

Friday Sermon: Mahmood Ahmad Bengali: A True Ahmadi Passes Away

April 25th, 2014

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih devoted the entire sermon today to pay tribute to Mahmood Ahmad Bengali Sahib, Ameer Jama'at Australia who passed away two days ago. Huzoor said:

'I wish to pay tribute here to a very dear personality who had a special station owing to his absolute loyalty. He was utterly devoted to serve the Jama'at and passed away two days ago. Inna lillahe wa inna illaihe raji'oon. Each person has to leave and will one day depart from this world. Most fortunate are those who try to spend their lives according to the wishes of Allah the Exalted and try their utmost to honour the pledges they make. Along with serving faith, they are ever keen to try and also serve humanity. These people are included among those whom the world praises and because of this according to the saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Paradise becomes obligatory for such people.

This was our dear brother Mahmood Ahmad Shahid, who is known as Mahmood Bengali Sahib by many in Pakistan. He was a servant of the Jama'at, an excellent helper of the Khulafa of the time who had intense sense of honour for Khilafat. These days he was serving as the Ameer Jama'at Australia. He passed away on 23 April. Inna lillahe wa inna illaihe raji'oon. The first letter or message that I received after his passing away was from a relative saying that may Allah the Exalted make all of us as devoted to Khilafat as he was. In response I said that indeed, he operated in synchronisation like pulse. He did not ever entertain the thought of why an instruction was given and why was it given in a specific way. He would promptly comply even if something was asked which was against his will.

I will now mention his illness and passing away. He left Sydney mission house on 22 April to offer Asr Salat at the mosque but turned back after a brief walk as he did not feel well. Soon after reaching home he suffered severe brain haemorrhage. He was diabetic and suffered from blood pressure. He was taken to the hospital where he was placed on the ventilator. The doctors were of the opinion that a haemorrhage in the area of the brain that he suffered proved fatal. However, I advised them to try for twenty four hours and not any more. When the ventilator was switched off after twenty hours, he passed away after two minutes.

By way of introduction Mahmood Ahmad Sahib was born on 19 November 1948 in a Bangladeshi village Char Dukhiya in Chandpur district. His father's name was Maulana Abdul Khair Muhammad MuhibUllah and his mother's name was Zebunnisa. His father had accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1943. Initially his father's name was just Abdul Khair Muhammad to which Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) added MuhibUllah. He was the first Ahmadi of his region and was a great scholar. He was very keen on Tabligh and through his Tabligh efforts he gave the beneficence of the light of Ahmadiyyat to his father Khawaja Abdul Mannan, Mahmood Sahib's grandfather. MubibUllah Sahib was introduced to Ahmadiyyat during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) when he went to Saharanpur in UP, [Utter Pradesh] to study. When the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) once visited Delhi he was eager to meet him but he was not allowed to go by the education authorities where he was studying. Later, when he became Ahmadi he used to say those people tried to keep us deprived of this blessings but Allah the Exalted granted us this blessing. On the motivation of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) Mahmood Ahmad Shahid Sahib's father dedicated his life under the auspices of dedicating one's children in 1954. Mahmood Shahid Sahib had his elementary education in his hometown and joined Jamia Ahmadiyya, Rabwah in 1962 at a very young age. He obtained his Shahid degree in 1974. He was married to Hijira Sahiba, daughter of late Maulawi Muhammad Sahib, Ameer Jama'at Bangladesh in 1977. They had three daughters and one son, with the grace of Allah the Exalted they are all married and actively serve the Jama'at.

Mahmood Sahib narrated some of his early life accounts to his son-in-law and asked them to be written down. He says that once during his time in the Jamia he sustained severe injuries on his knee while playing football. He became quite unwell and went back home to East Bengal. Rabwah did not have many facilities in those days and the climate was quite harsh as well. The water was salty and sweetwater was not available. He often suffered from stomach pain, his parents were far away and he must have missed them given his young age and then he got hurt, so he returned to Bangladesh which was East Pakistan at the time. He had no desire to return to Rabwah. However, the principal of Jamia Rabwah at the time Syed Mir Daud Ahmad Sahib wrote him frequent letters and tried to get him to return to Jamia and this led him to return to Jamia. Mahmood Sahib said that his father's prayers had a deep impact on his life. While in Rabwah he wrote to his father that the weather was harsh and hot, there was lack of water supply and he had problems regarding food and drink etc. MuhibUllah Sahib wrote back saying times in Mecca were also very harsh and he quoted verse 38 of Surah Ibrahim: 'Our 'Lord, I have settled some of my children in an uncultivable valley...' (14:38) and counselled him through it and wrote that if you cannot live in the town that has been populated by the Khalifa of Allah, then your connection with your father is meaningless. Mahmood Sahib said a profound change came in his life after this.

Mujeebur Rehman Sahib advocate, writes from Rawalpindi that Mahmood Sahib was a quiet, accomplished servant of the Jama'at who undertook his obligations with complete loyalty and sincerity all his life and went to meet his Maker while in the midst of serving. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) nominated him Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya and with that his administrative skills came to the fore. Mujeebur Rehman Sahib writes that his father was appointed a missionary in Bengal and he dedicated his first child and while Mahmood Ahmad was quite young he was sent to Rabwah. Due to the unfamiliar surroundings he used to get sad in the early days. Mujeebur Rehman Sahib is the maternal uncle of Mahmood Sahib. Mahmood Sahib's father had an intense wish [for his son to go through Jamia] and he would write to Mujeebur Rehman Sahib not to let Mahmood Sahib get sad so that he could study and finish his schooling at Jamia. This was in the early days, very soon Mahmood Sahib became engrossed in his studies wholeheartedly and those who lived in Rabwah at that time know how much assimilated Mahmood Sahib became. Mir Daud Ahmad Sahib would send him to Rawalpindi to stay with Mujeebur Rehman Sahib during summer holidays.

Mujeeb Sahib writes that the dear deceased was so simple and sincere and was so friendly and sociable that even non-Ahmadi neighbouring children and ladies would become acquainted to him and always remembered him. Mahmood Ahmad Sahib had a very loving relationship with his brothers and would quietly help his underprivileged relatives. He always had some of his money kept with the Bangladesh Jama'at with which he constantly served his mother. All his relatives say they had a very loving relationship with him.

In the notes to his son-in-law he said that in 1979 the election of Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya took place at Shura in which his votes were in fifth place. At Fajr time after the elections Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) beckoned him and told him to engage in Istighfar abundantly and to recite Durud. The next day or in the evening the same day Huzoor gave approval of his name as Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya although his votes were in fifth place.

Missionary Inam Ullah Kausar Sahib from USA writes that he befriended Mahmood Sahib during Jamia day at Nasir Hostel. He was the Zaim of the hostel and Kausar Sahib was the Mohtamim. He was a member of the mess and later the Sadr and also became Raeesul Jamia. When the announcement of his appointment by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) as Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya was made, Inam Ullah Sahib stood next to him and wished to embrace him but Mahmood Sahib Sahib told him to get away in his specific accent of Bengali and Urdu mixed. He then asked if his name was announced and when told that yes it was he could not believe it. Rather than be happy, he looked sad, but soon recovered and Inam Ullah Sahib embraced him.

Khalid SaifUllah Sahib, who is currently the acting Ameer of Australia writes that Mahmood Bengali Sahib told him that when the election of Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya took place in 1979 the votes he garnered were in

fifth position. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) was most affectionate to Mahmood Sahib. He beckoned him and told him to abundantly engage in Istighfar till the evening. Mahmood Sahib was quite scared and thought he had committed a mistake but when Huzoor appointed him as Sadr in spite of his votes being in fifth place he realised that Huzoor was drawing his attention to humility in this way. Therein is a lesson for all office-holders that when they are appointed they need to engage in Istighfar and Durud so that they maintain humility and are enabled by Allah the Exalted to serve in a proper way.

Mahmood Mujeeb Sahib who is an engineer also writes that Mahmood Bengali Sahib was a devoted Ahmadi who was wholly dedicated to Khilafat. Perhaps in 1981 Hazrat Khalifatul Masih had all the Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya from 1960 up till then enumerated and then said that Mahmood Sahib had excelled them all in obedience and in being a recipient of prayer and said that this was the reason why he had appointed him Sadr in spite of his votes being in fifth position. He said he wanted to give the Jama'at a lesson that appointment by Khilafat is indeed better. He had many books written by him during the Khuddamul Ahmadiyya time.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) appreciated his services in these words: 'Blessings are given to those who sincerely follow Khilafat because all blessings are associated with this system. And nothing besides it can gain acceptance with Allah the Exalted.' He said: 'Mahmood Ahmad Sahib was in fifth position as regards votes in the Khuddamul Ahmadiyya election held last year. I wanted to give this lesson to the Jama'at that the tasks of those four individuals who secured more votes would not have been blessed because of the number of votes they had. Rather, one who follows Khilafat with sincerity is the one who receives blessings. Therefore, I appointed Mahmood Ahmad Bengali Sahib as the Sadr. He is a very sincere person, may Allah enhance his sincerity. He has worked very hard and has received many prayers.'

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah be pleased with him) mentioned the attendance graphs of Ijtimas from the times of different Sadrs of Majlis e Khuddamul Ahmadiyya dating from 1960 to that time and with the exception of a blip mentioned the gradual increase and said: 'I wish to tell you that success is not with those who garner more votes but those who receive the prayers of the Khalifa of the time. Last time the Sahib whose votes were in fifth position was made the Sadr. In the first year 771 majalis were represented and this year 818 majalis are present.'

At the time when Mahmood Bengali Sahib was the Sadr of Majlis e Khuddamul Ahmadiyya there used to be one worldwide Sadr who worked under the centre and other [leaders] were called qaid. This system came to an end in Mahmood Sahib's time and he was the last worldwide Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. After this appointment period was over he wrote a most humble letter to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him) who said in his reply: 'You needlessly expressed embarrassment. What is there to be embarrassed about? MashaAllah, you have accomplished a very good tenure and have worked very well and with wisdom at a very difficult time. May Allah bless it! This is why you are being given the chance to serve in spite of joining Ansar Ullah. (He was given an year's extension). Had you been incompetent this would have never been done. May Allah the Exalted continue to keep you a devoted servant of the mission and may you continue to be enabled to serve in an excellent way.' He also said, 'You have worked a lot as regards the welfare of the [Ahmadi] prisoners of conscience.' Regular reports were sent in this regard and it was remarked on one: 'Your report regarding welfare of the prisoners of conscience was received. MashaAllah, you are working with great diligence and wisdom. May Allah the Exalted bring good outcomes of your work!' Indeed, Mahmood Sahib did a lot of service as regards prisoners of conscience in those days. It is remarked on one report: 'I am delighted at your service for the prisoners of conscience. You are working excellently, just as I had meant it to be done.' This was the time around the ordinance of 1984 when hundreds were being imprisoned for saying the Kalima. Khuddamul Ahmadiyya and Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya worked diligently in this regard.

During his time Khuddamul Ahmadiyya made prominent progress in many departments. He established 'Aseeraan Trust' for the welfare of Ahmadi prisoners of conscience. This Trust tried to meet their needs and alleviate their suffering. An ambulance was run for service of humanity by Khuddamul Ahmadiyya to mark the

Jama'at Centenary. In the early stages of Boyootul Hamd Society Khuddamul Ahmadiyya gave a tremendous donation at the heart of which was Mahmood Ahmad Sahib. Land was purchased to build quarters for workers of Khuddamul Ahmadiyya in which he showed personal interest. Central Khuddamul Ahmadiyya were enabled to give a valuable donation towards translation of the Holy Qur'an. Mahmood Ahmad Sahib visited many countries outside Pakistan for the organisational advancement of Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. The most thorough of these tours was his tour of three continents, Europe, America and Western Africa in which he visited eleven countries. From 11 June till 11 October he went to Holland, Belgium, Germany, UK, USA, The Gambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast etc. This was the first tour of Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya to these countries. In 1989 he visited Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. During his tenure the upper story of the Khuddam guest house was built. There was a fire in Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Mahmood Hall, which is known as Awan e Mahmood and its repair and renovation was undertaken without any appeal for funds. Khuddamul Ahmadiyya were enabled to serve during the election of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him), election of the fifth Khilafat. They were also enabled to serve during the sensitive time of the migration of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him) from Pakistan. Duty was given and Huzoor was accompanied.

There were some historic moments during his tenure. He was enabled to serve in both the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in accordance with Hijrah calendar and also served in the first and the second century of the Jama'at. Khuddamul Ahmadiyya completed its fifty years during his tenure and entered its fifty first year.

Sultan Mubasher Sahib, who is writing the history of Khuddam writes that Mahmood Sahib used to relate, two to three days after becoming Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya I was very anxious and wept a lot sitting at the feet of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him). He told Huzoor in his specific accent, he did not always know which grammatical gender to use [in Urdu], that he could not do the task. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah have mercy on him) said in response: When Khalifa of the time makes a decision and makes it after prayers, he does not alter it. My prayers are with you. You should come to me when in difficulty. Mahmood Sahib used to say he went on to experience that prayers of Khulafa were always with him.

He had a direct connection with the Khuddam. He said that Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III (may Allah be pleased with him) had advised him to spend less time in the office and more time having direct connection with the Khuddam. In the evenings Mahmood Sahib would often sit on a chair outside the offices and ask people how they were and informally chatted with them in a friendly atmosphere. In Rabwah there are purpose-built Khuddam offices and the entire enclosure is Khuddam's and people would come and go to Awan e Mahmood. Mahmood Sahib also shared everyone's grief.

Dr Mubasher further writes one day it got very late at the office and Mahmood Sahib asked if there was anything to eat. I went to the guest house to see but the food that was brought for the assistants from Darul Ziafat had finished and just a few pieces [of bread] were leftover. I returned empty-handed and said that there was nothing left apart from a few pieces. He said, bring them they are blessed and then ate them. He neither gave instructions to anyone in-charge or worker of the guest house nor did he rebuke them why some food was not kept for him. He had contracted diabetics by then and diabetics get hungry, but he did not say anything to anyone. The Mohtamim Sahib and other workers lived within the enclosure but he did not inconvenience them. Dr Mubasher also writes that Mahmood Sahib appointed him to write history of Khuddam and was most encouraging. His Bengali accent in speech could also be noted in his writing. Often he asked me to write his letters. When he went to UK Jalsa in 2010 I wrote some letters and reports for him. Dr Sahib also came to the Jalsa. Sometimes it was difficult to understand him due to his Bengali accent and I would joke with him about this but he was never offended. The thing that I learnt the most from him was to take one's capacities to their highest point in obedience to the Khulafa of the time and in observance of obligations. He was the confidant of Khulafa. If there was ever any questioning by the Khalifa of the time over any matter he always used qawl e sadeed (the right word) and never lost heart over Huzoor's displeasure, rather he was ever keen on reformation and sought guidance from Khulafa for future. He prayed and asked for prayers.

Feroz Alam Sahib writes I was closely associated with him when I went to Jamia in 1982. I was an inexperienced new Ahmadi at the time and he would affectionately care for me in spite of all his engagements. He would invite me over to his house on Eid and other occasions and gave me gifts and tried to alleviate my homesickness.

Abdul Awwal Sahib has also mentioned similar qualities and the most outstanding of which was his great closeness and sense of sacrifice for Khilafat. He was quiet natured, appreciative of others' qualities and an elder who practiced the teachings of Islam. He often encouraged a youngster like me. When I went to Jamia after I passed my Matric exams, I was only sixteen years old. I noticed that although living far away he had an analytical eye on the situation in his homeland and would give valuable advice and prayers. Last year I sent Mahmood Sahib to Bangladesh Jalsa as a representative. He writes that he was very pleased and was constantly encouraging.

Khalid Saif Ullah Sahib writes, Ameer Sahib would say when I went to Rabwah to study I had other boys with me. We went for a mulaqat with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him). Huzoor was lying on bed and we sat on the floor beside the bed and Huzoor told us about the significance of Waqf and sacrifice. He placed one of his arms on me as I was closest to the bed. Allah so willed that the rest of those boys could not handle the severity of climate and diet and returned to their homes, those who had come from afar, and with the grace of Allah only I was enabled to finish my Waqf and my education which was a blessing of the touch of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him).

Khalid Saif Ullah Sahib writes the late Ameer Sahib was an intelligent person who was extremely skilled in making contacts and honouring them and used this for the benefit of the Jama'at. As a result of this the immigration process for Pakistanis became easy and the Australian Jama'at which numbered in a few hundred when he first came here now numbers in its thousands and is progressing. According to the instructions of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him) Ahamdīs were populated in all the big cities of Australia and now there is a strong Jama'at in the capital city of every state and large beautiful mosques and mission houses are established. In Sydney there is Baitul Mahdi mosque as well as Khilafat Centenary Hall and mission house and a guest house is under construction. Mosques have been built in Brisbane and Melbourne and there is a centre in Adelaide. Efforts are being made to obtain land for a mosque in Canberra and it's hoped we will soon obtain it. MashaAllah he fully partook in the progress of the Australian Jama'at.

He had a few new mosques built after the 2005 tour as well as the Centenary Hall. Baitul Salam in Melbourne has larges halls and a capacity of over 2000 worshippers. Other mosques are also large. Good contacts with both the political parties in the federal government of Australia were maintained during his tenure which facilitated processing of immigration matters. He formulated the auxiliary organisations in Australian Jama'at on the central model. His moral training played a large part in cultivating brotherhood among different ethnic groups. Apart from Pakistanis, Australian Jama'at has many Fijians, there are Australians and Africans and Mahmood Sahib created an air of brotherhood among them. He entrusted them with duties and made them responsible and availed of their capacities which is indeed the quality of a good administrator and should be practiced by others as well.

He presided over Australian Jalsa recently and gave an address on the topic of gratefulness for the Being of Allah the Exalted. He was in good health at the time and no one could have even imagined, that is, good health relative to his illness. His health was improving and had improved quite a lot but then he had this sudden stroke.

Sadr Jama'at Victoria, Javed Sahib writes in a detailed letter that everyone knows episodes about Ameer Sahib's sagacity, guidance in every small matter, perception, insight and foresightedness. Ameer Sahib kept an old car. In spite of the insistence of the Majlis e Amila as well as my personal wish he did not get a better car and always provided other missionaries with good cars but had not concern for himself. Similarly his daughter has written about clothes that they used to get for him, but he did not have much concern and only wanted to

wear comfortable clothes and did not like to spend too much money on them. He was very careful about Jama'at expenses and had a very good memory. He remembered members of Jama'at by their names and had the God-given ability to utilise their skills to the best. He used to explain matters in Majlis e Amila and Shura by giving references of Khalifa of the time.

Someone writes that a Sahib was to fly in for the cricket tournament that takes place here but his flight was cancelled or delayed due to bad weather and he could not be included in the tournament. Ameer Sahib advised him to still make the journey and said, it is OK if you could not participate in the tournament, the main thing is to meet Khalifa of the time, if you can do that, consider your objective to participate in the tournament is fulfilled. During my recent tour there he could not go to Melbourne as he was quite unwell those day but he would make regular and frequent phone calls to oversee all the arrangements.

He writes that Ameer Sahib used to advice Khuddam Ansar and Lajna about fulfilling their obligations and the pleasant effect of this could be seen in their lives. He especially cared for overseas students and gave preference to matters regarding families of the martyrs over all else. He would say taking disciplinary actions cut his heart and he was very quick in pardoning. Ameer Sahib's personality was like a rock for Jama'at e Ahmadiyya Australia and his work was like that of a foundation in the establishment of Australian Jama'at.

Dr Syed Ahmad Ahsan writes, he was an ocean of love that you and I saw and felt. Every Ahmadi young or old went to his house without hesitation and talked to him about ordinary matters. He would especially entrust youngsters with tasks as if he was training them to be leaders. He always felt the pain of members of the Jama'at. Usama Ahmad Sahib from Melbourne writes Maulana Mahmood Ahmad Sahib was like an affectionate father for us Australian Ahmadi. He loved all Australian Ahmadi the same and without any discrimination and had won over every young and old with his courtesy and high morals. He always took great care of all guests who came to Sydney on every occasion and personally welcomed guests by coming out of his house to embrace them at Ijtimaa and Jalsa. We always saw Ameer Sahib's smiling face and this removed all our travel tiredness.

Some people hurt him in some ways and when matters were investigated he was never found directly responsible in spite of negative conjectures made about him. There were one or two cases where negative suppositions had been made about him but the blame laid with those made the complaints!

A lady, Tahira Ather Sahiba writes, Jalsa Australia concluded just a few days ago when he placed special emphasis on hospitality extended to guests staying at the mosque and said that Jalsa guests should be looked after. He placed great emphasis on observance of Salat.

Our in-charge of press, Abid Waheed who went with me on tour writes, I had the opportunity to closely get to know Mahmood Bengali Sahib during the recent Australian tour. In spite of feeling unwell during the entire tour he looked after every small matter and gave his full attention. For example we were served the same vegetable two nights in a row at dinner. Although we had not even noticed this but when it came to the attention of Bengali Sahib, in spite of not feeling well he personally went to the kitchen and asked the Ziafat people if no other vegetable was available for they were serving the same again! He took great care of guests in every way. He was also extremely humble in nature and regardless of his knowledge and experience Abid says he had no qualms in taking his advice in matters of press and media. He respected the administration of Jama'at and had ardent love of Khilafat.

Zartasht Munir Sahib, Ameer of Norway writes, I was enabled to be qaid of Karachi district in the days when Mahmood Ahmad Sahib was Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. In extremely challenging times he was an extremely successful Sadr. These were the years 1984, 85 to 86. When the situation worsened the Jama'at and the auxiliaries of Sindh and Baluchistan were entrusted to Karachi Jama'at. If a martyrdom took place anywhere in Sindh, Mahmood Sahib or his representative would arrive there before representative from Karachi. Mahmood

Sahib would undertake very difficult matters in troubled times with great courage and wisdom. He adored Khilafat and had a great sense of sacrifice for it and did not tolerate the slightest of negligence in terms of security. He would be most affectionate and loving when we went to Rabwah for Ijtima and Jalsa.

Malik Ikram Sahib who is a missionary here writes during my student days at the Jamia I toured Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Rawalpindi with him. He gave a different address in every majlis. He had memorised Quranic verses, blessed Ahadith and pronouncements of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and sayings of the Khulafa with complete references. One senior office-holder in Rawalpindi said after one Jalsa that this young man will be honoured in life although at that time Mahmood Sahib was a student of either third or fourth year of Jamia. Ikram Sahib writes I was enabled to serve for five years in his amila when he was Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. He was a very meticulous and sagacious person who was extremely humble. He was extremely loving and affectionate who worked hard himself and also expected his amila to work hard. He was most courageous. He writes I remember once a mischievous officer was imposed on Rabwah and he created some inappropriate restrictions. Mahmood Sahib went to his office in his capacity as Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya and spoke to him with such dignity that he became awe-struck and removed the restrictions. He writes that he never saw Mahmood Sahib use the car given to him by Jama'at for personal or family purposes. He often went to gatherings in Rabwah on foot or by bicycle. Addressing Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Ijtima he said: some people say that Ahmadi young men are better than non-Ahmadi people. He said it was not the objective of the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) to compare yourself to others or compete with them. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) said that every Ahmadi should bring about pure changes in himself and keep this in view.

Zafar Ahmad of Bangladesh writes that he was enabled to serve him during his stay in Bangladesh last year. Mahmood Ahmad Sahib was extremely simple in nature and was sociable and was ever present in mosque at Salat time. In spite of his illness he offered Tahajjud regularly. During his stay in the guest house his advice was not to stop anyone who wished to meet him and used his personal money to pay their hospitality. He was caring towards everyone and went to visit the ailing. Many have written such qualities of his that he remained till the end as he was in the beginning.

Atta ul Mujeeb Rashed Sahib, Imam London Mosque writes he was an extremely sincere, devout, humble and selfless person. He says he had occasion to go to Australia for a month in 2004 and came to know his countless qualities top of which was his love and obedience of Khilafat. This would often be the topic of discussion during morning stroll. We would talk about progress of Jama'at and about participation and association with Jama'at work. He would say with great pathos that many weaknesses remain. While touring other Jama'ats he would inform me which matters needed to be brought to their attention.

Khalid Ahmad Sahib, in-charge of our Russian Desk has written to me and says, after you assumed the office of Khilafat, Mahmood Sahib's love changed into great reverence and his face would exude humility and sincerity when mentioning you. He then says and in fact he says correctly and without exaggeration: there would be very few who are sincere, humble, righteous, dervish-natured, compassionate and utterly devoted to Khilafat like he was!

A relative of his writes that he was sitting next to Ameer Sahib when a member of Australian Jama'at called and insisted to have his way and was using some harsh words in expressing that he was in the right. When Mahmood Sahib counselled him he became angrier and said he would report him to the Khalifa of the time, etc. When the call was over he said most concerned, these people make mistakes and then become source of worry for the Khalifa of the time! Just as I said and many others have said he did not care to be reprimanded by Khalifa of the time due to any mistake and would always explain the whole matter fairly. He would often say to youngsters, we are mere pawns; this is God's Jama'at and He Himself takes care of matters. If you are getting the opportunity, avail it to serve Jama'at.

His service to Jama'at began with Ziamat of Nasir Hostel, he was then Mohtamim of local Khuddamul Ahmadiyya in Rabwah from 1977 to 1979. He was given the high responsibility of Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Central at the annual Ijtima 1979 which he served for almost ten years. As I said earlier he was the last worldwide Sadr Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. Afterwards separate organisations were made. He served in the department of Islah O Irshad. When the central department of Audio and Video was created in the fourth Khilafat, he was made in-charge in November 1983. He served as Wakeel Audio and Video Tehrik e Jadid in 1984. This department ceased to be part of Tehrik e Jadid after 28 June, I think. In fact, I believe it did not cease to be, rather it had not worked because it was initiated to disseminate cassettes after MTA. Later, MTA undertook this task. From 28 June till he breathed his last, he was enabled to serve as Ameer of Australia.

May Allah the Exalted have mercy on him and continue to elevate his station. No doubt he was a selfless elder who served the Jama'at with all his capacities. He neither cared for his health nor let any impediment come in the way of Jama'at work. Although he was in great pain during my last tour of Australia he supervised everything himself. When I emerged from the air plane he stood there. I was quite concerned to see his condition. He had severe back ache. His back bone had deteriorated a lot. Medical advice for such people is to rest but he did not rest because it was the tour of the Khalifa of the time how could he rest! On the way back from the airport naib Ameer Nasir Sahib was driving our car and I said to him that I found Mahmood Sahib very frail and aged. I did not know about his ailment at the time and found out the detail later when I spoke to a doctor there. I found out how this person was up and about by enduring great labour, not only that he was also supervising all the matters of the tour. One day during the tour his blood pressure became very high and there was concern that he may suffer from stroke or heart attack. He was in a very bad way and was taken to hospital. He stayed in hospital for a few hours and was then allowed to come home. And this gallant man started work as soon as he came home. He could not go with me to one city and regretted it greatly but in spite of his ill health came along to the next place. Although I said to him not to come with us but he did and remained with us in all the demanding and active programmes and supervised everything. He forgot his own worries and was worried about me lest I was inconvenienced in any way and also that all programmes are accomplished well. Not only was he worried about me but was also worried about people of my entourage and looked after them as well. He repeatedly said that he could not look after them properly and this worry stemmed from the fact that the Khalifa of the time is not inconvenienced due to the people of the entourage in any way. While I was worried about his health during the tour, anyway, his health did improve during the tour and gradually he became quite well. He fully participated in their Jalsa and Shura which took place recently.

I have also worked under him in Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. He was very generous with his workers as regards their tasks. He gave them opportunities to work and then appreciated their work. And he was an excellent helper of Khilafat of the rare kind. I mentioned this at the start. Although his passing has left a vacuum in the Australian Jama'at but Allah the Exalted Himself looks after Divine communities and fills such vacuums Himself. May Allah the Exalted bless and always grant such excellent helpers who are loyal to Khilafat and are dedicated to it and who fulfil their pledge. May Allah the Exalted be the Protector and Helper of his wife and children and also enables them to be strong in faith like their father and have strong bond with Khilafat. May Allah the Exalted enable his children to pay the dues of their mother!

I will InshaAllah lead his funeral Prayer in absentia after Friday Prayer.'