where they could truly appreciate and understand the blessings of Khilafat and the purpose of meeting Huzoor. It is quite possible that this was the only chance in my life to meet my Khalifa and so I wanted to make sure my children were of an age where they could benefit the most."***

Tahir sahib continued:

***"When I was young, I saw with my own eyes the ignorance of the non-Ahmadis in Pakistan but their ignorance and hatred has only ever served***

***to increase our faith in Khilafat. With every day that passes, my belief that Khalifa-Waqt is appointed by Allah the Almighty only increases. The emotions of love that exist between Khalifa-Waqt and Ahmadis are those emotions that can only be put in a person's heart by Allah the Almighty."***

That evening I also met with *Ateeq Ahmad (32)* who had just met Huzoor for the very first time along with his wife. They had moved to Germany from Pakistan in 2017.

Ateeq sahib told me that he had suffered a lot of persecution in Pakistan and had been falsely imprisoned and tortured.

Ateeq sahib said:

***"In 2011, my brother and I were arrested in Pakistan and taken to the local jail where the police used to beat us repeatedly simply because we were Ahmadi Muslims. We were kept in jail for one month and six days and even now I cannot believe that I am still alive and that I survived what they did to me. Throughout, I used to pray to Allah that I was not tortured or beaten beyond my capacity and Allah listened to my prayer because whenever I felt I was reaching the limit of what I could physically and mentally endure the beatings would cease for some time."***

Ateeq sahib continued:

***"With hand on heart, I can say that never once did my faith weaken or did I consider saying anything against my faith in order to receive lenient treatment. Allah the Almighty never forsook me, He was always with me***

*and today He has given me the best of rewards. Meeting Huzoor has removed any grief or pain that I have ever felt. Before we entered Huzoor's office, I was so nervous and I felt as though I could not breathe. Yet the moment I entered Huzoor's office, I felt Huzoor's love and grace. I knew I was in the presence of my best and most beautiful friend."*

### **A few moments with the Jamaat**

After Mulaqats were completed, Huzoor proceeded directly to the Mosque but before leading *Namaz*, Huzoor took a seat on the floor of the Mosque and graciously spent a few extra moments with the members of the Jamaat.

Turning his direction towards a young boy sitting near the front, Huzoor smiled and said:

***"Your watch is bigger than your hand!"***

The pride and delight on the face of the young boy that Huzoor had seen him and spoken with him was clear for all to see.

Then, Ameer Sahib Germany informed Huzoor about an anti-immigration and anti-Muslim rally held in the eastern German city Chemnitz a few days earlier attended by thousands.

Some of the far-right extremists had even resorted to using Nazi salutes and slogans. More positively, a counter protest in favour of immigrants had drawn an even bigger crowd.

Upon this, Huzoor said:

***“It is after seeing the current circumstances and hostilities that I have decided to speak about immigration during my Jalsa address to guests. I shall speak about how immigrants should behave and how immigrants should be treated and speak about the responsibilities of both sides.”***

In reply, Ameer Sahib Germany said:

***“Huzoor, your topic is most apt and needed at this time in Germany.”***

Huzoor asked Ameer Sahib Germany about the lady who seemed agitated by the Qafila’s presence at a petrol station the day before when Huzoor was travelling to Frankfurt.

Upon this, Ameer Sahib Germany said:

***“Yes, Huzoor she was quite worried and hostile because she thought we were some type of ‘mafia’ group. However, we explained calmly to her who we are and that all leaders have some security and she calmed down. The interesting thing is that the lady who held these reservations later told us that she was a teacher who taught students about integration!”***

Thereafter, Huzoor said:

***“I saw a Sikh man from Amritsar at the petrol station and later on I was told that he had expressed a desire to meet me but no one told me at the time. If he desired to meet it should have been mentioned to me.”***

Huzoor's comment illustrated his constant regard for the feelings of others. I think the reason the German Jamaat did not mention the request of the Sikh man was because they did not wish to disturb Huzoor during a journey. However, when Huzoor later learned of it he felt regret that the wish of the Sikh man had not been conveyed to him.

### **'Tears of love'**

The next day, I saw a familiar looking elderly Ahmadi Muslim from Indonesia passing through the security scanning area of *Baitus Sabuh*. I knew I had seen him before but could not recall his name.

I introduced myself and soon learned that I was talking to a very respected and devoted servant of Ahmadiyyat, a Missionary called *Hajji Syuti Aziz Ahmad (74)*, who was serving as *Principal Jamia Ahmadiyya* in Indonesia.

He had literally just arrived in Germany and did not know where he was staying or what the programme was but his only concern was that he should not be late for *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers.

I informed him that Huzoor's Mulaqats were taking place and there was still some time until Namaz. He was instantly relieved and thereafter I was able to talk to him for a few minutes.

During those few minutes, Syuti Aziz sahib told me about his life and his experiences with Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

Syuti Aziz sahib told me he studied in Jamia Ahmadiyya in Rabwah from 1966 until 1972 before returning to Indonesia where he had served ever since. Over the years, he has also been sent by the Jamaat to do Tabligh in nearby countries and islands.

Throughout our meeting, the love and absolute respect Syuti Aziz sahib held for Khilafat was ever apparent.

In response to any question I asked, Syuti Aziz sahib invariably responded by mentioning his love for Khilafat and the paramount need for Ahmadi Muslims to always stay loyal and obedient to Khilafat.

Indeed, Syuti Aziz sahib described this as the foremost lesson he had learnt in his life and which he desired to inculcate amongst his students.

Syuti Aziz sahib said:

***“I have served as a Waqf-e-Zindighi (life devotee) for over 50 years and if I have learned one thing it is that we can only succeed and progress if we say ‘Labaik’ (we obey) with all our heart. True obedience to Khilafat is our means of progress, whereas if we go one iota in another direction we are destined to fail.”***

Syuti Aziz sahib told me about the persecution faced by the Jamaat in Indonesia.

He said the scale of the persecution had increased in recent decades and in some areas was relentless and extremely painful.

Syuti Aziz sahib said:

***“Huzoor always tells us to be patient and to increase our prayers and so this is our way to respond to the cruelties we face. In Lombok Island the persecution is particularly heavy and sustained but Huzoor has instructed us that the Jamaat should not leave the Island and that the Ahmadis should stay patient and his prayers are with them. His prayers and his love ensure that we are ready for every sacrifice and the cruelties we face are borne with fortitude and courage.”***

As we talked, Syuti Aziz sahib became visibly emotional. As he wiped away tears from his eyes he took pride in them. He said:

***“We Indonesians cannot control our tears when it comes to Khilafat. Our love for Huzoor and the institution of Khilafat is beyond words or description. In fact, I believe that when it comes to showing tears of love for Khilafat the Indonesian Jamaat is number one in the world!”***

As Principal Jamia Ahmadiyya, Syuti Aziz sahib had experienced and seen first-hand, Huzoor’s desire for progress so that the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat could spread in East Asia and beyond. Further, he had also seen and experienced Huzoor’s great love for those people who had dedicated their lives for this great purpose.

Syuti Aziz sahib said:

***“Before in Indonesia we only taught the ‘Mubashar’ (shorter course) at Jamia Ahmadiyya but Huzoor instructed us to increase to a full Shahid***

***degree course. It appeared a great challenge but with Huzoor's prayers we were able to fulfil his desire and now the first Shahid class will Insha'Allah graduate in 2020 from Jamia Ahmadiyya Indonesia."***

Syuti Aziz sahib continued:

***"Huzoor guides us on every single issue and personally takes care of any problems faced by the staff or students. He sends them tabarruk and responds to their every letter. We can never be grateful enough for the prayers and love that Huzoor has shown us."***

As our chance meeting drew to a close, Syuti Aziz sahib told me about his personal experience of *Hajj* and the great blessings that ensued.

Syuti Aziz sahib said:

***"In March 1999 I had the great fortune to do Hajj and before I went, our Ameer Sahib Indonesia asked me to pray that Khalifatul Masih comes to Indonesia the moment I saw the Kaabah for the first time. Thus, this was the prayer that I made repeatedly upon seeing the Kaabah and the very next year, in 2000, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) visited Indonesia in an extremely historic and emotional tour."***

Syuti Aziz sahib continued:

***"Now we are in desperate need for more Indonesian Ahmadi Muslims to do Hajj and to beg Allah the Almighty in front of the Kaabah that our nation may be blessed again by the presence of Khalifatul Masih. We are***

***desperate for that love, for that light, for that benevolence to radiate amongst our people.”***

As he said these words, Syuti Aziz sahib suddenly became quiet. I could tell that his emotions and love for Khilafat had consumed him, as he contemplated the fact that it had been eighteen long years since Indonesia had the honour of hosting Khilafat.

After a few seconds of silence, Syuti Aziz sahib said that he should proceed to the Mosque so that he was not late for Namaz.

I was very grateful that I personally had that opportunity to meet and spend some time with such a sincere and earnest servant of the Promised Messiah (as).

Syuti Aziz Ahmad sahib passed away on 19 November 2018 at the age of 74. In his *Friday Sermon* of 30 November 2018, Huzoor spoke extensively about the life and character of Syuti Aziz Ahmad sahib and prayed that he was granted a high status in Paradise.

When I heard about his passing, I felt deep sadness but also gratitude that I had been able to spend some time with him in Germany.

### **Emotions of Ahmadis**

During the morning session of Mulaqats, a lady who met Huzoor for the very first time, along with her husband, was *Shima Rai*, originally from Sheikhpura in Pakistan. They were now living in Hannover.

When I met them after their Mulaqat, Shima sahiba, in particular, was extremely emotional.

Shima sahiba said:

***“I have never felt such emotions in my life before. I feel like I am walking upon a different planet! To meet Khalifatul Masih is no ordinary matter, rather it is the greatest blessing imaginable! After seeing Huzoor, I am ready to give my life for the sake of this beautiful Jamaat! Everything good in our lives is because of our attachment to the Promised Messiah (as) and to Khilafat.”***

Shima sahiba told me that their family had faced certain difficulties since coming to Germany. Their asylum case was dragging on and they had felt and experienced anti-immigrant sentiments. However, after meeting Huzoor everything else paled into insignificance.

***“The prayers and blessings we received today from Huzoor will remain with our family long after we have left this world. They will benefit us for centuries and into the Hereafter. I wish to tell those Ahmadis who have not yet met Huzoor that he truly is the most special person in the world and that everything that is said about the immense love, spirituality and noor of Khalifa-Waqt is true.”***

Another couple to meet Huzoor were Muzaffar Ahmad (36) who served in the Amoomi security team and his wife Naheed Muzaffar.

During their Mulaqat, Naheed sahiba asked Huzoor to pray that Allah the Almighty forgave her and her family for their weaknesses.

Naheed sahiba said:

***“When I asked Huzoor to pray for our forgiveness, he said ‘Strive to do good and to be pious and then automatically any shortcomings or weaknesses will be forgiven’. I promised Huzoor we will try to act upon his guidance and now that I have made a promise to Khalifa-Waqt I know we must make every possible effort to fulfil it. This was my first experience ever of meeting a Khalifa and truly it is the case that ‘seeing is believing’. When you see Huzoor and talk to him you realise that nothing else in the world compares to such blessings.”***

Also meeting Huzoor that morning, along with his wife, was *Sarmad Azim Butt (30)* from Ahmad Nagar in Pakistan.

As soon as we met, Sarmad sahib became overcome with emotion and tears streamed down his face.

Through his tears, Sarmad sahib said:

***“I don’t know why I am crying in front of you but it is hard to control my emotions because meeting Huzoor has made me more aware than ever of my own weaknesses and failings. Yet despite all my sins, due to his Grace and Mercy, Allah the Almighty has enabled me to meet the most holy person in the world today. Meeting Huzoor is indescribable. He is so loving and so kind. He is considerate of our feelings and needs. Today is***

***a colossal reward from God for all the pain and suffering our family endured in Pakistan due to our faith.”***

Thereafter, Sarmad sahib told me about how his family had faced a lot of persecution in Pakistan. At one point, Sarmad sahib and his brother had both been arrested on false charges and imprisoned. Thankfully, both were released relatively quickly but the difficulties and opposition continued. For example, Sarmad sahib was dismissed from his employment as soon as his employers realised he was an Ahmadi.

Speaking of the blessings of patience in the face of adversity, Sarmad sahib said:

***“Looking back, I consider that the persecution we faced in Pakistan was the means of our success. Alhamdolillah, our faith never once weakened and the result was that our lives and circumstances improved. As we were dismissed from our jobs, me and my close family members were forced to set up our own business and, with the Grace of Allah, it soon started to do very well.”***

After moving to Germany, Sarmad sahib had gained employment and this was something that came up in his Mulaqat.

Sarmad sahib said:

***“Huzoor asked me what job I was doing in Germany and I told him that I had set up a pizza takeaway. Upon this, Huzoor strictly told me to ensure that the pizzas and food we served remained halal. In truth, it is very***

***difficult to run a fully halal takeaway in Germany because the local people eat so much pork and drink so much alcohol. However, this is a test of my faith and it must take precedence over my worldly income no matter how difficult it becomes. I must follow my faith and the pledge I have made to Khalifa-Waqt because everything good in my life is because of Islam and the beautiful Jamaat of which I am a member. If it does not work out I will change jobs and move into another industry."***

Whilst I was standing outside, a slim young man approached me called *Wasik Parvaiz (20)*. He told me he had lived in Hartlepool with his family whilst I still lived there in the early 2000s. I had not recognised Wasik as he was just a young child when I had last seen him.

He and his family now lived in Germany and Wasik told me he was joining *Jamia Ahmadiyya Germany* in September.

Wasik said:

***"In our family Mulaqat, I thanked Huzoor for permitting me to join Jamia. Upon this, Huzoor said 'Always be regular and punctual in Namaz and study diligently. If you follow these two things, you will be successful in Jamia.'"***

I also met a lady called *Aliya Mishal* from Sialkot, who had recently moved to Germany with her husband *Mubashar Ahmad (34)*. As I spoke to her and her husband, Aliya sahiba kept wiping away tears. Where she was overcome with joy at meeting Huzoor, she also felt a sense of regret.

Aliya sahiba said:

***“I feel a deep sense of grief that I was unable to convey the salam and request for prayers of my parents and siblings in Pakistan. I feel as though I have let my family down. The Mulaqat was like a dream and I just wanted to stay in Huzoor’s presence forever. Yet, at the same time, I feel devastated that I could not do the one thing my family asked me to do. Please if you ever have the chance, convey my parents’ salam and request for prayers to my beloved Khalifa.”***

Quite often people ask me to convey messages or requests to Huzoor. Due to Huzoor’s schedule it is difficult to fulfil such requests and so normally I respond by suggesting they write to Huzoor.

However, on this occasion, the pain and anguish of the lady was such that I told her I would mention her request in my diary and that in this way Huzoor would, *Insha’Allah*, read her message.

### **Chinese whispers!**

During the course of the day, I started to notice that one of my teeth was feeling rather sensitive.

Having had some past unpleasant teeth issues, I immediately felt a sense of alarm and so, as soon as I had a chance, I went to the bathroom and started to gently brush around the tooth and saw some blood come out.

It was not especially painful but I was worried it could get worse. Thus, I mentioned the issue to an Ahmadi dentist, *Dr Muzafar Bajwa* and he kindly said I could come to his practice the next day and he would have a look.

As a member of Huzoor's *Qafila*, we are there to work and serve and if we have any personal needs or requests, we take permission from Huzoor.

We are all well aware of how busy Huzoor is and so to take up his precious time over such matters is something that weighs very heavily.

However, on this occasion, I sought Huzoor's permission and he graciously granted it and said that getting early treatment was prudent.

The next day, Dr Muzafar Bajwa kindly had a look and treated the tooth at his clinic.

I had not told anyone about the fact that I was going for the appointment, yet somehow word got out!

Thus, after I returned, for the rest of the day, various Khuddam came up to me and were asking how I was and if I had recovered!

As the day progressed, the scale of the concern seemed to increase. Somehow, I think my brief appointment had evolved through Chinese whispers into a mammoth surgical procedure!

Thankfully, the truth was much less dramatic and, with the *Grace of Allah*, I had no further issues during the rest of the tour.

## **Emotions of Ahmadis**

During Huzoor's next session of *family Mulaqats*, an Ahmadi lady, *Nazia Parveen* had the opportunity to meet Huzoor for the very first time. She was extremely emotional and overwhelmed by the experience of meeting Huzoor.

Nazia sahiba said:

***"I still cannot believe that I have seen Huzoor with my own eyes. It feels impossible that this has happened. In the past, I always felt deprived and desolate that I am so far from the person who is Allah's most loved one in the world today. I never dared to dream that I would meet Huzoor, lest I be crushed by the disappointment of it never happening. Yet somehow, Allah the Almighty has turned the impossible into the possible."***

Another person to meet Huzoor was *Khiyam Khalid (32)* originally from Faisalabad. He told me that in Pakistan anti-Ahmadi extremists had torched the homes of his family and destroyed their livestock and crops. Furthermore, they were subjected to social boycotts and some family members were physically beaten all because of their belief in the Promised Messiah (as). Yet, throughout, he had seen how Allah the Almighty had never forsaken them and had continuously rewarded their sacrifices.

Khiyam sahib said:

***"Allah has blessed us a million times over for whatever small sacrifices we have made for the sake of our faith. There was a time when we lived***

*in mud-houses, yet with the Grace of Allah, in Pakistan our family now lives in brick houses. Before we used to walk, then we used to take the bus and now we have our own cars. This is why our faith never ever weakened, even when the persecution was at its height, because we saw how Allah the Almighty continued to help and support us.”*

Khiyam sahib continued:

*“Regrettably, one member of our extended family did leave the Jamaat as he could not tolerate the persecution but now his state is terrible and much worse than before. When he was an Ahmadi he had a good job but now just to make ends meet he is working as a servant in Pakistan. Seeing how Allah blessed us and how his situation worsened has further increased our faith in Ahmadiyyat.”*

Also amongst the fortunate people to meet Huzoor for the first time was a young Khadim, *Malik Bilal Ahmad (28)*.

After meeting Huzoor, Bilal sahib said:

*“Meeting Huzoor feels like I have experienced Paradise on earth. His personality is so pure and beautiful. When I entered his office, Huzoor stood to greet me, he smiled and showed great affection throughout. I was so overwhelmed that I felt as though I had even forgotten who I was! There are so many better and more pious people who do not get the chance to meet Khalifa-Waqt but somehow this sinful and weak person has had the opportunity.”*

Bilal sahib continued:

***“I just pray that Allah removes whatever difficulties, stresses or worries that our beloved Huzoor may have and that we are able to help him as much as possible. I often think of how we always ask Huzoor to pray for us but Huzoor is human as well and so before we ask for his prayers, we should make sure we are praying for him. From morning till night, he is sacrificing everything for us and so we must do all we can to help him.”***

One young boy to meet Huzoor was Asam (13) who told me that before meeting Huzoor he felt nervous, excited, fearful and very hungry! The latter was a new one to me and I could not stop myself from laughing out loud.

Thereafter, Asam said:

***“As soon as I met Huzoor, I realised there was no need for me to be fearful because Huzoor was extremely loving and kind. However, my hunger remained throughout and still continues!”***

Upon this, I again laughed out loud and feeling sympathy for his predicament I cut our interview short and told him to go and get something to eat!

Later, I mentioned our conversation to Huzoor and said that it was one comment I had never received before.

Huzoor enjoyed the comment and the honesty of the boy and laughed.

### **A remorseful youth**

I also met a young man who met Huzoor bearing a sense of regret and guilt. He said:

***“I feel a great deal of regret in my heart. I was part of the Waqf-e-Nau scheme but we had various problems at home. My parents could hardly read or write and they had some marital issues. As I grew up, no one was there to guide me and I never understood the real value of being a Waqf-e-Nau.***

***“As a result, I went on the wrong track and I feel very sorry and remorseful. I feel as though I have let down Huzoor and so in Mulaqat today I wanted to say sorry to him. I desired to tell him that though I no longer deserve to be a Waqf-e-Nau, perhaps he could pray that I can still serve the Jamaat with humility and sincerity. If you can, please convey my deep shame and regret to my beloved Khalifa.”***

The young man continued:

***“Also, if you can please share my feelings in your diary or elsewhere because other Waqf-e-Nau should know how fortunate they are and should never take their Waqf lightly as I did.”***

As the young Khadim left, I thought of how Huzoor has repeatedly said that being a *Waqf-e-Nau* is not a title to be proud of but is something to be earned and requires the child’s parents to understand their responsibilities towards the moral training of their children.

This young Khadim had learned the value of Waqf-e-Nau the hard way.

As our conversation ended, I hoped I would see the Khadim again. I wanted to stay in touch and try to help or guide him if I could in any way. I asked if he would be coming to the Jalsa Salana.

In reply, he said:

***“Yes Abid sahib, of course I will be there! My duty is to clean the toilets and I am so happy and proud that I have been given this particular duty. Please pray I can do it in the best way.”***

### **Group Mulaqats**

On the morning of 5 September 2018, Huzoor held separate ‘group Mulaqats’ with Ahmadi men and Ahmadi ladies, during which hundreds of men and dozens of ladies were able to meet Huzoor in a group meeting for the very first time.

One of the men who met Huzoor during the group meeting was *Arsalan Tariq* (27) who had recently moved to Germany from Rabwah.

He told me he had come to Germany in 2017 when his wife was pregnant with their first child.

Though it was very tough to leave his wife whilst she was pregnant, he said they made the decision together for the sake of their unborn child.

Arsalan Tariq sahib said:

***“When my wife became pregnant we prayed and decided that I should leave Pakistan and go to a country where our future children would be able to openly call themselves Ahmadi Muslims, would be able to attend and do duties at the Jalsa Salana and be proud ambassadors of Ahmadiyyat.”***

Arsalan told me that after arriving in Germany he had attained employment at a local *Burger King* restaurant. However, he later heard that Huzoor had instructed the Jamaat not to take any *Chanda* from people who worked in establishments that sold either pork or alcohol. Despite having no other work lined up, Arsalan immediately resigned from the job.

Explaining the reasons and consequences of his decision, Arsalan sahib said:

***“As I resigned without giving notice, I did not even receive any pay for the final days of my employment but I did not wish to even spend a second in an activity that might be displeasing to my Khalifa. Some friends urged me to remain in the job until I had another one lined up but why would I ever desire to be amongst those people from whom the Jamaat did not take Chanda? I would prefer to be unemployed and penniless than to have a salary that is cursed and devoid of blessings.”***

Arsalan sahib continued:

***“Today, I have been rewarded more than I could ever imagine for that small sacrifice as I have been blessed with the most beautiful Mulaqat***

*imaginable. Even before Huzoor entered the Mosque, I felt a deep sense of anticipation and then when Huzoor entered I could not control my emotions. Seeing Huzoor on television does not do justice to his grace, beauty and radiance. Hearing Huzoor's voice directly for the first time in my life is something I will never forget. Huzoor asked us all to come forward one by one to meet him but it felt to me as though Huzoor was talking only to me. Being in his presence has invigorated my faith and my belief that Huzoor is the true representative of the Holy Prophet (sa) in the world today."*

Another person to meet Huzoor was *Muzzamil Hussein (36)*, who was originally from Sialkot. He told me that in Pakistan he faced many difficulties due to being an Ahmadi Muslim.

For example, he was fired on numerous occasions whenever his employers learned he was an Ahmadi. Or else his colleagues would throw away any plates or dishes from which Muzammil sahib may have eaten, having deemed them to be 'unclean'.

He never sought revenge or retaliated and such patience was a result of his obedience to the Jamaat.

Muzzamil sahib said:

*"It never occurred to me that I should retaliate to the persecution because the Jamaat in Pakistan had told us that Huzoor has instructed that we remain patient and that we should even pray for those who persecute us that may Allah guide them."*

Muzammil sahib continued:

***“All those times I was called a kafir (disbeliever) remain etched in my memory but now I have true freedom and today I met the most precious person in the world. Huzoor is so busy, yet he took the time to meet each of us with love. He appeared angelic and pure and was happy to see us. I will never forget those moments.”***

### **My old teacher**

I was pleased to see *Muhammad Hameed Kauser* from Qadian in Germany. Kauser sahib, is a long-serving Missionary of the Jamaat. He had served for many years in Qadian and had also spent a number of years in Kababir. Currently, he was serving as *Nazir Dawat Ilallah Markazia (Tabligh)* in Qadian.

I had spent three months as a student of Hameed Kauser sahib in 2007 when he was serving as the *Principal of Jamia Ahmadiyya Qadian*. At the time, I had only recently begun serving full time as a *Waqf-e-Zindighi*.

My wife’s maternal grandfather, *Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad*, a son of Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) had recently passed away after a life of service in Qadian.

Thus, Huzoor sent us both to Qadian in August 2007 with the instruction that I should study in Jamia Ahmadiyya and serve in some of the offices, whilst my wife should care for her elderly maternal grandmother *Sahibzadi Amtul Qudoos*.

During that period, I would spend the morning and early afternoon in Jamia receiving personal one-to-one tuition with Hameed Kauser sahib, whilst later in the day I would serve in the Jamaat's *Legal Affairs* department in Qadian.

Kauser sahib taught me how to read Urdu and I also studied *Hadith* and the books of the Promised Messiah (as) with him. The trip was personally very rewarding and most especially I will never forget the opportunities I had to pray daily near the blessed grave of the Promised Messiah (as) and in some of the blessed rooms in which the Promised Messiah (as) himself used to pray.

Thus, exactly 11 years later in Germany, I was glad to meet Kauser sahib and spend time with him. Physically, Kauser sahib is an imposing figure and from a distance can seem stern but he is very kind and is always generous in his desire to share his religious knowledge with others.

One evening after *Isha* I asked him if he had been out to see any of the local tourist sites or been anywhere else.

In reply, very matter-of-factly, Hameed Kauser sahib replied:

***"I have only one purpose on this visit and that is to pray behind Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (aba) and so I have not been out anywhere and have no desire to do so. In fact, when I arrived in Germany, I called home in Qadian to let my family know I have reached safely and after that I switched my phone off and I will not switch it back on until I return to India! Here I have no need for any such worldly things."***

Telling me about his Mulaqat with Huzoor in Germany, Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***“Alhamdolillah, I was blessed to have a very beautiful Mulaqat. Huzoor said to me that ‘You have come after 6 years, why so long?’ and in reply, I said ‘Huzoor, I come only on your instruction!’”***

Hameed Kauser sahib told me that he had sought Huzoor’s instructions regarding his Jamaat duties and that Huzoor had emphasised the importance of defending Islam through social media.

Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***“Huzoor urged us in Qadian to respond very quickly to any false allegations against Islam. In particular, Huzoor said that many lies about Islam were spread on social media and should be refuted quickly. As an example, Huzoor mentioned he had seen a clip of a female Hindi politician who spoke very aggressively against Islam and made a whole host of false allegations. He said such false allegations should not be left unanswered otherwise people would assume they were true.”***

Hameed Kauser sahib continued:

***“Huzoor has expressed his desire that we should always be ready to stand up and defend Islam. We should let the opponents of Islam know that we too have tongues and we too can speak. We will not respond to the hate with hate but by spreading the truth. This is what Huzoor desires from us.”***

A few days later, as Huzoor's tour of Germany was nearing its conclusion, I took the opportunity to spend a few more moments with Hameed Kauser sahib.

I asked how he had spent his past few days and was taken aback by his answer.

Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***"Alhamdolillah, I have been able to read all my prayers behind Huzoor and have completed the reading of the Holy Quran cover to cover twice whilst we have been here. I am happy because my only desire was to worship and pray behind Huzoor."***

I wondered how Kauser sahib had found the time to complete the reading of the Holy Quran twice in just a few days. I felt embarrassed and thought of how I should myself have spent more of the free time in early morning or the late evenings in a similar way.

Despite having enjoyed his time in Germany, Hameed Kauser sahib was ready to return home. He said:

***"I am desperate to go back to Qadian, where I was born and raised. In the middle of my life I was sent abroad for a few years and so then I had to leave Qadian but my personal desire would always be to remain in the town of the Promised Messiah (as). Previously, it was always my routine to walk daily along the different streets and roads of Qadian but now I tend to walk in Bahishti Maqbara."***

Laughing, Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***“I am trying to get familiar with Bahisti Maqbara as I hope to end up there permanently one day, Insha’Allah!”***

I asked Kauser sahib if he missed Jamia Ahmadiyya Qadian, where he had previously served as *Principal*.

In reply, Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***“If you do your duty properly you do not have time to reflect on the past or to miss things. Hence, I do not miss Jamia as I am solely focused upon the big task given to me now by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (aba) which is to convey and spread the Jamaat’s message in North India. If any day I have the time to sit and remember Jamia it can only mean that I am neglecting my duties.”***

Kauser sahib told me how the Ahmadis in Qadian longed for Huzoor to visit and how he had expressed this during his Mulaqat with Huzoor a few days before.

Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***“We are desperate for Khalifatul Masih to visit Qadian again as it has been so long since his last visit. In Mulaqat, I asked Huzoor when he will come and upon this Huzoor was silent for a few seconds. During those moments of silence, I saw a look on Huzoor’s face that I had not seen***

***before that suggested he too desired to return to the town of the Promised Messiah (as)."***

Reflecting on the past, Kauser sahib said that even though more than a decade had passed since his death, he continued to deeply miss Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad.

With great pain and emotion in his voice, Hameed Kauser sahib said:

***"Mian sahib (Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad) was our elder and was like a father to the people of Qadian. Allah took him early and now Apa Jaan (Sahibzadi Amtul Qudoos) is currently residing in Rabwah and in poor and frail health. Sometimes, I go to pray in Bait-ud-Dua and see the large lock on her house and it is devastating knowing that this was the house that was never closed."***

I thought of the great sacrifices that Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad and Sahibzadi Amtul Qudoos had made over the decades that followed the *Partition* of India and Pakistan and how years after the passing of Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad the people of Qadian still missed him so much.

Hameed Kauser sahib said to me that whenever he visited Hoshiarpur he always thought of me, as he took me and my wife there for a visit in 2007.

He added that if he ever saw me on *MTA* near Huzoor, he felt a sense of pleasure that someone he taught was now serving Khalifa-Waqt.

In reply, I said:

***“At that time, I was in the very first days of service as a Waqf-e-Zindighi and I never imagined that I would have the opportunity to work so closely to beloved Huzoor and be able to spend so much time in his presence.”***

Hameed Kauser sahib smiled and said:

***“Aap ki Qadian ki dua-ain 2007 mein kaam aagayin phir.”***

Meaning:

***“The prayers you offered in Qadian in 2007 have benefited you.”***

I was sure he was right.

### **Emotions of Ahmadis**

I met another Ahmadi, *Tanveer Ahmad (26)*, originally from Rabwah who had arrived a year earlier after an arduous four month journey during which he had travelled through Dubai, Libya, Italy and Austria before finally reaching Germany.

He told me that during his journey to Germany he had faced some very tough and harrowing conditions. However, the journey had been worth it as it had enabled him to be free from the heavy persecution he had faced in Pakistan.

As we talked, Tanveer sahib rolled up his trouser leg a few inches and showed me a very large scar which he had received after being stabbed by anti-Ahmadi extremists in Pakistan.

After showing me the scar, Tanveer sahib said:

***“They attacked me for one reason and one reason alone – that I was an Ahmadi Muslim. Even after the attack they did not leave us alone, instead they would tell my father that they planned to burn alive his two children. Throughout, we stayed patient because this was Huzoor’s instruction. If he had permitted us to fight back we would not have waited for even a second to defend ourselves, yet the instruction all Ahmadis receive in Pakistan is to put their trust in Allah the Almighty.”***

Tanveer sahib continued:

***“Alhamdolillah, now we have seen the fruits of that patience. Now I can breathe with freedom. Now I can speak with freedom. More important than anything else, now I can meet my beloved Khalifa, as I did today. His beauty was captivating, his noor beyond my imagination. He is my inspiration and my role model.”***

Another person to meet Huzoor was *Muhammad Javaid* (37) who had converted to Ahmadiyyat along with his brothers in the late 1990s.

He had arrived in Germany nine months earlier after travelling on foot all the way from Pakistan. I was amazed to hear how he had done this. He told me the journey had taken two and a half years and he had walked across

Iran, Turkey, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia, Italy before finally arriving in Germany.

Muhammad Javaid sahib said:

***“Unquestionably reaching Germany was not easy and the most difficult part of the journey was when I was in Serbia, as I was beaten at the border but somehow Allah gave me the strength to survive and meeting Huzoor has made all the pain and hardship worthwhile. I cannot express in words the emotions I feel and I just pray that my family, who remain in Pakistan, can join me soon and also attain the blessings of Khilafat.”***

It was emotional to hear of the hardships that so many Ahmadi Muslims had faced in Pakistan and how many had risked their lives in order to escape the persecution and for the chance to be nearer to Huzoor.

### **A large desk**

When Huzoor visits Germany, Private Secretary, Munir Javed sahib's office is next to Huzoor's and next to Munir sahib's office, is an office in which Majid sahib (*Additional Wakil-ul-Tabshir*) and I work in.

Various other people also spend their days coming in and out of the offices. Some are young Missionaries who assist Munir sahib and Majid sahib, whilst other Qafila members often come in as well.

In the office in which Majid sahib and I sit there were three desks in the past, however on this tour they had placed two desks.

To the amusement of the rest of us, the desk Majid sahib had been given was extremely vast in size. More than a desk, it appeared to be a huge dining table.

Hence, occasionally we would gently tease him about the size of the desk by suggesting he was enjoying having so much space to himself.

Majid sahib would not mind and would himself laugh but, at the same time, on each occasion, he would make it clear that he had not made any request or demand for such a large space and that the German Jamaat had given such a desk on their own initiative!

### **'Joy, joy and more joy'**

During Huzoor's tour, I met a young Missionary, *Hafiz Khaleeq Bashir (30)* on various occasions. He had travelled to Germany from Ghana with his family to attend the Jalsa.

Though I was meeting Khaleeq sahib for the first time, I had previous contact with him over email.

Khaleeq sahib had been born in Faisalabad but went to Rabwah as a child to memorise the Holy Quran before returning to his family home.

Between 2007 and 2014 he studied in *Jamia Ahmadiyya* in Rabwah and after completing his *Shahid* degree was sent to Ghana in 2016 where he was now teaching African children to memorise the Holy Quran at the *Madrassa-tul-Hifz*.

Though he was a child at the time, Khaleeq sahib told me he vividly remembered seeing Huzoor in Rabwah before his Khilafat on various occasions.

He said that Huzoor, who was then serving as *Nazir-e-Ala*, would come to inspect the *Madrassa-tul-Hifz* in Rabwah to check the conditions and to see how the children were faring.

Narrating one such occasion, Khaleeq sahib said:

***“Once when he was Nazir-e-Ala, Huzoor came to Madrassa-tul-Hifz. I still remember how Huzoor was wearing a suit and a Jinnah cap. At the time, I was feeling very unwell and so was sitting down to one side. Huzoor asked the Principal why I was seated and upon this I stood up myself and informed Huzoor that I was not feeling well. Hearing this, Huzoor very affectionately placed his hand on my forehead to see if I had a fever before personally prescribing homeopathy for me. This was how he personally cared for the young children.”***

Khaleeq sahib continued:

***“After his visit, Huzoor also instructed that the hostel fees were to be waived for all children who were enrolled in Madrassa-tul-Hifz. Previously, we had to pay fees which covered our food and certain other costs. Similarly, we noticed that after Huzoor’s visit, the food served to the children was much improved and this was all a result of Huzoor’s love and care for children and his desire for the students to be comfortable in all respects.”***

After graduating as a *Missionary*, Khaleeq sahib spent some time serving in different Jamaat offices in Rabwah for training before receiving notification that he was being sent to Ghana. At the time of his departure, his wife, who had also committed the Holy Quran to memory, was six months pregnant.

Telling me about that time, Khaleeq sahib said:

***“It was not easy to leave my wife when she was heavily pregnant and even after my daughter was born I could not meet her for six months. However, in a way, I felt pride and happiness to be separated from them because I knew that we were separated for the sake of the Jamaat and I considered this to be an honour. My wife also understood that I am a Missionary and so such separations and trials were possible in our life.”***

Khaleeq sahib continued:

***“The thing that gives me greatest joy is that I am serving in that country where Huzoor lived and continues to have great love for. In material terms, the conditions here are tougher than in Pakistan but I have never worried about such things and always think that the conditions in Ghana today are much easier than when Huzoor and Apa Jaan lived here around 35 years ago.”***

I asked Khaleeq sahib what he had learned or observed during his short time in Ghana. In reply, he said:

***“More than anything, I have seen how strong the love and respect for Khilafat is in Ghana. Perhaps, it is even more than I saw and felt in***

***Pakistan. The standards of obedience to Khilafat are incredible and in this respect, even though I am a Missionary, I feel as though I am lagging behind the Ghanaians."***

During their visit to Germany, Khaleeq sahib and his wife had the opportunity to meet Huzoor for the very first time.

Khaleeq sahib said:

***"I have read your diaries for a number of years and also seen Huzoor on countless occasions on MTA but today I realised that seeing Huzoor in person is completely different and on another level entirely. Huzoor was so kind and loving towards us and, it was surprising to me to see Huzoor's informal style. Huzoor made us feel so special by meeting us in a way that made us feel like he knows us so well."***

Khaleeq sahib continued:

***"The overriding emotion is joy! Joy, joy and more joy! It was always my dream and desire that Huzoor knows who I am. That was enough for me and I think Huzoor does now recognise me and knows my name. What greater honour could there be that the most beloved person of Allah knows my name!"***

### **Inspection of Jalsa Salana Germany**

With the *Grace of Allah*, we had reached the sixth day of Huzoor's tour on Thursday, 6 September 2018.

After working during the morning and afternoon, Huzoor departed from the Baitus Sabuh Mosque at 5.20pm to travel to the city of Karlsruhe for the Jalsa Salana.

Shortly after arriving at the Jalsa site at 7.15pm, Huzoor conducted the inspection of the arrangements of the Jalsa Salana.

Invariably during such inspections, the crowd of people around Huzoor is quite large and often people are walking at speed and sometimes the surface can be uneven. On a few occasions, I have found myself on the verge of tripping, whilst on others I have seen others struggling to keep their balance.

The inspection had only just started when I saw Ameer Sahib Germany stumble, however he managed to stop himself from falling and very lovingly Huzoor held his arm and supported him. As he did so, Huzoor gave Ameer Sahib a very kind and warm smile.

Thereafter, Huzoor visited various departments on both the men's and ladies' side, including *MTA*, the various stations in the *langhar khana* (kitchen), accommodation, security, exhibitions and various others.

Throughout, Huzoor met different Ahmadis on duties and waved and smiled at those who were standing to greet him.

At various points, the *naaray* (slogans) raised by Ahmadis overjoyed to see Huzoor were deafening, especially as Huzoor walked past an accommodation area where Ahmadis were staying in tents.

As he walked past them, Huzoor slowed down for a few seconds and waved to the women and children.



Many Ahmadi ladies, overcome at seeing Huzoor, had floods of tears streaming down their faces, whilst others beamed with joy.

During the inspection, a senior office bearer from the Jalsa administration, mentioned that the Jalsa Germany continued to expand and it was proving a challenge to find space for all participants to offer their Namaz in congregation.

In reply, Huzoor smiled and jokingly said:

***“I think next year you should hold your Jalsa at Hadeeqatul Mahdi as well then!”***

Whilst visiting the *Humanity First* exhibition, Dr Athar Zubair informed that *Humanity First* was selling a special kit designed to aid people if there was a war or disaster.

Upon this, Huzoor smiled and narrated how before electricity was freely available people were very good at improvising and devising methods to provide relief.

Huzoor said:

***“In the olden days when there was no electricity, people had ceiling fans that were attached to a person by a rope and when it became hot that person used to jog or move quickly and the fan would start moving back and forth! So, I think that you will have to devise such things as well!”***

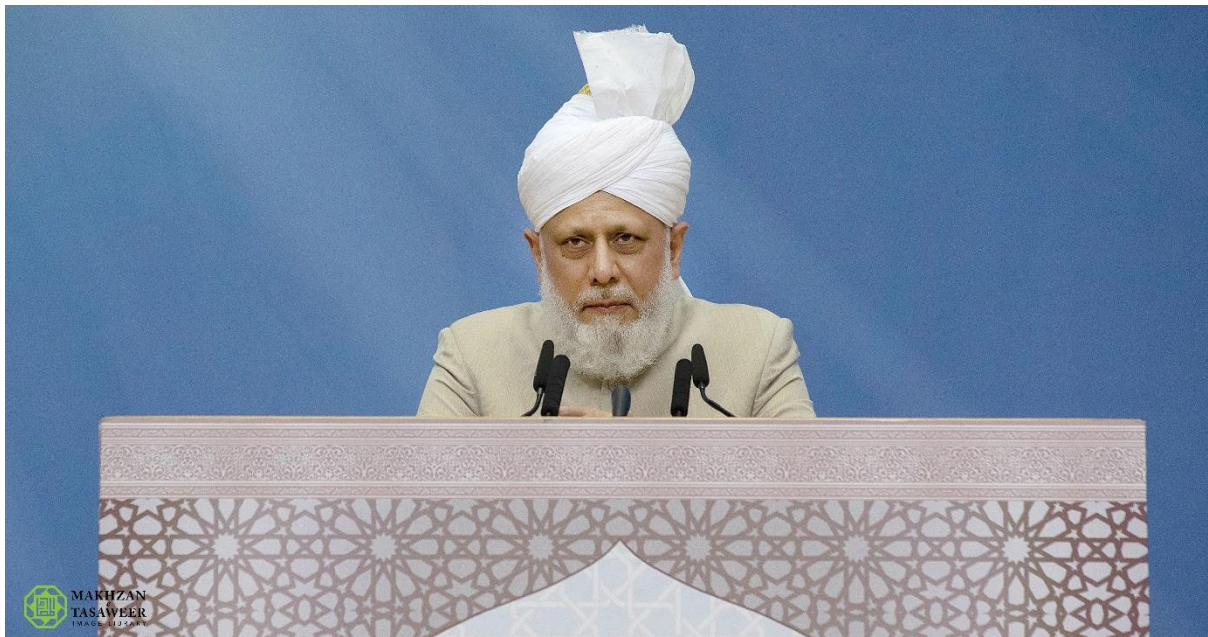


### **Huzoor's address at Jalsa Germany inspection**

Following the inspection, Huzoor proceeded to the main Jalsa Gah where he delivered a short address to the thousands of volunteers present in which he spoke about the need to constantly improve.

Huzoor said that one complaint he had received was that there was not enough space for people to offer their *Namaz* in congregation.

He said if the reason was that the attendance was much more than expected then it was a cause of happiness, however if the lack of space was simply due to a lack of organisation it would be a grave mistake and deep cause of regret.



Huzoor said that all possible efforts were to be made before the *Friday Prayers* to ensure that the space available was utilised in the most efficient manner for maximum capacity for *Salat*.

Thereafter, Huzoor said:

***“The most important thing is that the workers and volunteers conduct their duties with the very spirit and always keep a smile on their faces. I get more complaints about the attitude of duty workers serving at the Germany Jalsa compared to the UK Jalsa. Thus, no matter what, you***

***should serve the guests of the Promised Messiah (as) with a smile on your faces. It is better not to offer yourself for any duty than to serve without courtesy and respect for others. Wherever your duty, be it in car parking, food or anywhere else, you should show patience and always smile.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“Thus, I hope and expect that I do not receive complaints about the etiquettes of Jalsa workers here at the Germany Jalsa as I have in the past. If you think it will be difficult for you to serve with this spirit then it is better for everyone if you take leave in advance. May Allah the Almighty bless the Jalsa Salana in all respects.”***

Following Maghreb and Isha prayers, Huzoor returned to his residence which was at the Jalsa complex.

### **A call in the car park**

Soon after, I travelled to the nearby hotel where I was to stay, along with Majid sahib and Nadeem Amini.

We were driven to the hotel by Mohammad Akmal Khan, who for many years had been one of the Qafila drivers on behalf of the German Jamaat.

The journey to the hotel took around 10 minutes and throughout the short journey Nadeem continued to talk and joke as is his style.

As we approached the hotel, I saw that I was receiving a call on my phone but I assumed that it was an accidental dial.

People often pocket-dialled me by mistake, as my number is normally the first name in their phonebooks because the first two letters of my name are 'A' and 'B'.

Given *who* the call was from combined with the fact that I was in a crowded car with no privacy I decided it was better not to pick up and hoped that it was an accidental dial.

About 10 seconds later, just as we were approaching the car park of the hotel, the same number called again.

I knew then that it was not an accidental dial but a real call. I knew I better pick up!

My pulse was racing and I could feel beads of sweat on my forehead.

The call was from Huzoor!

Nadeem was still talking quite loudly and so to take the call in the car was problematic. Thus, suddenly I told Akmal sahib that I am getting out because I need to take this call!

With that I frantically opened the door, and as I had half-stepped out I answered the phone.

Slightly out of breath, due to a combination of jumping out of the car and even more due to nerves, I said:

***“Assalamo Alaikum”***

In reply, I heard Huzoor’s beautiful and most familiar voice on the other end.

Huzoor said:

***“Walaikum salam. Why did you not answer the first time?”***

Very embarrassed, I said:

***“Huzoor, I apologise, I thought you had called accidentally.”***

Thereafter for the next five minutes or so, I had the pleasure and honour to speak to Huzoor whilst standing in the hotel car park.

It took me a while to get my breath back and to control my nerves but soon I began to greatly enjoy the opportunity to speak to Huzoor and to listen to his voice.

I had previously spoken to Huzoor on the phone on five or six occasions and had always found it much more nerve wracking than seeing Huzoor in person.

When Huzoor is in his office, invariably he is also doing his office work and so, whilst the pressure is always high, I have the reassurance that Huzoor's attention is not only towards me.

Furthermore, if I say something that is not relevant or necessary, whilst I feel embarrassed and ashamed, I at least know that Huzoor's time was not completely wasted as he was going through his work at the same time.

Yet when speaking on the phone, I assume that Huzoor is not going through his files and so I am even more conscious of saying something that could waste seconds of his precious time.

Anyway, the call flew by. Huzoor asked me for some information regarding an ongoing Jamaat matter and gave me some instructions to convey.

Huzoor also asked more generally how everything was and if I had eaten and where I was staying.

The call concluded as Huzoor said:

***“Chalo phir” – meaning “Ok, then”***

I offered my salam to Huzoor and, as the call ended, I finally was able to collect myself. It had been a beautiful few minutes.

I have stayed in that hotel every year since I have been travelling with Huzoor to the German Jalsa but now I will always look back with special fondness for the evening I spoke to my beloved Khalifa in the car park!

### **Forever ready to serve**

It had been announced a few days earlier that Atif Mian, an Ahmadi Muslim economist from the United States, had been appointed by Pakistan's new Government to their newly formed *Economic Advisory Council*.

Unsurprisingly his appointment was met with intense anger and hostility from Pakistan's extremist clerics.

Nonetheless, Pakistan's *Information Minister* made public comments in which he defended the appointment and said that the new Government would not withdraw Atif sahib's appointment.

Over the days that followed, the scale of the outrage of the fanatical clerics and their followers continued to rise.

The day before the Jalsa Salana started, I learned that the pressure from the Maulvis had become too much for Pakistan's Government and that they had asked Atif Mian to withdraw from the Economic Advisory Council.

At a personal level, my instant reaction was of sadness and regret. Any sense that the new Government might be different to previous Pakistani governments when it came to the issue of Ahmadis had vanished.

That evening and the next day, I presented the updates to Huzoor before they had been publicly announced.

On each occasion, Huzoor responded with a direction that illustrated the pureness of his heart and the beauty of Islamic teachings. His response illustrated why Ahmadi Muslims remained the most faithful and loyal citizens of Pakistan, despite decades of relentless persecution.

Huzoor said:

***“Tell Atif Mian that even if they remove him or ask him to resign, he should make it clear that he will always be ready to serve Pakistan. Out of his love for his country and, as an Ahmadi Muslim, he should make it clear that he is always ready to serve the nation without need for any recognition.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“From the moment Atif sahib was appointed to the Economic Advisory Council, I knew that the end result would be this and that the Government would not be able to tolerate the pressure of the Maulvis.”***

Huzoor further said:

***“You should also convey my instruction to the USA Jamaat and other Ahmadis that they should not criticise the Pakistani Government over this issue and their comments should be limited to expressing their hope and prayers for the success of the Pakistani Economic Advisory Council. It remains, and will always remain our desire, for Pakistan to succeed and progress, no matter how they treat us.”***

Huzoor's words were astounding.

Genuinely I was shaken and moved. Despite the grave injustice that was apparent, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) did not desire for us to protest or to even express our dissatisfaction.

Rather, our response was to continue to offer our services and to continue to pray for the success of the nation that had rejected us.

Truly, if there is any person who follows the glorious example of peace and patience of the Prophet of Islam (*peace and blessings be upon him*) in the world today it is Khalifatul Masih.

### **Friday Sermon at Jalsa Germany**

On 7 September 2018, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Jalsa Salana Germany began at 2pm with the traditional flag hoisting ceremony, followed by the Friday Sermon delivered by Huzoor.



Huzoor began his address by speaking about the objectives of the Jalsa Salana.

Huzoor said:

***“Ever since the Jalsa Salana was established, over 125 years ago, we have repeatedly heard of its status and importance, as stated by the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him). He very clearly stated that the Jalsa Salana was not a common worldly event. It was not an event to showcase our numbers or to direct any sort of worldly influence on the rest of the world. Rather those who attend the Jalsa should do so purely for the sake of God Almighty and strive to be those who increase in spirituality, understanding and knowledge and fulfilling the rights of mankind.”***



Huzoor continued:

***“Sadly, it is a cause of deep regret that some people attend the Jalsa Salana but do not achieve anything or gain any benefit, except that they***

***meet a few friends or relatives. In fact, a few people, continue to engage in wrong activities and negatively affect the atmosphere and can influence others. Such people may think they can get away with their misdeeds but they should always remember that Allah the Almighty is watching over them at all times.”***

Huzoor said that it was important for all people attending the Jalsa to remain positive and calm. If they faced problems or difficulties, they should remain patient. Very emotionally, Huzoor gave the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) and how he responded to all the trials and tribulations he faced.

Huzoor said:

***“Which difficulty did the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) not have to endure? Which problem did he not face? The truth is that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) bore far greater tribulations, troubles and difficulties than any man can imagine, yet still his companions would say that they had never seen anyone smile more than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). A smile would always be etched upon his blessed face.”***

Following the conclusion of Huzoor’s sermon, Huzoor led the Jumma Namaz and Asr. In previous years, Huzoor would walk a few hundred metres to a separate hall to lead Namaz to ensure that no one in the complex would be offering their prayers ahead of the Imam.

Though there was nothing wrong with offering the prayers in a different hall to where the sermon was delivered, it used to feel slightly strange or odd to me and so I was glad that the German Jamaat had changed the arrangements this year so that all prayers were led in the main Jalsa Gah.

### **A late request**

Two days prior to the start of the Jalsa, the German Jamaat had requested Huzoor to answer questions in a *Press Conference* after the Friday prayers. However, Huzoor had not approved the request on the basis that it had been submitted very late.

In reality, it ought to have been sent in the initial programme suggested by the German Jamaat prior to the start of the tour. By rejecting the request, Huzoor had clearly indicated that such requests for his events ought to be submitted in good time.

The previous year, Huzoor had accepted a late request but it did not mean that the request should be sent late every time.

Nor could it be suggested that the Press Conference was an unseen or unplanned event, which was why the request was justifiably late.

Hence, my opinion was that Huzoor had rejected the request so that in future the Germany Jamaat would pay heed to ensuring that a full programme was submitted in good time.

Anyway, as Huzoor walked back to his residence after Jumma, Ameer Sahib Germany repeated the request and asked if Huzoor could meet the assembled media later in the day. Upon this, Huzoor said that he would meet them later in the day.

I personally thought it would have been better to leave the matter once the request had been rejected. If Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (aba) makes a decision or gives an instruction, it is always best to follow without question.

Where immediate compliance is lacking the result is never good in the long term. Thus, I was not at all surprised when later the German Jamaat were forced to cancel the press conference themselves because by then the media representatives had left the Jalsa site.

### **Seeing his people**

At 7.15pm, after the first session of Jalsa Salana had concluded, Huzoor came out of his residence and proceeded to his office at the Jalsa site. I was standing outside Huzoor's residence at the time and so I had the privilege to walk with Huzoor to his office.

As Huzoor walked up a staircase to the third level he paused for a few seconds and looked down at the thousands of Ahmadis who were walking in the main lobby area on the ground floor.

A handful of people looked up and saw Huzoor and excitedly waved towards him but the vast majority had no idea that Huzoor was looking down at them.

I wished that they would look up and see how Huzoor was lovingly looking down at them. Yet the vast majority remained oblivious and continued to proceed none the wiser.

Personally, it was a very special few seconds, being able to stand next to Huzoor as he looked down and appreciated the Jalsa atmosphere and seeing his people.

### **Meeting with Senegal delegation**

Huzoor's first meeting that evening was with two dignitaries who had come to attend the Jalsa Germany from Senegal.

One of the guests was a Mayor in Senegal and upon meeting Huzoor, he said:

***"Your Holiness, the Jalsa has been extremely beautiful and I have been tremendously influenced by everything I have seen. I prayed behind you today and I desire that everything you have said should be followed. In particular, I commend you for your focus upon peace in the world and I personally solicit your prayers."***

The other guest, a prominent businessman who had links to the Government, also sought Huzoor's prayers and said:

***"On behalf of the President of Senegal we would like to invite you to visit our country. Personally, ever since I saw your photo it has been my desire to help and support your Jamaat. Furthermore, I wish to build a school in Senegal and I would like for you to lay the foundation stone."***

Huzoor thanked him for the invite and said:

***“Whenever I next visit Africa, I will see if it is feasible for me to include Senegal in my travel schedule. However, do not wait for me to come to start building the school, rather there should be no delay in your efforts to serve humanity. I also hope that our Jamaat in Senegal starts its own primary school to provide education to poor and vulnerable children as soon as possible.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“My prayer is that may Allah help you both to serve your nation in the best way. The African continent has many natural resources but it requires for the people to work hard and selflessly and for the leaders to be honest. If that happens, I believe that, one day, Africa can take on a leading role in the world, Insha’Allah. The way to thank Allah the Almighty for the natural resources He has endowed your nation with is to use them in a way that is of greatest benefit to humanity.”***

As the meeting ended, Huzoor asked the two guests how many children they each had.

One of the guests said he had six children, whilst the other said he had twelve!

However, both of them said this in such a casual way that it did not appear having a half-dozen or a dozen children was in any way rare in Senegal!

### **A humble servant of Allah**

The next delegation to meet Huzoor consisted of guests from Tajikistan and Lithuania.

One of the guests said there remained a lot of opposition to Islam in Russia and certain other ex-Soviet states. For example, he cited a school in Kazakhstan where Hijab had recently been banned.

In reply, Huzoor said:

***“The world needs moral and courageous leaders who are determined to strive for justice. Yet today we see that most leaders and politicians are blinded by party affiliations and their personal desire for power. Generally speaking, there is an attempt to weaken Islam in the same way that other religions have been weakened. This is all part of the Dajjali powers that the Holy Prophet (sa) warned of.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“For example, today they are trying to remove the headscarf from Muslim ladies but this is only their first step. The long term goal and objective is to try to ‘modernise’ and change the Holy Quran. However, I have said on many occasions publicly that today’s trends are not here to guide religion, rather the religion taught by Allah the Almighty is here to guide mankind forever. Certainly, the Muslim countries should unite in an effort to defend Islamic values. Indeed, it is the duty of every sincere Muslim to protect and defend the teachings of Islam.”***

A female guest asked Huzoor why Muslim men and women mostly remained separated from one another.

It was a question Huzoor had been asked on countless occasions and one he had addressed repeatedly. Nevertheless, with great patience Huzoor explained the concept of *Purdah* by highlighting the risks of unhindered mixing of the sexes.

Huzoor said:

***“Islam teaches that wherever there is even the slightest risk of wrongdoing or deviating from morality it is better to put in place measures to protect society. Thus, in the case of men and women, Islam states that close contact should be avoided between both sexes outside of one’s close relatives.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“In the past, where these Islamic teachings were criticised and opposed by the Western world, now they are realising the value of them. Everyone has seen the recent scandal in Hollywood and the grave consequences of the free mixing of men and women and how men took advantage of women. As a result, there are now reports of ‘women-only’ events being held in some Western cities such as Berlin. Anyway, in spite of the separation of sexes, Islam teaches Muslims to be ever ready to serve their fellow beings. Thus, if you, or any other lady, face difficulty or is ever in danger, you will see that true Muslim men would be at the forefront of helping you.”***

A young medical student asked Huzoor about his position as Khalifatul Masih, though, perhaps not knowing the correct term, she referred to Huzoor as the ‘Muslim Pope’. She asked:

***“How did you become the Muslim Pope and attain this high status?”***

Most beautifully, in reply, Huzoor said:

***“I am a humble servant of Allah – that is all. I did not do anything to attain this status and in fact, to this day, I have not been able to solve this dilemma that why I have attained this position (of Khilafat).”***

Huzoor’s reply was brief but filled with beauty and the humility that is his hallmark.

### **Meeting with Africans**

Huzoor’s final meeting of the day was with a large delegation comprising hundreds of African Ahmadis and guests from various countries. Some had come from Africa to attend the Jalsa, whilst others were now settled in Europe.



A Ghanaian Ahmadi, *Rizwan*, asked Huzoor about the challenges of raising children in Western countries. He said that in some Western schools, teachers taught children that they should be critical of religion and suspicious of a belief in God.

In response, Huzoor said:

***“This is a challenge that is not going to go away magically and so it means that Ahmadi Muslim parents living in the West must be willing to work even harder to ensure the moral training and upbringing of their children. You must ensure that you are not consumed by your work or other activities but should give more time to your children.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“In terms of belief in God, it is not enough just to instruct your children that God exists, rather you have to explain to them the various proofs and evidence supporting the existence of God. Also, speak to the schools and tell them that it is not appropriate for them to instruct your children in a way that seeks to weaken their religious faith.”***

Thereafter, Huzoor gave a personal example of how he trained his own children and dealt with similar issues in Ghana.

Huzoor said:

***“In Ghana, my children went to a Christian school and one day my son, who was very young, was taught that ‘Jesus is the son of God’. Upon this,***

***I told him very clearly that this was not our belief and he should not say these words again. As a result of refusing to repeat those words again, my son and daughter were physically punished by the school teachers.”***

Huzoor continued:

***“For three days they were punished and so on the fourth day I went to the school and met the teachers. I told them about how we do not believe Jesus to be the son of God and that my children will either remain silent or will say that Jesus is a Prophet of God. After this the teachers agreed and accepted and my children were no longer told to repeat the Christian words of belief. Thus, this is not a new issue and not only limited to the West but certainly it is the duty of all Muslim parents to guide their children and to ensure their faith remains strong.”***

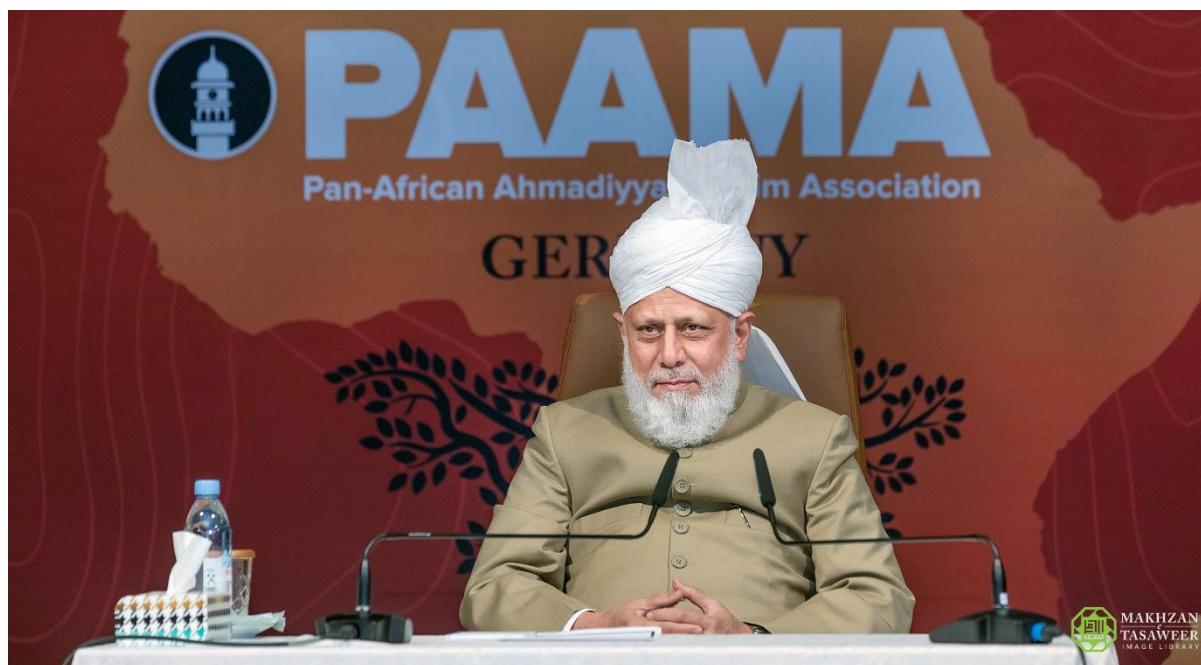
Another African Ahmadi said:

***“Huzoor I have heard many people say that when they meet you they forget what to say!”***

In reply, Huzoor smiled and said:

***“Well that is not my fault if they forget! Sometimes, people become very emotional and as they are overwhelmed by their emotions they struggle to speak. Hence, their inability to speak is due to love rather than fear. Once, a person who met the Holy Prophet (sa) appeared shaken and scared and so the Holy Prophet (sa) said ‘Do not be fearful for I am the son of a human and am a normal human being myself’. Thus, there is no***

***need for anyone to be fearful when they meet me but if they are emotional due to their love it is a different matter.”***



After several further questions from guests, the meeting concluded with a question from a journalist from Congo.

She asked about *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyyat* and Huzoor’s hopes for the future of the world.

In response, Huzoor said:

***“The success of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya, the true Khilafat, is destined because the Holy Prophet (sa) prophesied of its success. We are seeing this already, as every day people are accepting Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam. We hope one day that we shall win the hearts of the majority of the people of the world so that they come to recognise that Islam is a religion of truth, peace and harmony.”***

With that, the meeting concluded and Huzoor proceeded to the main Jalsa Gah to lead the Maghreb and Isha prayers.

It had been an emotional end to an emotional few days.

I eagerly looked forward to what was to come next.

### **End of Part 1**

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