

Mufakkire Millat Maulana Abdullah Kapodravi (1933-2018)

By: Khursheed Alam Dawood Qasmi*

Hind, son of Abi Haalah (RA) used to describe a lot about the Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallaahu Aleihi Wa Sallam*)'s blessed physical features, looks and the characteristics many a times. Once describing the way the Prophet (SAWS) used to talk, he said: "The Prophet (SAWS) would constantly remain in grief (about hereafter) and would always remain busy thinking. There was no respite for him." (Shamaail-e-Tirmidhi: 226) Mufakkire Millat Mualana Abdullah Kapodravi left for heavenly abode on 10th July 2018 in the afternoon. He was almost 85 years old. He was blessed with the ample portion of the quality of Allah's Messenger (SAWS) "remaining always busy thinking" about the attributes of Allah and the betterment of the Ummah. He, therefore, used to remain busy thinking for the progress of the Ummah in general and for the betterment of the academic quality of the Ulama and the students in particular. Those who have been in his company, be it for few days or few hours, will bear witness that he was always busy thinking how would this Ummah progress and how the Ulama and the students would improve their academic qualities as they are the real guides, leaders and mentors of this Ummah. It was either his special gathering or a general programme, wherever he had a chance to address, he used to talk about the lack of attention of Ulama in the education and the deteriorating educational system of Madaaris. Observing his thoughts and views, this can be said that "he was the patron of the Ulama and the students" who was always concerned about them.

It is very true that if the Ulama are equipped with ability and skill, they are sincere, honest and qualified; they can lead this Ummah in proper way. If the Ulama and the students are weak, they are lacking in sincerity and quality, who is going to guide the Ummah? The main reason behind this thought is that the Almighty Allah has put the responsibility of leading this Ummah on the shoulders of the Ulama as they are true inheritors of the Prophets (PBUT).

Maulana Kapodravi was a perfect and competent scholar of the holy Qrua'an and the Sunnah. He has deep knowledge. He was Allah-fearing scholar. He was very strict in following the Qura'an and the Sunnah in his daily life. His life was an ideal and role model. While talking, he used to present the Qura'anic verses, Ahadit and the beautiful proverbs and idioms of Arabic language. He liked academic conversation and dialogue. In whichever gathering he was, mostly he used to be its eloquent speaker and the president. In spite of that, he was very simple, humble and down-to-earth. Elder or younger, whoever came to meet him, with no excuse of being busy, he used to meet him at the same time without any protocol. Whenever a learned man came to meet him, he felt delighted. When he knew about any knowledgeable and qualified person visiting the vicinities of Bharuch or Surat districts, he would invite, host, made him stay at his house and had fruitful academic discussion with him.

This humble writer spent almost five years in Markaze Islami, Ankleshwar, Dist.: Bharuch as a learner and later as a teacher. During this period, I had opportunity to listen

to his talks in the several programmes and functions. His each talk gave me impression that he is the patron of the Ulama and the students and he thinks sincerely about them. Due to his humbleness, knowledge and sincerity, he was loved by the masses and the learned people alike. None was heard complaining about him.

When I was perusing my “Diploma in English Language & Literature (DELL)” at Markaze Islami Education and Research Center, Ankleshwar, I wrote an article on the significance of English language and its learning in the modern world. The rector of Markaze Islami, Maulana Moosa Mankrod (May Allah protect him!) informed him about the article and requested him to review and correct wherever necessary. Sheikh Kapodravi responded in positive happily and asked him to meet in Kapodra. Maulana Mankrod told me to get ready. Then we went with the article. When we reached, he welcomed us warmly and hosted us happily. The first and foremost, he wanted my introduction as I was a new person for him. I introduced myself. Then he asked me to read the article. I read the article which was consisting of 5000 words almost. He listened to the complete article carefully. Wherever he felt necessary for correction, he told me and I did it at the same time. When I completed the article, he appreciated, encouraged me and advised me to continue writing. It was my first meeting with him. May Allah give him the best reward and grant him Jannah!

Sheikh used to stay few months in India and few months in Canada. When he was in India, we used to go to Kapodra to meet him. Once, Maulana Ismail Mankrod (May Allah protect him!), Director: Markaze Islami Education and Research Center and I went to Kapodra in the month of Ramadhan, in the night just after Taraweeh Salah to attend his gathering in Masjid Aisha. The gathering started with forty Durood upon the beloved prophet Muhammad (SAWS). Then he gave his talk. We listened to him attentively. We came back at the end of the gathering.

Once, Sheikh Kapodravi organized a programme in Masjid Aisha, near by his home in Kapodra on Thursday 27th November 2008. He sent invitation letter to each Madrsa and Darul Uloom of Gujarat and requested to send the representative. The representatives of almost 45 institutions attended the programme. Maulana Yusuf Bhadrkodravi, Maulana Ibrahim Falahi and I attended the programme from Darul Uloom Markaze Islami according to the suggestion of Markaz’s rector. What was the objective and aim of the programme? Please read the following paragraphs to know his sincerity, concern, worry and love for the Ulama, students and Madaaris. It will also make clear the purpose behind organizing the programme.

The theme of the programme was “Educational Decline and the Educational Progress of the Students in the Modern World”. Avoiding teachers from mutual discussion among themselves on some academic topics was also discussed. The participants presented their views and had discussion.

As the president of the programme, the suggestion and message given by Sheikh Kapodravi were very important. He suggested that in each Madrasa, there should be an association for the teachers. Under the association, there should be a library for the teachers where the books on all subjects must be available. The important magazines and newspapers of Urdu and Arabic languages publishing from India and abroad should

be also arranged. The teachers should fix a time for opening the library and they should come and read the books, magazines and newspapers available. If a teacher finds an important point during his reading and he thinks that it is important for the students, he should make photocopy of that part and handover the students to read it. Under the association, every week, a topic should be fixed for teachers' discussion and dialogue. The teacher should prepare on that fixed topic and come for open discussion. Sheikh gave dozens of books to the representative of each institution as gift and suggested to start the library with those books.

Ponder over the aim of the programme! To spend a good amount of money, to invite the Ulama, to arrange food for them, to give them priceless suggestion, to give them dozens of books as gift and at the end to see them off with respect! SunhanAllah! What sincerity! It is a sample of the worry, concern and sincere efforts of Sheikh for the betterment and educational progress of the Ulama and the students. I don't see anyone currently who can think so much and can go so far for the progress of the Ulama. May Allah give him the best reward!

After coming back from the programme, I gave the report of the programme to Maulana Moosa Mankrod, the rector of Markaze Islami. I also mentioned the suggestion of Sheikh Kapodravi. The rector was very pleased with the suggestion and gave approval to start the association. Then the teachers' association was launched in Markaze Islami.

After few days, Maulana Ismail Mankrod and I reached Kapodra to meet Sheikh. He presented the tea etc. and started talking to us. During the talk, as I mentioned about the association, he became happy. Then he talked about studies and mentioned many important points about it. During the talk, he also mentioned the famous scholar of Hadith of the last century, Sheikh Abu Abdur Rahman Muhammad Nasiruddin Albany (1914-1999) and his work on *Mishkatul Masabih*. He also said that apart from the difference opinion, we should acknowledge one's academic work and appreciate it.

What Sheikh Kapodravi said that is golden point. When Allah has blessed the people with the wisdom, they can differ the opinions. When they will differ the opinions, the difference will arise. The difference of opinion should remain as the one, but it should not change into enmity and hostility. Due to differences of opinion or due to some deficiencies, ignoring the day-night efforts and struggles of a personality is unjustified. It is a fact that Sheikh Kapodravi's heart was neat and clean from any type of prejudice and malice. He used to appreciate the work any scholar. It was his habit to admire the services of the elders and encouraged the youngers' efforts.

Sheikh Kapodravi continued sending the books for the library of the Teachers' Association latter. The books like: "Jang: Seerate Rasul Ki Raushani Men", "Asaatidah Keliye Tarbiyati Waqiaat", "Tafseer Azizi", "Nasihatul Muslimeen" etc. were received by the library.

I had chance to meet the last time, it was in December 2009 in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. In those days, he was on a journey in Zambia. I participated in his one gathering after Isha Salaah. I met him after the gathering. He started saying that these African countries need struggles. Those who are working here will have to struggle and

then it will bear fruits. During his talk, he mentioned about an Islamic school which is founded in a village: Anosa, near Petauke of the Eastern Province. He said that he had a chance to visit the school in the company of the celebrated orator, Maulana Abdul Majeed Nadeem many years back. He happily described about the discipline and education of the local pupils. He praised the way they read Na'at and Nazam in Urdu language before him. He appreciated the efforts of Hafiz Ismail Munshi (1950-2015), who was the founder of the said school. Hafiz Ismail had completed his education of Hifz and Tjaweed from Darul Uloom Falahe Darain under the supervision of Sheikh Kapodravi. May Allah grant him Jannah!

Sheikh Kapodravi was a widely travelled and experienced person. He used to travel Asian, Arab, African and European countries. Wherever he went, he used to meet academic persons. He used to visit the libraries of those places. He used to get information about the newly published books and used to buy his loved books. Whichever places he visited, these were his preferable activities. His personal library in Kapodra is full with the books of several subjects and topics.

Along with buying books, he was also very habitual and interested in reading books. He used to incite and induce the Ulama and the students for reading the books. When he came to know about the publication of any valuable new book, he mentioned it among the Ulama and the students and recommended to read. His love for the books and recommendation for reading was not limited just in his meeting and gathering, but he used to do it suitably in his articles and the letters as well. He writes in his travelogue of Reunion: "Aatash Fishan Ke Mulk Reunion Men": "I present the names of the following books with the intention of the information of our students as these books are very informative on the topic of Masjid". After recording eight books' names with its authors, he writes: "God willing, any book loving student may buy these new books and go through them; because the knowledge increases with reading the books. (Afkare Pareshan, P.: 259)

Mentioning the residence of Maulana Dr. Muhammad Taqiuddin Nadvi Mazahiri in "Alain" city of Abu Dhabi, he writes in his travelogue: "Muttahidah Arab Imarat Men Chand Din": "I saw some new books in Maulana's library. Some of those books are very useful for our Madaris." Then he mentions eight Arabic books' names, authors and publishers on Hadith and biography published from Arab countries. (Afkare Pareshan, P.: 209)

Sheikh Kapodravi was very much aware of the magazines published from different institutions and places. He used to read the magazines regularly. He also used to suggest the Ulama and the students to read the magazines. Allah the Almighty had blessed him with the writing skill. Occasionally, he used to write in the Arabic and Urdu languages to express his views. His writings used to get published.

Once Sheikh was talking in reference to the magazines, during his talk, he gave the detailed introduction of the "Urdu Book Review" published from Delhi. He talked about the reviews getting published in the magazine and the standard language which is used. He recommended that library of each Madrasah should get this magazine. The librarian

should read the magazine and try to get the beneficial and necessary books for the library. It will add value to the library.

It is an important point to be noted that reading the articles on social, political and religious topics published in the magazines is very significant. It gives ample material and knowledge to the readers on different topics in arranged manner in very few times. The readers are able to understand the views and opinions of the number of writers on the current affairs.

In spite of being busy in teaching and administrative duties and being occupied in the journey of different countries, Sheikh authored several books such as (1) Azwaun 'Ala Taarikh Al-Harakah Al-Ilmiyyah Wa Al-Ma'ahid Al-Islamiyyah Wa Al-Arabiyyah Fee Gujarat, Al-Hind, (2) Allamah Badruddin Aeni Awr Ilme Hadith Men Un Ka Naqshe Dawaam, (3) Allamah Qutbuddin Awr Un Ki Ilmi Khidmat, (4) Allamah Yusuf Banuri Awr Khidmat Hadith, (5) Rushdo Hidayat Ke Minar..., (6) Haji Imdadullah Awr Un Ke Namwar Khulafa, (7) Deewane Imam Shafae (Translation and Explanation), (8) Afkare Pareshan (2 Volumes) (9) Sadaye Dil (4 Volumes) etc.

Sheikh Kapodravi passed away on Tuesday 10th July 2018. His funeral prayer was led by Mufti Ahmad Khanpur (May Allah protect him!), Sheikhul Hadeeth: Jamia Talimuddin, Dabhel and Member of Governing Body of Darul Uloom Deoband. Thousands of Ulama and students participated in the funeral prayer. He was buried in Kapodra. Now, he is no more among us, but his good manner, humbleness, concern, worry and sacrifice for the Ulama and the students will be remembered for long. May Allah accept his services and grant him Jannah!

Sheikh Kapodravi's Biographical Sketch

Sheikh Kapodravi was born in 1933 in Heho, Myanmar where his father was working and staying with his family. The family came back to India in 1935 and resided in Kapodra, Surat, Gujarat. He acquired the basic education of the Holy Qura'an and Urdu language in Madrasa Islamia, Kapodra. He got admission in Jamia Talimuddin, Dabhel in 1944 and studied from Farsi Class to the Mukhtasarul Quduri (3rd year of Fazilah Course). Then he got admission in Darul Uloom Deoband in 1948. He started from Kanzud Daqaiq (4th year of Fazilah Course). In next year, he learnt the books like, Noorul Anwar, Al-Maqaamat Al-Haririyah (5th year of Fazilah Course). Then he fell sick and had to come back home. When he recovered, he started his education again in "Talimuddin, Dabhel". He completed his education from Talimuddin in 1953.

Sheikh Kapodravi learned from the following Ulama: Hafiz Ibrahim Umadwadvi, Maulana Dawood Kafletavi, Maualan Abdul Hay, Qari Bandah Ilahi, Qari Hasan from Meerut, Maulana Ibrahim Sufi, Maulana Nasir Ahmad Khan (ex-Sheikhul Hadeeth of Darul Uloom, Deoband), Maulana Fakhrul Hasan, Maulana Muhammad Naeem Deobandi, Maulana Merajul Haq Deobandi, Maulana Mahmood, Maulana Abdur Rawuf, Maulana Abdul Jabbar, Maulana Fazlur Rahman Deobandi, Maulana Fakhruddin, Mufti Mahdi Hasan and Sheikh Mahmood Tantavi from Egypt (May Allah grant them Jannah!).

His Services in the field of Teaching and Management: Following the completion of his graduation, he joined "Majlis Khuddamuddin, Simlak" and "Jamia Talimuddin,

Dabhel” as a teacher. Following the resignation from those institutions, he worked as the Sub-Editor of “Tabligh”. Again he left for Darul Uloom Deoband, stayed two years and learnt from the senior scholars. Coming back from Deoband, again he joined Jamia Talimuddin, Dabhel and served as a teacher from 1961 to 1965. He got offer from “Darul Uloom Falahe Darain” in Tarkeshwar, Surat in January 1966 to teach. Latter, in March 1966, he was appointed as the rector. As the rector, he appointed numerous qualified teachers, created the suitable environments of teaching and learning and established the best system of cleanliness etc. He made “Falahe Darain” a model institution. From 1966, he served as a teacher and the rector of Falahe Darin continuously for 27 years beautifully. When the institute reached at the peak of success, he resigned willingly; but his love remained the same for “Falahe Darain” as he had as the rector. May Allah accept his services and grant him *Jannah!*

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