

Dr. Syed Aziz Pasha: Truly an Ambassador of Islam in letter and spirit

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Dr. Syed Aziz Pasha was a great dawee. He always thought it is our duty and responsibility first to remember our Creator and worship Him. He never failed to remember his Creator and submit to Allah the Almighty five times a day whether in sound health or in illness, either at home or abroad. Dr. Pasha followed Islam in letters and spirit and remembered his duty to Allah the Almighty as much as he could in his own life by performing his daily prayers wherever he was even in the Vatican city or in Moscow when it was under the communist rule of the then Soviet Union

Dr. Pasha practised every tenet of Islam

“Dr. Pasha was one of the most honest and genuinely always held fear of Allah's reckoning on the Day of Judgement. May Allah swt accept his unparalleled services to Islam. He was true to his responsibilities and faith,” said Mr. Yousuf Bhailok, former-Secretary General and now Board of counsellor of MCB, member of the UMO and close colleague of late Dr. Pasha and also Chair of Al Jamiah al Islamiyah Darul Uloom Lancashire (Training Imams).

Mr. Bhailok also said, “Dr. Pasha practised every tenet of Islam to the letter and even his message in his will was words of wisdom for us to follow. As a young man he inspired me, he taught me that *Taqwa* means to face all challenges with fortitude and never to compromise on Islamic principles.”

Dr. Pasha involved in conveying the true message of Islam

And secondly, Dr. Pasha thought and used to say to me, it is also our duty and responsibility to convey the message of Islam to our fellow workers, colleagues and neighbours and that's why he never missed whether he is in good health or in sickness to organise Prophet's (peace be upon him) birthday celebration where he invited everybody irrespective of religion, caste and colour including Ministers, high government officials and members of other faith communities. Lord Sheikh, the Peer of the House of Lords, told me “Dr. Pasha had been involved in conveying the true message of Islam and he had devoted many years not only to give this message but also being involved in promoting peace and harmony between various racial and religious groups.”

Dr. Pasha never compromise on matters relating to the teachings of Islam

Dr. Pasha was a man of principle, ideology and commitment and he never compromised on this principle, on any matters relating to the teachings of Islam and ready to struggle and suffer like any other ideological committed person. Sir Iqbal Sacranie, the former Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and presently Chairman of the Muslim Aid Trust, told me, “Dr. Pasha was a man of principle and he never compromised on matters relating to the teaching of Islam. I admired his uncompromising stand which he conveyed with great humility and integrity to Ministers and civil servants when demanding the due rights of the Muslim community.”

Sir Iqbal also recollected and said, “His role during the years of the UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs was instrumental in bringing the Muslim community together to defend the honour of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). No doubt, he has earned a rightful place in the *Jannatul Ferdous*. And May Almighty Allah give all of us strength to follow his last message which he conveyed in his will.”

His Actions and pronouncement never weakened

Not only Dr. Pasha remained firm, unchangeable and unyielding in his conviction and mission, but his action, deeds and assertion never weakened. Senator Raja Muhammad Zafar-ul-Haque, the Secretary General of the Pakistan-based World Muslim Congress, told me, “Late Dr. Syed Aziz Pasha was one of those Muslims who had dedicated all his life to the service of Islam and Muslim. Even in the most difficult times he continued with his mission and even after 9/11 his activities and his pronouncement never weakened. He was a man who respected all other religions and his positive approach was a key to his success. He was a man of continued struggle and made a very successful life.”

Dr. Pasha’s single motto was unity of Muslim community

As a dedicated servant to the motto of the Union of Muslim Organisations (UMO) to achieve unity of the Muslim communities he spent his entire life for his mission and did not find time to enter into wedlock. Sometimes I used to say humorously to Dr. Pasha that it seems that you married to UMO. Haji Ahmad Thomson of the Association of Muslim Lawyers, said, “Dr Pasha also sought to educate in the best way those who knew little about Islam or Muslims and who therefore were the unintentional victims of their own ignorance, misconceptions and blind prejudices. Blessed as he was with a keen intellect, a sound knowledge of the Qur’an and the Hadith and above all a sense of humour, even before it became fashionable to label all the Irish and all the Muslims as terrorists, Dr Pasha made it

abundantly clear that Islam is a middle way, which has nothing to do with terrorism or extremism.”

“As well as striving to unite the various Muslim communities in the British Isles, Dr Pasha extended the hand of friendship to everyone and showed genuine respect for those who had different beliefs and different ways of understanding life. In the words of Imam Junayd, may Allah be pleased with him, he was like the earth which supports everyone and like the sky which shades everything. I have never heard anyone speak ill of Dr Pasha – and shame on anyone who has or does,” mentioned Hajji Ahmad.

The motto of the UMO, which is clearly enshrined in its Constitution, ‘Hold fast to the rope of Allah and be not divided.’ According to Dr. Pasha, this is a great opportunity for Muslims coming from various parts of the world to demonstrate the potentiality of Islam as a uniting force, as a cohesive force. It will eliminate discrimination on whatever grounds; race, colour or ethnicity – all this is taken care of in the Islamic faith, because the Holy Qur’an is very clear: All humanity comes from Adam and Eve and Adam came from dust. Exactly what our Prophet (peace be upon him) said in his Farewell Message on the Mount of Arafah. So the motto of UMO is to achieve unity of the Muslim community and to promote Daw’ah.”

To achieve the above goal, Dr. Pasha pursued single-handedly all through his dedicated objective of uniting Muslim communities and uplift their situation. Even before his death, Dr. Pasha still remembered his duty towards his co-religionists and left a last message for the Muslim community which was read out by Haji Ahmad Thomson after the *Janaza* prayer, “It is my wish and desire that the British Muslim community plays an important role in communicating the message of Islam to the British people and rejuvenate their moral and spiritual standards in accordance with the Divine Shari’a. I have spent 40 years of my life in this country to promote unity between Muslims of various nationalities settled here and Da’wah Islamiya. This is exactly the motto of UMO (Union of Muslim Organisations) for whom I happened to be one of the founders and Secretary General of.”

Death of Dr. Pasha a great loss of Muslim community

Dr. Pasha left the Muslim Community in the sea of sadness. Dr Ahmad al-Dubayan, Director General of the Islamic Cultural Centre and the Regents Park Central London Mosque, said, “The death of Dr. Pasha is a great loss of the Muslim Community.” Because some of the works that Dr. Pasha started remain incomplete. Lord Nazir Ahmed of Rotherham said, “I am very saddened because his work has not been completed because he was constantly trying, first of all, to introduce the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) birthday and many other events and then he was campaigning at the labour party conferences, as well as the political party conferences.”

Dr. Pasha was a great dawee and truly an ambassador of Islam in letters and spirit. Haji Ahmad said, Dr. Pasha “was both a pioneer and an ambassador in the way of Allah.”

The Muslim community needs someone to carry on the works that Dr. Pasha left incomplete. Dr. Al-Dubayan said, “What we hope now is that the Muslim leaders in our community will learn from Dr. Pasha and will have the same feeling and love for Islam and Muslims and for everybody as Dr. Pasha had.”

