



# Muslim Television Ahmadiyya

## An Interview with Maulana Abdul Ghany Jahangeer Khan

*Maulana Abdul Ghany Jahangeer Khan was born in London and moved to Mauritius at a very young age. In 1986, at the age of 19, he dedicated his life for the service of the Jama'at. He worked as a missionary in Belgium and was Amir of Jama'at France until 1995 when Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى called him to London to work in MTA International. He is currently head of the French desk. Some of the recollections presented below were taken from a recorded interview. Others were drawn from a speech at the UK Annual Convention in 2003.*

### MTA - The Early Days

When I arrived in the UK, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى immediately gave me heart, courage and encouragement. He told me not to feel sad at leaving France as I was only leaving behind a few hundred people, whereas through MTA there would be hundreds of thousands seeing and listening.

With MTA, the Jama'at made a leap from the world of paper and audio cassettes into space to reach satellites. This was Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى own idea and it took the whole Jama'at by surprise. Nobody had an inkling of the technology required and everyone had to learn from one day to the next. But through a series of miracles the dream of satellite television came true.

In the early days MTA was a one-man show. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى invested his whole soul, being and energy into making MTA something alive. He would come up with brilliant ideas for different programmes and offer invaluable advice on how to make them. He had the whole Jama'at to look after, the prayers to lead and countless other duties to attend to - yet he still found time to visit the MTA studios, sometimes several times a day.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was ahead of all, dragging us along at his pace, telling us not to worry and assuring us that we would succeed. He had extraordinary vision. From the start he provided input at every level, showing interest in everything and offering guidance in every single matter. Hence the abbreviation MTA (Muslim Television Ahmadiyya), which also stands for Mirza Tahir Ahmad, was spot on.



**Top:** Huzur رحمه الله تعالى meeting Abdul Ghany Jahangeer sahib

**Right:** An early MTA mobile transmission vehicle

### Financial Sacrifice

Although Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was certain that Allah would make MTA a success, he continuously reminded the Jama'at of its financial responsibilities. MTA was the biggest project we had ever undertaken and hence required a lot of money. Millions of pounds were being spared thanks to unpaid volunteers, but funds were still needed for maintenance, technical equipment and the actual renting of the satellite service. But despite such financial burdens, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى said that he was absolutely certain that Allah would provide the money as He has never let the Jama'at down. That certainty alone was enough to keep the spark of courage alive in the Jama'at.

Once there were some young Khuddam from France who wanted to come to the UK to train for MTA translation. When I spoke to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى about this he said: "Yes, why not? Tell them to come." But he added: "What do you mean training? They don't need training. Sit them down in front of the TV, hand them the microphone and the headphones, and ask them to start." Then I asked Huzur رحمه الله تعالى if he meant they should go live from day one, to which he replied: "Yes. don't worry, at first they won't be so good, but they will get better." At first I was very worried at how they would take to this great task, but since Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had said it, it had to be done. Some of the Khuddam almost fainted when I told them! Yet they did it. But that is how Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was. He did not mind if it wasn't too good on the first day. He was very patient and would appreciate everyone's efforts. Even if you gave five minutes, he would comment "Masha Allah, that's very good," which made one feel on top of the world.

### A Muslim Flavour

Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى رحمه الله تعالى رحمه الله تعالى emphasis was that all programmes, regardless of their subject matter, must have an Islamic flavour. Whether it was travel programmes, children's classes or cookery lessons, MTA needed to possess a Muslim feel to distinguish it from all the other channels. The Khutba was the prime and most important channel through which Huzur رحمه الله تعالى issued instructions and guidance to the entire Jama'at.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted MTA to be spontaneous and not artificial. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted it to be natural, where he did not mind members of the camera crew coming in front of the camera. He was right. Many other channels have now adopted this informal style. In the beginning we thought people might be laughing at us, but that style has now become a trend - perhaps we started it?

### A dream come true

The format of the first Mulaqat programme was that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would meet people and discuss all topics such as the Holy Qur'an, homeopathy as well as meeting with English, Arabic, Russian and other friends, etc. But eventually Huzur رحمه الله تعالى subdivided them into different categories. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted to try a new format for the Q&A programmes. There were already sessions in Urdu and English so he decided to address other languages.

This came at a time when there was a big breakthrough in the French speaking world. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had related two dreams that he saw, in which he had seen that he was in Africa going to a place called Dakar. At the time he did not know where that was. Dakar is the capital of Senegal. He also saw French Africa was accepting Ahmadiyyat in great numbers, at a time when



**Top:** Huzur رحه الله تعالى is interviewed by various TV stations.

there was hardly a trickle coming into our Jama'at. Now the situation has radically changed. Millions are joining every year. Suddenly the French speakers became one of the largest communities within the Jama'at and the French language became very important. So out of the blue, Huzur رحه الله تعالى introduced the French Mulaqat and I was asked to translate and present on that programme. It wasn't long before Bengali and German Mulaqats also started. These were wonderful programmes, especially for those who were able to enjoy an hour's audience with Huzur رحه الله تعالى. Huzur رحه الله تعالى was able to address questions on key issues faced by the countries that the studio participants were representing. Many times people wrote in and commended Huzur رحه الله تعالى on answering these questions.

One thing that sticks in my mind is how things Huzur رحه الله تعالى would say or wish for quickly came to pass. During one session Huzur رحه الله تعالى was asked a question on the Holy Qur'an, at which point he said he was reminded of Abdul Rahman Sahib, the Somalian brother known for always asking questions on verses of the Holy Qur'an. Huzur رحه الله تعالى said that the questioner was following Abdul Rahman's tradition and that we should all pray that he should come back quickly to the UK. In fact he was stuck in Somalia after travelling from the UK to see his sick mother. Abdul Rahman Sahib's life was in danger in his country and he did not really have the required paperwork for his visit. Therefore his return to England seemed improbable. But

a few days after this Mulaqat programme, Abdul Rahman Sahib was back in the UK! When Abdul Rahman Sahib was asked how he got back, he said that he simply boarded the plane, arrived at Heathrow and was able to leave the airport without once being asked to show his passport! He was able to attend the very next Liqaa Ma'al Arab programme, three days later! Miracles like these would happen often.

Huzur رحه الله تعالى would sometimes adopt children in the programmes. In the French Mulaqat there was a two-year-old girl called Sophia and Huzur رحه الله تعالى made her the star of the programme. I think the reason why Huzur رحه الله تعالى loved her so much was because the only thing she had to offer to Huzur رحه الله تعالى was her love. She used to hang onto his hand, swing on his clothes and Huzur رحه الله تعالى used to throw her up in the air and catch her! Huzur رحه الله تعالى would ask her distribute the mithai (Indian sweets).

### **Jinn**

We would sometimes ask Huzur رحه الله تعالى really private questions, which he preferred not to answer, although he would sometimes relent, allowing us an insight to Huzur رحه الله تعالى the person. One such question was about his encounters with Jinn. Huzur رحه الله تعالى said that during one night he had seen a Jinn change the blade of his razor. Huzur رحه الله تعالى saw this happening but he could not move during the incident. The next



morning he saw the blades really had been changed and that it wasn't a dream after all. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى really believed that Jinn were not only what we interpreted them to be in the wider sense of the term, but also those creatures which we don't understand, that we may brush against from time to time. We don't really know what their purpose is, but we could encounter them. These were the intriguing things that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would often touch upon.

One thing we noticed very early on was that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would become bored by questions that were very similar or merely repeated. But even if they were, he would answer them slightly differently with something new to add. We tried to have a lot of wide-ranging questions covering many fields. On some memorable days when we had got the balance of questions right, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would comment at the end that he had enjoyed the session.

### Telepathy

Another very intriguing thing about Huzur رحمه الله تعالى, which many had suspected during programmes, was his telepathy. Sometimes people would feel that they were thinking about something and suddenly Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would leave what he was doing, look at them and say something which had to do with what they were thinking about. So one day we plucked up the courage to ask the question, even though we knew the answer could change the way we would be around Huzur رحمه الله تعالى for ever! We asked Huzur رحمه الله تعالى if he had telepathic powers. He replied: "Yes, I do to a degree." However, he stated that he couldn't detect all thoughts of a person, as only Allah could do that, but there were certain thoughts that he could catch. He explained that he could sometimes even pick up on the state of people's hearts whilst leading the prayers in the mosque.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى indicated that telepathy was also a quality of his father, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى related an incident when, as a very little child, he was caught out during a Jalsa session. He was on the stage and he could see all the elders of the Jama'at, sitting on a bench on the stage, whilst Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood رضي الله عنه was delivering a speech. You can imagine the seriousness of that situation. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى related that for a split second he began to think that if he tilted the bench slightly, all the people on the bench would fall onto the stage. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى then stated that the minute he thought this, his father turned round to him and said: "Tahir, don't do that!" From then onwards, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى said, he had to be very careful in keeping his thoughts in check!

Another thing Huzur رحمه الله تعالى mentioned of profound significance was immediately after cracking a joke. Although laughing with everyone else he would also



**Top:** Huzur رحمه الله تعالى talks about satellite technology at a Jalsa  
**Middle:** Fareed Ahmad of MTA interviews Ibrahim Noonan Sahib  
**Bottom:** Aqeel Shahid of MTA.



### Top: Huzur رحه الله تعالى at a Jalsa Salana UK

turn serious and say: "Remember, I never say something without a reason. There is always a message in what I say, even within a joke. So try and understand what I say."

#### Love for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Huzur رحه الله تعالى had a profound love for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Huzur's رحه الله تعالى whole mission was to convey Allah's message to the whole world. That was the dearest thing to his heart. But coupled with that was the true portrayal and defence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Once I accompanied Naveed Marty Sahib to see Huzur رحه الله تعالى with regard to the French speaking world. We asked Huzur رحه الله تعالى if there was anything in particular he wanted us to do. Huzur رحه الله تعالى said he wanted us to publish material about the true character of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. At the time we couldn't understand the full purport of this advice. But we realised this would be something to attract the French people. Every time Huzur رحه الله تعالى would speak of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his sacrifices, his voice sounded as though it would break. But he would very quickly compose himself.

#### Taqwa

Another thing that moved him was observing Taqwa in people. He once related an incident in which somebody had told him

that he was feeling very guilty about himself. Huzur رحه الله تعالى became emotional and said that he had seen this person's Taqwa, the one thing Allah loves. Huzur رحه الله تعالى advised the person to hold on to that quality which would make everything safe for him. The love of Taqwa was the driving force behind everything Huzur رحه الله تعالى represented.

#### Defender of the Faith

As far as his own person was concerned, Huzur رحه الله تعالى displayed absolute humility. But when it came to the honour of Allah, His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Islam, he would fearlessly combat any attacks made on all things pronounced sacred and inviolable by Allah. The same went for his Khilafat, which he would defend from every attack or wayward challenge. He was fully aware that the fourth Khilafat fulfilled many prophecies of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. One of these prophecies was the well-known revelation "Ba'd ghayra, insha'Allah" (After eleven, if God wills) (p401 Tadhkirah). This was fulfilled in a spectacular way when Huzur رحه الله تعالى challenged General Ziaul Haq, the former Pakistani dictator, to a Mubahala (prayer duel), as a result of which God brought a sudden end to Zia's 11-year reign. This prophecy was also linked by Hadhrat Musleh Ma'ood رضي الله عنه to a Khalifa after him, bearing similarities to Hadhrat Musa عليه السلام and his dealing with the Pharaoh of the time. This can be found under the commentary of verse 15 of Surah Al-Fajr in Tafsir-e-Kabir.

## Humility

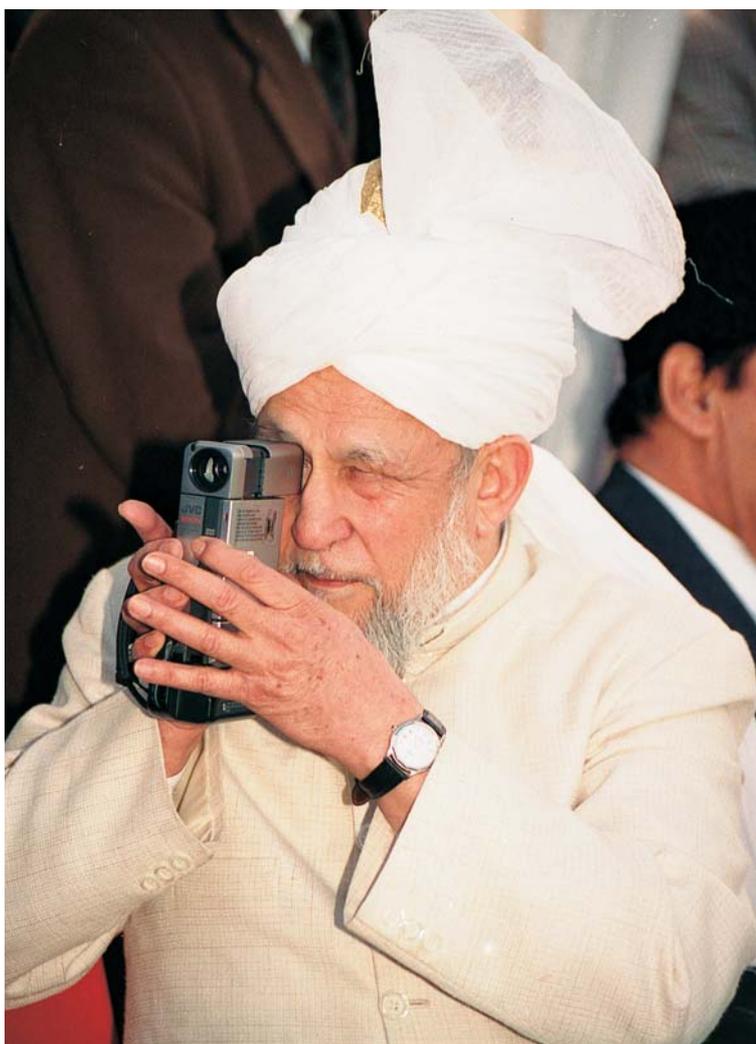
On one occasion Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى humbleness was made to stand out as a witness to the true greatness of his character. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى came to lead Maghrib at the Fazl Mosque. It so happened that several non-Ahmadi Arab Muslims were also present. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى raised his hands and pronounced the Takbeer, and then started reciting Al-Fâtihah, but only said "Al-Hamd..." Then Huzur رحمه الله تعالى said the Taslim (Salam), thereby breaking the prayer. Understandably everyone was perplexed by what had just happened. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى turned around and, addressing the worshippers, said: "I am sorry, but I just realised that I had forgotten to perform ablution. I will be back within a few minutes, insha'Allah." Later on, one of the Arab guests said: "By Allah! Not a single Imam in the world would have admitted this to his followers. He would have continued to pray and kept silent out of pride. This Imam is truly a great man. By Allah! He is a great man." And he kept on saying this as the whole incident had profoundly affected him. This is the humility Huzur رحمه الله تعالى demonstrated throughout his life.

## Preaching

One piece of advice that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave me is the way to preach, not only in the religious but also in the reformatory sense, trying to correct people and help them. He said there are

two ways of doing this, one being better than the other. One way is like allopathy and the other like homeopathy. He said that as allopathic remedies enter the body, it tells the body not to do any work and forces it to submit, consequently producing an adverse effect. This is similar to somebody picking out someone's fault and saying they have to change it. Sometimes a person might accept the advice, sometimes the person might react negatively and reject the advice. However, when homeopathic medicine enters the body, it merely wakes up the body to any danger and allows the body to work itself. Similarly, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى explained, we should try and make people realise their mistakes themselves. And if they realise their faults they will feel ashamed and correct themselves. This way we will be successful. Thus Huzur رحمه الله تعالى preferred the homeopathic approach to reforming people as opposed to the allopathic way.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was a man who profoundly affected millions of people during his lifetime, who still exerts a powerful influence on the world today, and will no doubt continue to do so in future, insha'Allah. I am infinitely grateful to Allah for having had the chance to be one of those millions who were blessed to have shared some precious moments with Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad رحمه الله تعالى. May Allah envelop him with His special love and mercy, just as he had been loving and merciful to us in his lifetime.



**left:** Huzur رحمه الله تعالى is using a digital home video camera.

**Above:** An MTA satellite dish

Photo: Umair Aleem



## An interview with: Chairman MTA International

Naseer Shah Ahmad

*Syed Naseer Ahmad Shah's service to Jama'at started from Birmingham where he served as local Qaid in 1984. Two years later he became the Regional Qaid of Midlands before being appointed General Secretary for Birmingham Jama'at. Since 1995 Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى twice appointed him Chairman of MTA International.*

### First Recollection

**M**y first recollection of Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى was when he came to Birmingham in 1982. It was the first time he travelled to the UK after becoming Khalifa. Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى was there for a day and attended a picnic in a park, where he also led prayers. One thing I will always remember was an incident just before the prayers. Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى explained that he was going to offer *Qasr* and told the local members: "Remember one thing, you are not supposed to continue with the rest of the prayers until the Imam has completed the second salam." That instruction has never left my mind.

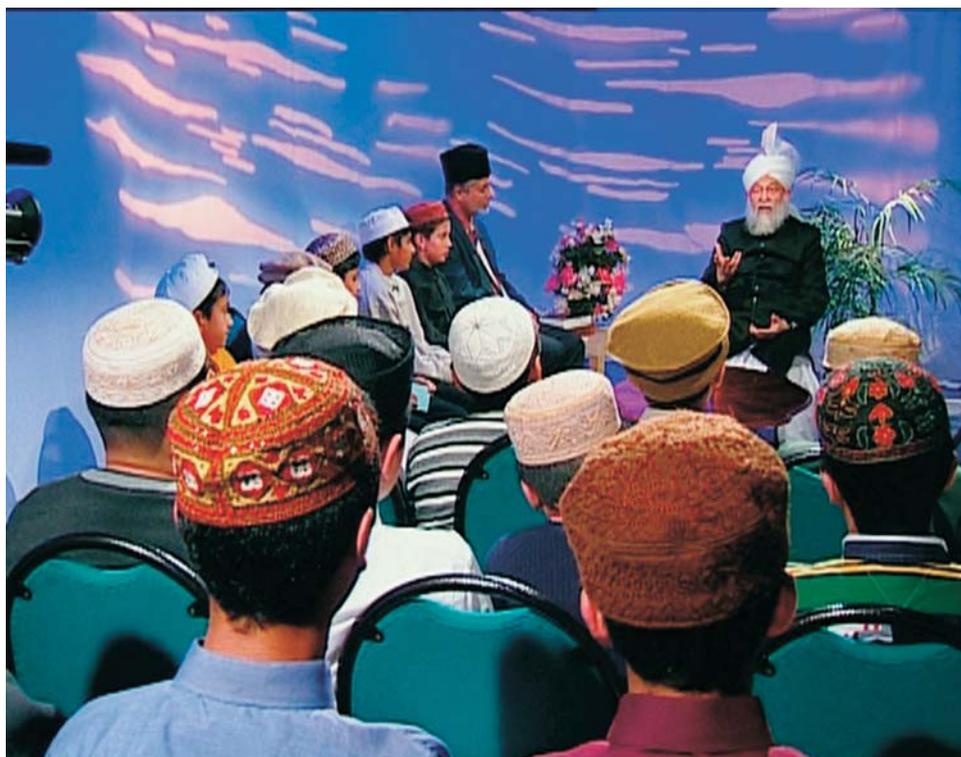
I was also fortunate to see Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى on the very day he had arrived in England following his migration from Pakistan. We received a call from London informing us that Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى had arrived and would be addressing the Jama'at at the same evening. My car had broken down and we rushed around trying to hire another vehicle, and eventually reached London. As Tilawat was being recited Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى looked

very exhausted. But as soon as he started speaking, he was as fresh as anything. I can remember his voice was hoarse and he kept asking for Kava (tea). The person responsible for the Kava had to keep changing as it wasn't up to Huzur's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى standards.

### Cycle Marathon

I think the first impression I made on Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى personally was during the centenary cycle marathon in 1989. I was interviewed for 10 minutes on BBC Daytime Live in Birmingham. When I returned to the mosque I received the shock of my life - the phone rang and it was Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى! He told me that he hadn't watched the interview himself but was told I had done very well. It was so unexpected. I remember breaking down into tears after that.

In another year I had organised a Tabligh trip to Europe and the team members had plastered banners all over the van. We started the day with Fajr at the Fazl Mosque. I don't know how I managed to pluck up the courage, but after the prayer I approached Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى and asked



Top: An image from an Atfal Mulaqat programme with Huzur رحمه الله تعالى .

him if we could we take one photo with him before we set off. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى replied, "Just one?" but he was so kind to allow numerous photos to be taken with him alongside our van. He then led us in silent prayer.

In 1993, a basketball tournament was organised in Birmingham and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى graced the event with his presence. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى spent three hours with us and it was an extremely special occasion for the Birmingham Jama'at.

In 1994, Rafiq Ahmed Hayat Sahib, who was Chairman of MTA at that time, asked me to take up some work in the department. A year later there were problems with the satellites, so Huzur رحمه الله تعالى asked Rafiq Sahib to find an appropriate person to investigate other satellite contracts. I was included in this team. At the time I didn't have a clue about the industry or about transponders and footprints. Can you believe our first point of call was to look through the Yellow Pages?! That's how naïve we were, but it proves that this is all Allah's work and not man's doing. Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى prayers made it all possible. I believe that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى could have put any one in this position and they would have been successful.

#### **Chairman of MTA International**

In January 1996, I was appointed as Chairman of MTA. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى went to Leicester for a Question and Answer Session and had asked me on the phone earlier if I was going to be there too. When I arrived there, Bashir Sahib said that he had something for me. He brought out a box of mattai (sweets) and said it was from Huzur رحمه الله تعالى to me. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى called me into a private room before the event and told me he was

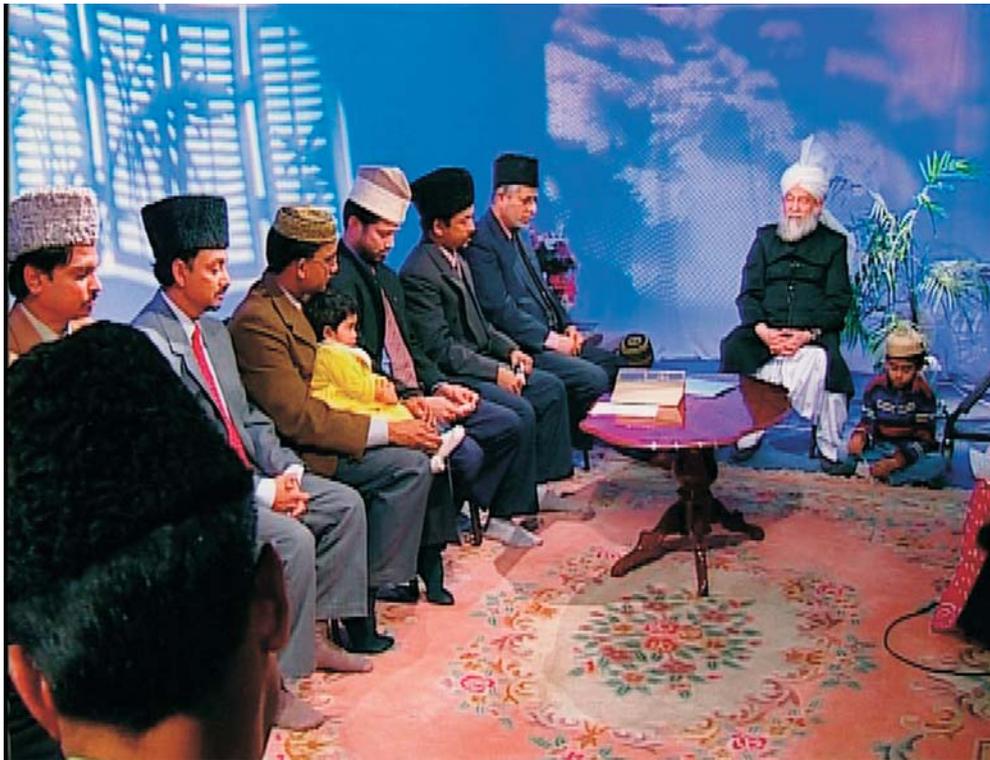
giving me the responsibility. I replied that I was very weak and I couldn't do it, but Huzur رحمه الله تعالى emphatically stated: "Nahin, nahin, aap karlingai, insha'Allah" (No, no, you will be able to do it, God-willing). Huzur رحمه الله تعالى then asked me a few questions regarding the satellites, and when I answered he said I had learnt a lot. But Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was saying this just to boost my confidence. I was so overwhelmed due to the responsibility that I had been given.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was guiding us and giving instructions all the time. On one occasion Huzur رحمه الله تعالى sat down with me and he drew the shape of a dish and explained the physics behind it! That's how he guided us, but of course his prayers were always with us.

#### **Historic Moment**

One of the most wonderful and historic moments was on April 1, 1996, when Huzur رحمه الله تعالى launched the 24-hour global transmission of MTA. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى used to pray so hard for this. I remember that on the eve of that day, the special dish antenna that we required and had arranged to be delivered from Ireland was too big to fit on the ferry. If we had transmitted with the smaller antennae, it would have meant that our transmission would have interfered with the neighbouring channels.

When I approached Huzur رحمه الله تعالى about this problem, he calmly said: "Find another one." So I contacted our American satellite company and got through to the director while he was on holiday on his boat. I told him the situation and emphasised that we had to be on air the next day. The director phoned the



**Top:** An Image of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى listening to a nazm in the Bengali Mulaqat programme

satellite control room in Washington and told them to allow us to transmit from our existing antennae! So the following day we managed to transmit across the airwaves. This is how Allah gave us the help from people that had no concern with us or Islam.

### *Sky Digital*

In April 2001, I very timidly suggested to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى that we had an opportunity to move onto Sky Digital and that millions of homes could have access to MTA. I also realised the financial aspect of it. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى saw the huge potential of MTA on Sky and he knew that most Asian families had Sky satellite receivers at home. After looking at the figures Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave his approval without hesitation.

### *Power of Prayer*

A few days prior to the start of Jalsa Salana 1997, there was a robbery in one of my shops in Birmingham. I wrote to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى requesting prayers as the staff were also very much upset. Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى reply was: "Don't worry, 'OUR' robbers will be caught." Amazingly, after just a few weeks, the police found not only the stolen till but the robbers themselves. Prior to that there had been numerous similar incidents with no one ever being caught by the police. This is how Allah listened to Huzur's prayers.

### *A Personal Moment*

One incident that sticks in my mind was when we had put up first right of refusal for the global beam which covers Africa and

Asia together. That was also booked by another large company and we were waiting for their right of refusal to expire. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was praying and waiting so that we could then broadcast to these parts of the world. We learned at the end of the working day in America (around 11pm here) that we had got the global beam. It was Ramadhan so I decided not to inform Huzur رحمه الله تعالى that night, but to wait until the following morning.

When I called Huzur رحمه الله تعالى at 9am to tell him the news, I thought he would be excited. However, he sounded very calm and asked: "Tell me the news." So I told Huzur رحمه الله تعالى that we had got the global beam and congratulated him. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was still calm and also congratulated me. But I could not sense any excitement in his voice. I was still confused as to why Huzur رحمه الله تعالى remained so calm, since he had been praying so hard for it and had even mentioned it in the previous Friday Sermon.

When Huzur رحمه الله تعالى realised that I had become quiet, he asked me when I had heard about the decision. I replied that I had been informed the previous night but that I did not want to disturb Huzur رحمه الله تعالى so late, considering it was Ramadhan. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى then told me he had remained awake, and that whenever the phone rang he thought it was me calling to give me some news. When I heard this, it made me feel that I should dig a hole and go into it! Here was the Khalifa of the time, waiting and staying awake for my call. That showed how much concern he had for the Jama'at. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى then said that, as my punishment, it was my responsibility to bring the mattai!



Statistics from MTA			
Programme	Started	Ended	Number of programmes
Reply to Allegations:	18 <sup>th</sup> Jan 1994	14 <sup>th</sup> July 1994	37 Programmes.
Homeopathy Class:	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1994	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan 1997	198 programmes.
Qur'an Class	15 <sup>th</sup> July 1994	24 <sup>th</sup> Feb 1999.	305 programmes
Liqa Maal Arab Class	17 <sup>th</sup> July 1994	5 October 2000.	472 classes, which include a few that Ataul Mujeeb Rashed presented.
Urdu Class	21st July 1994	6 <sup>th</sup> April 2003.	520 Classes + 7-8 Special classes
Childrens Class	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 1994	5 <sup>th</sup> April 2003.	Approx 300.
French Mulaqat	13 <sup>th</sup> July 1997	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2003	209 classes
Bangla Mulaqat	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1999 1	5 <sup>th</sup> April 2003.	128 classes

**1994 was a milestone in the history of MTA. It was then that the 24 hour broadcast started and most of the Class's and Mulaqat programmes began.**

**Huzur's** رحمه الله تعالى *Passing*

I was called upstairs by Sahibzada Mian Luqman Sahib around 10am. Amir Sahib and Dr Noori Sahib were also there. I was told to sit down and then given the news. I went numb for a moment. Amir Sahib reminded me that there were things for me to do and from that moment I went into the mode of having to do things rather than ponder over the shock of what had happened.

The first thing I did was to secure MTA. The transmission carried on as normal until Munir Ahmad Javaid Sahib, the Private Secretary, made the formal announcement. At that time, the boys in the control room, who were filming the announcement, did not know. Whilst the announcement was being made, the control room erupted into tears and cries of pain.

After the announcement, everyone just went into top gear. It was a time when the Khalifa was not there so I was referred to Sahibzada Mian Masroor Sahib, who was Nazir-e-Aala at the time and had arrived from Rabwah the following day. I asked him if we should transmit live proceedings from London. He replied in the affirmative. That was the only guidance we received at that time. He did not find himself in the position to give instructions which only a Khalifa could. It was Allah's guidance, the training that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had given to us and sheer commitment of the team that enabled us to fulfil the tasks that lay ahead of us. I must pay tribute to everyone in MTA and particularly my two deputies, Nadeem Karamat Sahib and Malik Ishfaq Sahib, whom I consulted during that difficult period.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى took so much personal interest in everyone's work around him. It was that extreme affection which affected all of us. Everybody can recollect something which is unique about their time with Huzur رحمه الله تعالى .



**Above:** A Question and Answer session in the Fazl Mosque.



# The Urdu Class

## An Interview with: Ismael Ado

*Ismael Biki Addo, better known as 'Barra Bacha' (Big Child) from Urdu Class, was born in Ghana in 1934. His father was a Christian but accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1928. Addo Sahib came to England for his postgraduate studies before returning to Ghana to become Assistant Head at an Ahmadi secondary school. He has enjoyed an active diplomatic career, having been appointed Ghana's Ambassador to Ethiopia for three years and served a two-year term as chairman of the OAU Liberation Committee in Tanzania. Following the military coup in Ghana in 1982, the UN appointed him as a consultant in Tripoli where he worked for six months before deciding to settle in the UK.*

### First recollection

I had written correspondence with Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ even before I ever saw him. This came about when I was once asked to take care of one of his guests in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. My first recollection of actually seeing him was at the 1978 Jalsa Pakistan in Rabwah, where he performed Tilawat during the opening ceremony.

However, it was not until he came to London that I got to know him better. I was part of the delegation that went with Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ to Islamabad (Tilford) after we first purchased it. I remember Huzur's رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ face. He was beaming. I was also part of the delegation that went to welcome and receive him at the airport following his tour of Africa. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ asked me to come forward and told me that he had met my father in Ghana. Later my father came to the UK to meet Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ and Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ had told him that since he had accepted Ahmadiyyat in the same year that Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ was born, therefore they had both entered Ahmadiyyat together!

### Urdu Class

It was when Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ set up the Urdu Class in 1994 that I developed a personal relationship with him. I was delighted when he asked me to join the class, but I didn't understand a word of Urdu. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ told us that he was going to teach us just as a mother teaches her child, by observing and listening and not using the textbook methodology to learn the language. I tried to grasp the structure whenever Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ spoke. He named me 'Barra Bacha' and it is truly amazing that everybody all over the world knows me as that! Only occasionally did he refer to me as Addo Sahib. Maulana Osman Chau Sahib was like the senior prefect since he had studied Urdu before.

I became famous for my mistakes! Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ would sometimes ask me: "You are an English teacher, so why are you having difficulty grasping Urdu?" This was because I did not know the structure of Urdu, but now I do. I can say that because attending the class has improved my Urdu and I can now speak some Urdu. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ taught us a large



Top: A photograph of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى during the Urdu Class.

vocabulary. "Ye kya hai" (What is this?) was the first sentence I ever studied. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى used to show us a lot of pictures and tell us many stories. One I will never forget was that of Ali Baba and the forty thieves. Once I tried to tell a story in Urdu and I wasn't using the correct words. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would join in and help me.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى treated us so well in the Urdu Class. All members of the class were like a family. The class started small, but eventually it grew to over 120 members. On one of our trips, to Holland, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى made everybody use a bicycle. However, I couldn't ride my bike and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى arranged a driver for me! We stayed there for over a week and it was amazing to see Huzur رحمه الله تعالى going for his daily morning walks after the prayers. The children would sometimes go along with Huzur رحمه الله تعالى as well. There was a lake near the mission house and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would walk around the lake.

### Affection

Once I was on my way to the class and I was running a little late. All of a sudden, somebody grabbed me from behind and covered up my eyes. I thought maybe it was one of the security guards. However, to my surprise, when I turned around, it was Huzur رحمه الله تعالى! I quickly moved to the side for Huzur رحمه الله تعالى to pass. But then Huzur رحمه الله تعالى asked me: "Am I not your friend?" I replied: "No, you are my master!" Huzur رحمه الله تعالى then said to me that even if I was running late, I should still come to the class.

On one occasion, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى prepared and brought coffee into the class. He poured a cup and said that it was for me, since I had been dosing off. This would stop that happening again!

### Man of Century

I always thought of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى as the man of the century. I felt deeply humbled when Huzur رحمه الله تعالى appointed me President of the Pan-African Association. Also, when MTA International was inaugurated, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى said that one of the purposes was to honour the continent of Africa and he did this by having an Africa Day on MTA. Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى attachment to Africa was great. In a strange way I think that my presence in the Urdu Class was to symbolise Africa. When the foundation stone was being laid for Baitul Futuh, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave me the great honour to lay one of the stones as a representative of Africa. I was not Addo Sahib - I was an embodiment of Africa.

I have many memories, all of which made me feel closer and closer to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى. Once Huzur رحمه الله تعالى referred to me as an "institution," which humbled me very much and increased my resolve to serve the Jama'at better. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى made Urdu Class a family. We were a family, a union. It was a class full of blessings.



# The Urdu Class

## An Interview with: Rizwan Rehman

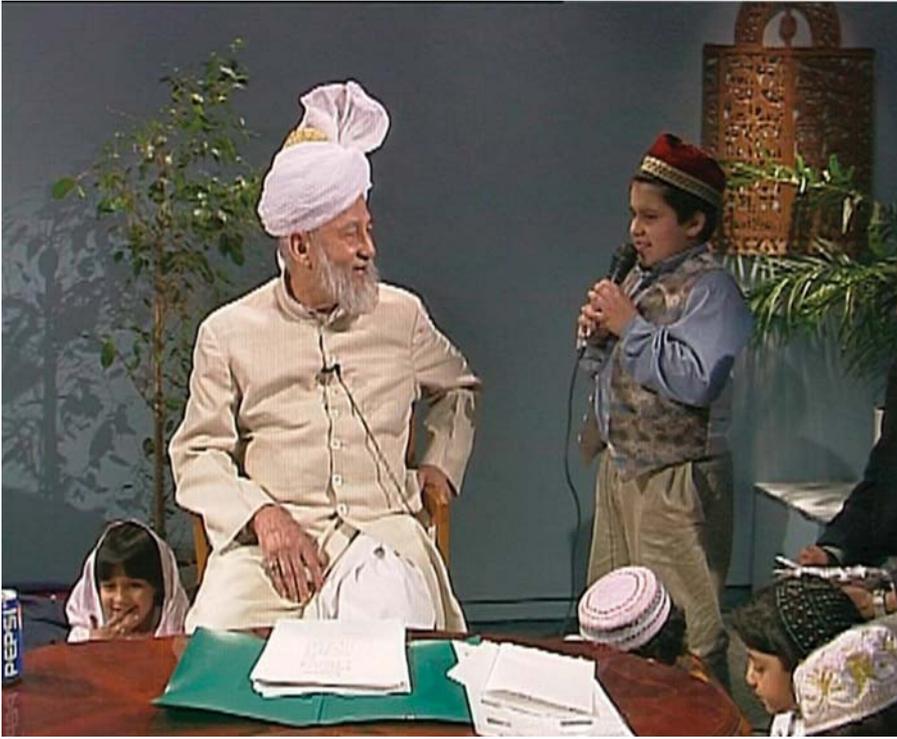
In 1994 Huzur رحمه الله تعالى started a project on MTA to teach Urdu to non-Urdu speaking members of the Jama'at for all ages and backgrounds. The Urdu class became essential viewing on MTA as it offered a personal insight to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى, his character and personality. The class originally started off with a handful of students, which over the years expanded to over 100. Many of the students became household names around the world and showed great affection towards his students. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى arranged and went on many trips with the class, to Holland, Hartlepool and Norway. Khuddam will remember the Urdu Class accompanying Huzur رحمه الله تعالى to several Khuddam Ijtema Barbecue evenings. One popular member of the class was Rizwan Rehman who was affectionately known as 'Mota Bacha'

When I was asked to write a few words about my memories of the Urdu class I did not know where to start and where to finish. I was only three years old when I attended my first Urdu class, as a matter of fact it was class number 5. My behaviour on my debut was totally carefree and oblivious; I was unaware of any caution. I thought Urdu Class was a playgroup. I was very excited to see so many new toys. I ran around chair, laughed freely and played with everyone of those toys and articles, which my dear Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had collected to increase our Urdu language vocabulary. I thought all those toys were brought in just for me. My older brother Imran who was present in that class was extremely embarrassed about my activities and discretely tried his best to make me behave seriously, but the most loving Huzur showed no sign of any kind of irritation. On the contrary Huzur showed so much love towards me that I thought everything I was doing was great. Incidentally my brother Imran never went back to any Urdu class afterwards, it was too difficult for him to put up with my carefree attitude towards everything. I was told later on by my mother that my dear Huzur رحمه الله تعالى specifically advised my mother not to try to force me to behave seriously, rather I should be left to

my natural behaviour. I can still remember that first class that I attended as a child, and how happy I was that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى sacrificed his precious time for the sake of teaching others.

Once in the early days Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was demonstrating how the new born babies are given the first taste of food by placing a tiny bit of honey on their tongues, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى held me on his lap and put some honey in my mouth with his index finger, unfortunately I do not like the taste of honey so I started making all sorts of faces, screamed and demanded that my mouth must be wiped clean immediately. My dearest Huzur رحمه الله تعالى quickly got a tissue paper and gently wiped off all the honey from inside my mouth, he did all that with love and care and showed no resentment.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى took us to two countries, Norway and Holland. When the Urdu Class went to Norway, we went by air, during the flight our most loving and caring master took a round inside the plane and personally visited and greeted every one of us at our seats. When we landed at Oslo airport there was a minor hiccup leaving the airport. This was because there was not enough transport to accommodate all the



**Top:** Rizwan answers a question in the Urdu Class.

people. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ waited with all of us at the airport. All of us were waiting outside the terminal building, when Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ called me. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ was walking round in laps and took my hand and I walked with him. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ must have walked for a solid 15 minutes, until the transport arrived. My hand in Huzur's رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ blessed hand for such a long period of time was something I will never ever forget for the rest of my life.

We reached our destination in the mountains of Norway at around 3 pm. My friends and I were playing outside in the lovely mountains and were enjoying the scenery. At about that time Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ was having his tea. We saw Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ and we waved. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ called us over, but at first we thought Huzur was telling us to go away! My friend Faiz and I went to Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ, while the rest of them ran off thinking Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ was going to tell them off. So Faiz and I went to Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ took us inside his house and very kindly offered us some crisps and cakes etc. Faiz and I felt so lucky, that Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ called us inside his house.

We had an unforgettable visit to Holland with Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ, I remember extremely enjoyable cycling trips with Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ at Nunspeet.

When I went to Urdu Class I saw lots of changes over the years. Urdu Class at the beginning was for a few little children and older gentlemen, but over the years the class had grown. The class had a variety of people from older gentlemen to little babies.

Hartlepool was another destination where Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ took the Urdu Class, with a smaller contingent. The late Dr. Hameed and his family were our hosts. We also had a trip to the Lake District

where we all stayed in a beautiful cottage.

Once I was coming in 5 minutes late to the class and I came in and sat down. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ said that I'm good at wrestling and I should have a match with Munir Odeh Sahib. I couldn't refuse Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ orders, even though Munir Odeh Sahib is a lot bigger and stronger than I am (6ft 3 plus..), yet I gave it my best shot. Even giving it my best shot was not good enough, I didn't come out victorious, but thank God in one piece.

The food in Urdu Class was always a feast. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ always selected and chose very high quality food for the class to eat. Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ provided a special exclusive ice cream for the class, it was home made. There were many flavours including lemon and pistachio. Fazal Sahib's delicious kebab rolls were also a very nice combination with his mango milkshake and a piece of mithai.

Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ liked to hear me sing, I don't know if that's because he liked my voice or because it made him a laugh. I don't mind whichever, as long as Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ enjoyed it.

I would like to conclude by saying Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ treated us with such a loving care and kindness, which I will never forget throughout my life. The things Huzur رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ did for the Urdu Class and the very special affection and the love we the fortunate members of the Urdu class received, will always stay in the depths of our hearts.



# The Children's Class

by Qudsi Rasheed

The Children's Class was initiated by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى not only to teach children about Islam, but also to instruct children in general knowledge. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى realised that there was a need for a class in English in order to educate and inculcate Islamic values within children, directly to those who attended the class and also to the worldwide audience through its broadcast on MTA International.

Initially there were few children attending and the Class took place in one of the small MTA studios located above the Mahmood Hall. In the early days of the class, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى used to tell the children stories about Islam and Ahmadiyyat, and he used to entertain us with anecdotes of his life. The class developed because Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted the children to further our knowledge. We always learned a lot in every class, but it was not just about learning. Simply being in the presence of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was awe-inspiring as well as entertaining and it was a very enjoyable experience for all the children.

As the class progressed and developed, so the number of children wanting to participate in this class increased, and so we

found ourselves cramped for room in the studio. Therefore, the decision was made that the class would move downstairs into the Mahmood Hall, and although at first it seemed that the space was almost too much, as the class continued to flourish under the guidance of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى, so the Hall was filled by all the children who wanted to take part.

Each class began with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an with its English translation. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى always emphasised the importance of reading the English translation as well as the Arabic, so that all the children and all the viewers would understand the message contained within the verses that were recited.

Hadith were often read out so that the children would be able to learn from both the practices and actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and be able to follow them.

Nazms were also a key part of the class. Urdu poems were sung by the children and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى used to enjoy these very much. Some of these poems were written by Huzur رحمه الله تعالى

himself, whilst others came from the poetry of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام and Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II رضي الله عنه . In fact, many poems in other languages were sung, most notably those in English, French, German, Spanish, Bosnian, Turkish, Bengali and Chinese. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was especially fond of the singing of Fatima Hanif of America, both in English and Urdu.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted us to prepare speeches for the class so that we could educate ourselves in researching topics, and so that we could also educate each other. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى stressed the importance of writing our own speeches so that we would benefit from them, and although what was said was not always perfect, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى appreciated that the children were making a real effort. As the class developed, the format was modified so as to give each class a particular theme and there would be many speeches on the same topic but from different aspects. For example, to commemorate Promised Messiah Day, there would be speeches about the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, or on Musleh Maud Day there would be speeches about the Hazrat Khalifat-ul Masih II رضي الله عنه . However, as well as Islamic topics, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى really enjoyed the other presentations, which ranged from speeches on different countries to sport to astronomy. The children would always be amazed at just how much Huzur رحمه الله تعالى knew; whatever topic was being discussed, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was always able to give us more information, and his ability to explain things simply meant that we all could understand.

During the weeks around the UK Jalsa Salana, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave permission for many children who had come to London from around the world, an opportunity to attend the class. When that happened the Hall would become packed with children from many different countries, but the classes were just as enjoyable, if not more so. These children who watched the Children's Class wherever they lived in the world wanted to take part, and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would not only let them sit in the Class, but would insist that they should do Tilawat or Nazm or at

least say something to those people they knew where they lived in their own language.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى enjoyed the games and competitions that were held, in particular the wrestling matches. These were not only entertaining for us, but Huzur رحمه الله تعالى really enjoyed the wrestling and it was when Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was relaxed and enjoying himself that we all felt comfortable in Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى presence, as if he was one of us. There were also many other competitions and games which took place but it must be noted that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى always congratulated both the winners and losers and he always conveyed love and kindness to us all.

In the last few classes there would be a short Question and Answer Session with Huzur رحمه الله تعالى where the children were allowed to ask questions to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى, not just about Islam and Ahmadiyyat, but on a range of topics. Although the time set aside for this was relatively short, the children always left the class knowing more than when they entered.

Here are a few comments from the children:

*"I really liked Huzur رحمه الله تعالى, he was really special to me. I really enjoyed going to Saturday Class."*

*"I really felt sad that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had left us and gone to heaven."*

*"Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was very fun, he was loving, and he was so much fun."*

*"My most vivid memory of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى is being the most loving and kind person in the whole wide world."*

*"I remember Huzur رحمه الله تعالى used to make me laugh."*

All of us will miss Huzur رحمه الله تعالى deeply and although he is no longer with us, his memory and what we have learnt from him will always remain. We all hope and pray that Allah grant him a lofty status in heaven. Ameen.



**Left:** Huzur رحمه الله تعالى watches a tug of war match between a two teams of boys in the Childrens Class.

Photo: Umair Aleem



# Lessons in Homeopathy

by Dr Mujeeb-ul-Haq Khan

**H**adhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى started teaching a series of lessons in Homeopathy in March 1994. Over the series of 182 lectures and classes that spanned two and a half years, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى successfully imparted some of his vast knowledge and experience, which he had gained over more than forty years of practising the medical science of Homeopathy. The last lesson that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave was on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1996.

His father Hadhrat Musleh-e-Maud رضي الله عنه was instrumental in instilling an interest in Homeopathy in Huzur رحمه الله تعالى, and after a basic introduction, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى pursued his interest with a passion. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى recalled in the book 'A Man of God', how he came to believe in Homeopathy after being treated with Homeopathic Medicine for a severe migraine headache.

*"When I recovered I began to think about it. Now theory must follow observation. You cannot bend your observations to suit theories. My theory said: it is impossible. My observation said: it happened.*

*It is like the question of God being there or not being there. Those who know that God is there and are in touch with him, how can any argument persuade or dissuade them from believing in God?*

*So you must follow the facts that you know. Don't bend your facts according to a theory. This was my principle and I still follow this principle. So I said: there must be something in it."*

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى went on to say:

*"my father was very ill at that time and he could not instruct me, but of course there had been many conversations in the past. I started to study. I had access to his library and I began to read all the books he*

*had about homoeopathy...*

*... gradually I built my knowledge and finally I decided 'no more allopathy'"*

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى was extremely enthusiastic about the concept of 'like cures like' [the principle of Homeopathy] and stimulating the body to heal itself. In contrast to the concept of eliminating disease by killing the problematic cause, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى mentioned that by promoting the body's natural response, a better outcome could be achieved both in the short and long term.

For many years before his Khilafat and throughout his extremely busy time as Khalifatul Masih, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى treated thousands upon thousands of patients with extremely diverse medical conditions both directly in face to face meetings and through communication by letters. The treatment that Huzur رحمه الله تعالى gave was, in addition to being a considered medical opinion, blessed by Allah and was prescribed with the prayer "Bismillahi Shafi" with the full knowledge that it is Allah who cures.

The first introductory lesson to Homeopathy was given in Nunspeet (Holland), the second in Paris (France). Later in the MTA studios in London, I personally had the honour and privilege to be a student of Homeopathic classes conducted by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى.

During the first lessons Huzur رحمه الله تعالى mentioned that this system also has an important spiritual aspect in addition to the physical aspect, and related the use of Sulphur and Mercury by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام for the treatment of many deep rooted illnesses. These two remedies are also considered as extremely important remedies in Homeopathy.

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى presented Homeopathy in a very interesting manner and students were never bored during his lectures. Even a person with little knowledge could understand and imbibe the essence of lectures. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى instructed us that if we remembered a few salient symptoms of each remedy, then we can treat almost all the ailments without much difficulty.

While teaching about sulphur, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى mentioned that one of the salient features of this drug is 'burning'. One of my patients told me that he had severe burning of his feet, so much so that not only was it necessary for him to take the duvet off at night but he also had to put cold water on his feet. In Allopathic terminology this is called "Burning feet syndrome." I remembered Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى lecture and gave him Sulphur 1000, three doses with an interval of one week in each dose. After a few days the patient came back and first words he uttered after entering the room were "Marvellous, marvellous" and when I asked him what happened he said that after taking the first dose 80% of his problem was solved and with the second dose he was completely cured. This incidence had a impact on me. Any doubt in my mind was removed, and I had full faith in Homeopathy.

While attending Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى lectures I felt that not only did Huzur رحمه الله تعالى have a deep knowledge of Homeopathy, he also had vast knowledge of Allopathic problems. At times Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would present an Allopathic problem with a new perspective. This helped me as an allopathic doctor to understand and treat such problems, better. One very experienced and famous Ahmadi Homeopath who attended some of Huzur's رحمه الله تعالى lectures told me that, "the way Huzur رحمه الله تعالى is teaching Homeopathy is unique."

Although Huzur رحمه الله تعالى had imparted much of his knowledge through the MTA lectures, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى felt that there was a greater need for the information to be available quickly and easily, his vision was for a book. Thus work began on a Homeopathic book based on the lectures containing 104 remedies. After the publication of the first edition Huzur رحمه الله تعالى began a process of revising the book, and it was transformed in line with his vision for it. The second edition was published in 1998. The third more expanded and fully revised edition was published in 1999. This edition contains 184 remedies, which if learnt properly would encompass all the known ailments. The three editions published are in Urdu. Work is currently under way to translate the third edition into English

Huzur رحمه الله تعالى also considered it very important for the benefit of

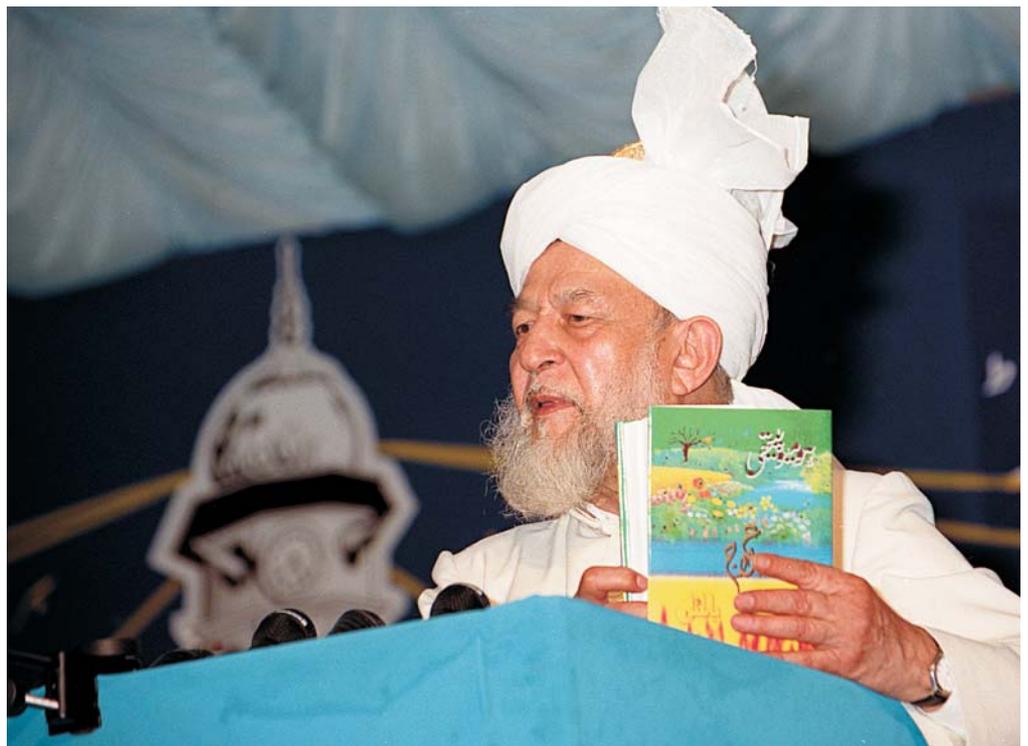
mankind to establish Homeopathic dispensaries all over the world. The clinics are of particular significance in the poorer countries of the world where the cost of allopathic medicine is not affordable to the local indigenous population. The cost of producing a Homeopathic remedy is significantly cheaper and presented a viable, affordable and working solution. Hence the service provided by the Ahmadiyya Muslim community is invaluable. There are now over 300 well established Homeopathic dispensaries in 57 countries. Hafeez Bhatti Sahib was appointed to prepare the Homeopathic medicines and Mohammad Aslam Khalid Sahib entrusted with the worldwide distribution.

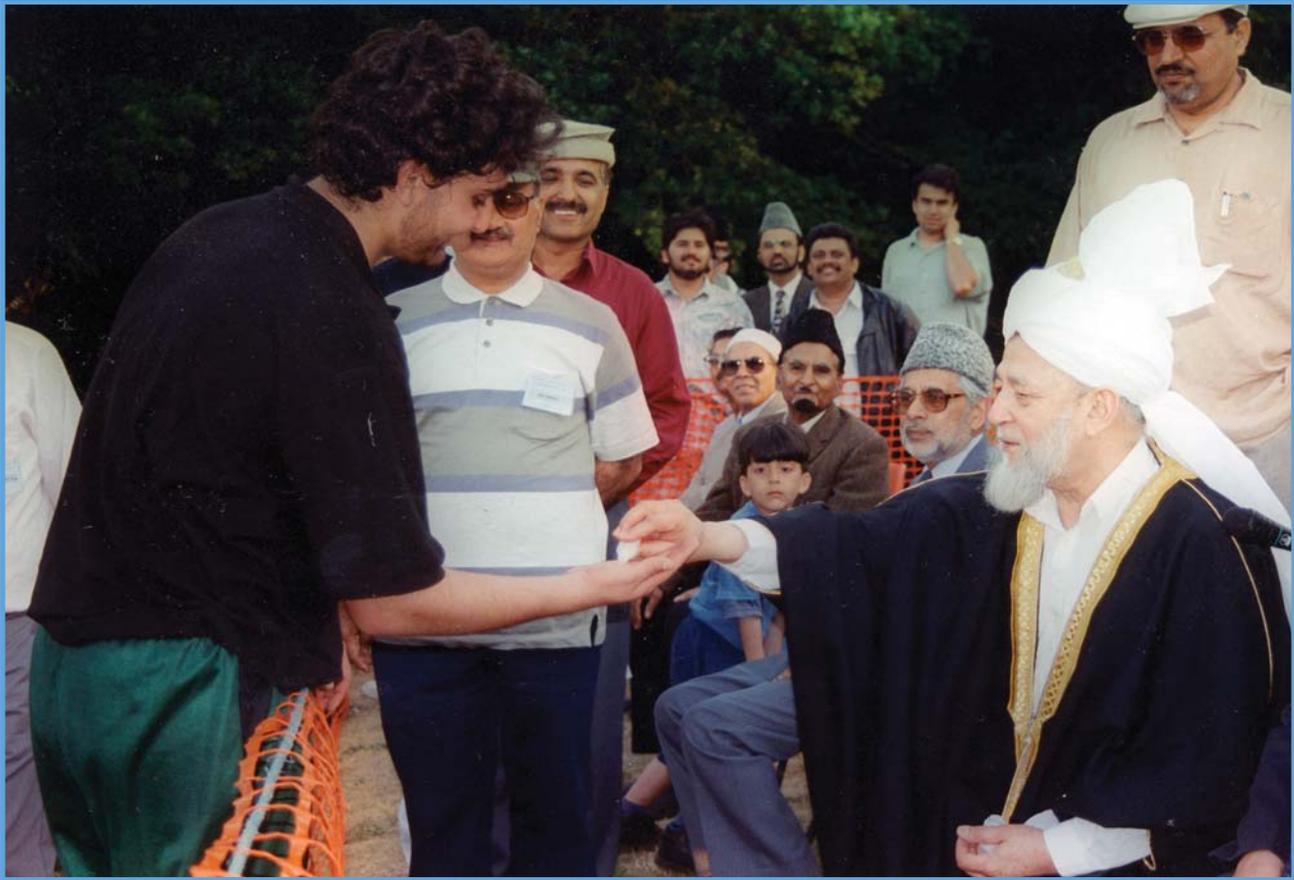
Whilst the consensus of many in the Allopathic world is still to disregard the Homeopathic science, many Ahmadi Allopathic doctors are now convinced of its efficacy (effectiveness). Homeopathic medicine has cured many ailments which allopathic medicine could not treat; it is gaining greater support around the world and is seriously challenging Allopathic science. If modern clinical investigatory techniques to pinpoint the root cause of a problem could also be used in Homeopathy, then this would greatly help in prescribing of the correct Homeopathic remedy.

Modern science still cannot explain how homeopathy works, but it will one day concede to it. Many theories are offered as how or why the treatment works and in due course Allah may reveal the exact science behind it.

May Allah bless all those who are helping humanity at large and most of all our beloved Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى Ameen.

**Below:** Huzur رحمه الله تعالى presents his book on Homeopathy to Jalsa Salana UK





# How Hadhrat **Mirza Tahir Ahmad** رحمه الله تعالى Changed my life

*An interview with: Munir Odeh*

Munir Odeh, from Kababir in Haifa, Palestine, came to the UK in June 1994 at the age of 18 to study English. Although hoping to enrol at Newcastle University, he was encouraged by the then Amir, Aftab Ahmad Khan, to move to London. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV also advised him to stay nearer to the Markaz.

## **First recollection**

I first saw Huzur رحمه الله تعالى in person at the 1990 Jalsa Salana UK, which I recall as a very emotional experience. A group of Palestinian youngsters came over to recite a Qaseeda. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى showed great love towards the Palestinians, especially on occasions such as Jalsa, and used to personally meet most Arabs. It was during one such meeting that my brother and I were present. We were so overcome by emotion that we could not speak. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى saw this and kept his arm around me and my brother throughout the mulaqat.

## **MTA**

We learnt a lot from Huzur رحمه الله تعالى. His constant presence improved our attitude towards the work and made us more disciplined. In the very early stages I got involved in recording the news, editing tapes and working with the schedules. We used to work very late and on occasions Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would surprise us by coming into the editing rooms, bringing fruit and sweets. The first time this happened, the door was closed and we heard a knock, followed by a familiar voice asking: "Can I come in?" We opened the door and could not believe that it was Huzur رحمه الله تعالى!



### *Liqaa Ma'al Arab*

Hilmi Shafie Sahib, who used to translate Liqaa Ma'al Arab, passed away in 1995. Abada Barboosh Sahib, who was the second choice translator, politely requested Huzur رحمه الله تعالى to be excused from doing the translation, and so I was asked to fill in. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى called me to his office and said to me: "Odeh Mian, you are going to translate Liqaa Ma'al Arab from today onwards". It was an instruction, so I agreed, but I was worried sick about how I would do it! I missed days from university and could not concentrate on anything else.

When the day came for the programme, Huzur رحمه الله تعالى explained to the viewers that I was going to translate from here on, and that any mistakes I made should be excused. I was sitting right next to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى , who answered the questions looking directly at me. I remember a feeling of panic; I began sweating and could not take any notes for the first 15 minutes. I felt like asking Huzur رحمه الله تعالى to stop the programme. Suddenly, Allah granted me composure and I began taking notes and the process for undertaking the task of translating began. Alhamdulillah, within a few classes, I became used to it.

### *Urdu Class*

I started work in MTA behind the camera. Shafie Sahib was part

**Top:** A golden view of Huzur رحمه الله تعالى during Jalsa Salana UK.

of that class and he found learning Urdu difficult. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى would often tease him and Shafie Sahib would laugh and say that he was too old to learn, but would point at me and say: "He is young, he can learn". One day Huzur رحمه الله تعالى asked me to join the class. Huzur رحمه الله تعالى always encouraged me to learn Urdu. In all my private meetings with him, he would speak to me in Urdu even though at that time I could only answer in English.

### *Jalsa Salana Germany*

In 1995 I attended Jalsa Salana Germany. During that Jalsa, a group of boys were going to recite the Qaseeda and Huzur رحمه الله تعالى wanted me to train the boys and check their pronunciation. I also had a chance to perform security duty in front of the stage during the final session, and when my shift ended I decided to go to the back of the hall. The Jalsa Gah was huge. The time came for the Qaseeda and the group formed a line on the stage. Just then Huzur رحمه الله تعالى asked "Where is Odeh?", saying that he had just seen me five minutes ago standing at the front of the stage, and that I should return. Major Mahmood Sahib spotted me raising my hand at the back of the Jalsa Gah and pointed me out to Huzur رحمه الله تعالى . I had to dash

from the back of the hall to the stage where Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى introduced me to the Jalsa.

### Affection

Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى used to make everybody feel very special, like they were the only people in the world with him. Very early one morning during Ramadhan, I had a call from one of Huzur's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى staff that I should quickly go to Huzur's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى doorway. I immediately made my way. When I arrived I saw Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى waiting in his doorway with a bowl of *sawayan* (sweet dish) for me. It was amazing that he had waited for so long whilst somebody went to fetch me from the guest house.

On another occasion, Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى learned that I did not have a fridge. He instructed the then Wakilul Tabshir, Maulana Hadi Ali Sahib, to give me a fridge and on that day it came packed with food. Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى said that from then on it was my responsibility to stock it up!

Being near Khilafat is the best fruit a person can taste. I was brought up in an Ahmadi household, we had all the Jama'at books, and my parents were strict in our religious upbringing. But it was from Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى that I learnt the real Islam, the essence of so many teachings, which I saw personified in him. Everything he said, he practised, and was an example to us all. He always spoke the truth, had no fear of anyone. He feared only Allah.

At one time, when I was out of the country for about three months, I was really missing Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى. I was sitting watching the Liqaa Ma'al Arab programme on MTA. when Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى mentioned my name in the programme, this made me cry with emotion. But before Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى had finished the

sentence, he said that by now I was probably sitting in front of the TV crying. It was so true.

### "Little Odehs"

Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى once asked me whether I was getting married and told me that he wanted to see "little Odehs" in his lifetime. In a mulaqat with my family, Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى enquired if I was engaged. When he was told that I was not, he told my parents: "Munir is ours now." From this they understood that I was to stay in the UK. My father told my mother that her son was not going to come home, but now had a special place to live.

I eventually got married at 21. In our fourth year of marriage, my wife and I had a mulaqat with Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى in the guest house where he had been staying during his illness. Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى asked us if there was any news. We answered in the negative. Although looking weak, Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى got up and asked us to wait whilst he went out of his office and into the house. He came back with a jar of honey, and with his index finger he stirred the honey and licked the honey three times, taking his finger out each time. He then gave the jar to my wife, telling her to give a taste of this honey "to your son when he is born." He also said that after 3 months we should come and give him the good news. In the 4<sup>th</sup> month after our mulaqat we went back to Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى with the good news and offered the baby into the Waqfe Nau Scheme. Nine months later, we were blessed with our first baby – a baby boy whom Huzur رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى named "Tahir Ahmad". Huzur's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى wish to see "little Odehs" in his lifetime had come true.

Below: Liqa Maal Arab

