

Illustrious Predecessors of South Africa

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CONTENTS

Introduction : Brief History of Islam in South Africa

Muftī Ibrāhīm Sanjālwī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hadrat Maulānā Abdul Kadir رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Sayyid Zubayr Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Ahmad Muhammad Hathuranī رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hāfiz Abdur Rahmān Mia رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Yūsuf Ahmad Casoojee رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Ahmad Muhammad Garda رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Muhammad Cassim Sema رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Abdul Haq Omarjee رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Maulānā Bāyazid Mahmood Pandor رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Qāri Abdul Hamid Dhudat رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Chota Mota Desai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hājī Goolam Muhammad Ismail Padia رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF HISTORY OF ISLÂM IN SOUTH AFRICA

First Muslims arrived in the Cape Colony as slaves in 1068H (1658), mainly from the Malayan Archipelago including Java and surrounding islands.¹

People like Sheikh Yusuf (1105H (1694)) (an exiled prince from Batava) and Imam Abdullah Kadi Abdusalâm (1122H (1710)) were leaders and great sufis who kept alive the spirit of Islam in the people, despite White owners who endeavoured to Christianise them.

The first Masjid built was in Cape Town in the 1207H (1793), Masjidul Awwal in Dorp Street with a maktab having 500 children. In 1219H (1804), the British allowed freedom of religious practise in Cape Town. In 1254H (1838) slavery was abolished by the British Parliament. There were about 39000 slaves in the Cape Colony at that time, Muslims constituting 1/3 of the population of the Colony.

¹ According to some researchers, Islam arrived in the Cape by Musâ, a half-Ethiopian, half-Quraysh son of one of the sahâbah ؓ. Inspired to propagate dîn, he headed for Africa. His ship was wrecked near Cape Agulhas, which he called Ras-al-Isaam. Musa and his companions were saved by local Khoi-San tribesmen who accepted Islam and established a town Madinah-al-Alim-Musa somewhere in the Cape. This information was known to Moroccan academics for centuries.

Similarly there was a Northern Transvaal tribe known as Ba-Lemba. They had many customs which are similar to those of Abrahamic tradition. Apart from circumcision, they never ate pork and always buried their dead in a shroud facing the same direction. According to two tribe members, the Ba-Lemba were originally influenced by da'wah work of a certain Zaid or Saeed who travelled southwards into Africa to propagate Islam after having met a Suleyman in Yemen. There are even reports of Arabic inscriptions on rocks in the Northern Transvaal. Eastern Cape Africans had a tribal structure similar to Bedouin Arabs. (Condensed from *The spread of Islam in Southern Africa and its impact on society* pg. 11-13)

In 1276H (1860), indentured labourers were sent from India to work on the sugar plantations in Natal. These were brought at the cost of the Natal government and hired out to White employers for a period of five years, after which they could return to India. Majority remained in South Africa.

About this time, a certain Muslim trader, Abubakar Ahmad, who traded in Mauritius, decided to expand his business operation into Natal. Up to this time, all shop and trading posts were in the hands of White traders who exploited the local African population. Abubakar was a devout Muslim and was scrupulously honest in his dealings with his customers. The story of his success reached his relations and friends in Porbander, India, and in a short time other merchants – Muslim as well as Hindu – from Gujerat, Surat and Saurashtra, made their way into Natal. These immigrants, known as ‘free passengers’, came to Natal under ordinary immigration laws, paying their own passenger fare. Majority of these immigrants were Muslims.

#By 1302H (1885), almost 4000 Indians had settled in and around Durban. The Indian Muslims were very much aware of their Islamic identity. Towards the end of the century, a masjid was built in Durban on a site purchased by Abubaker Jhavery, and this is the same site, where the Jumma masjid stands, till recently the largest masjid in the Southern hemisphere. In the course of time, other masjids and madrassahs were built to cater for the community. Later Muslims settled in the Transvaal. (Condensed from Meet the Muslims of South Africa pg.14-17)

The ulamâ and pious predecessors have always played an active role in preserving, promoting and spreading the teachings of Islam. It is through their sacrifices that Islam has remained alive in South Africa. It is through the dedication, sacrifices and sincerity of these ulamâ that today Islam is still found live in this country, even though the Muslims consist of a minority population.

This book endeavours to highlight some of these scholars and their achievements. The object is for us to firstly realize and acknowledge that these are our benefactors. Secondly, it is our duty to remember them in our duâs. Thirdly, we should try to study their lives so that love for them can be created in our hearts. Fourthly, we should try to inculcate the sterling qualities, which they possessed. Fifthly, we should try to spread the dîn using their methodology and guidelines, as in this lies our complete success.



HADRAT MUFTI EBRAHIM SANJALWI

(±1320-1403)

Hadrat Mufti Ebrahim Dawoojee Karodia was born in the early 1320's (1900) in a town called Sanjala. For this reason, he was called Sanjalwi. He studied basic knowledge in his village, before going to Rander and then Deoband. When the leading ulamâ of Deoband, including Allamah Kashmiri (who was his ustâdh and shaikh) went to Dabhel, it is not clear whether Mufti Saheb completed his studies there or whether he proceeded to Madrassah Amîniyyah in Delhi to complete his final year. He studied the iftâ course under Mufti Kifayatullah in Delhi, together with hikmah. He thereafter returned to his village to teach in a maktab in Budhan, a small village near his hometown. In the early 1350'sH (1930), he was brought to Durban, and served as imam of West Street Masjid. In 1355H (1936), the Covadia family brought Hadrat Mufti Saheb to Transvaal, as there were very few ulamâ here. He served as the imam of Kerk Street Masjid and taught in the madrassah there. He used to earn two pounds, one pound he would send to India for his parents and the other would be utilized for his family expenses.

The Jamiatul-Ulemâ commenced during this time, and Mufti Saheb remained its mufti till the end of his life. A great service rendered by the Jamiat at that time was the printing of Faidhul Bâri, the lessons of Bukhari Sharîf by Allâmah Kashmiri Rahimahullah. All the ulamâ of the Jamiat at that time gave over their one month salary to pay for its expenses.

In 1359H (1940), when the Waterval Islamic Institute opened, Moulana Muhammad Mia used to fetch Mufti Saheb during

the weekends to teach Gujarati and Urdu. Eventually Moulana Mia succeeded in bringing Mufti Saheb on a full-time basis to Mia's Farm. In 1361/2H (1942/3), he moved to Mia's farm till his demise. He first taught in the maktab and then established the first hifz class there. In the late 1940's, the hifz class dwindled. In 1369H (1950), Moulana Ooni and Qari Mirza began teaching the hifz class, and Mufti Saheb left the hifz class.

In 1374H (1955), he began the first Arabic classes, with five students including his two sons and Moulana Abbass Ali Jeena, who later became his son-in-law. After teaching them for some time, they proceeded to India to complete their course. The second batch of students commenced in 1379H (1960), which included Moulana Sulaiman Pandor, Moulana Moosa and Moulana Muhammad Mia. In this way, Mufti Saheb prepared these and many other students and then sent them to India to complete their studies. They in turn became great ulama and are now serving South Africa in different ways. Hadrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Saheb, Mufti Ebrahim Salehjee Saheb as well as principals of other Darul Uloom in South Africa received their initial training under Mufti Saheb.

Hadrat Mufti Saheb was compassionate but strict. He would give sick students permission to take leave only after they read their lesson. So dedicated he was that even on Id day, he would teach. He was extremely particular on time, and stressed on his sons and others to finish their lectures on time. When his sons qualified, he would not allow them to lecture until they read the whole bayân to him, and he would even time them. He was very dedicated. Even on rainy days, he

would walk about half a kilometre from his house to the hostel to teach.

In 1380H (1961), Qari Tayyib Saheb came to South Africa. It was during this visit that it was decided to have a uniform syllabus for all the maktabas. Mufti Saheb as well as the other great ulama made many journeys to implement this, as well as establish makâtib in South Africa as well as abroad.

Hadrat Mufti Saheb was a person of great knowledge. People would at all times go to him to ask fatwas and to resolve disputes. His door was open at all times. Once, in sickness, when his son advised him to allow people to visit only at stipulated times, he became so angry that he did not speak to him for a whole week. He was prepared to discuss masâil with even those who differed with him. Once when Mufti Mahmood Saheb rahimahullah was going to meet Hadrat Mufti Saheb, he said, "Today I am going to meet a refined human, his capabilities and position is such that he should have rather been a mufti in India. He is needed there."

Besides this, Mufti Saheb served the community in other aspects as well. People used to come to him for tawizes, and he would treat the people with herbal medicine as he has studied hikmah as mentioned before.

Hadrat Mufti Saheb passed away in 1403H (1983). May Allâh ﷻ crown his efforts with complete success and grant us the ability to serve dîn with the same level of sincerity, dedication and fervour shown by our predecessors! Amîn

(Transcribed and condensed from lectures given by Hadrat Moulana Abbass Ali Jeena and Hadrat Moulana Yunus Daya (dâmat barakâtuhum))

BRIEF PROFILE OF MOULANA ABUBAKR KHATIB رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (±1320-1399)

Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib (may Allah enlighten his grave with His Noor), is well known generally throughout South Africa and particularly in Durban. He was born in a village called Damman in India on 13 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1320 AH (1900 AC) at 10:00 a.m. on a Thursday and hails from Arab descent. He was about 6 months old when his honourable father passed away. His paternal grandfather, Hajee Ismail, took over custody of him. At the age of 5 years, he had completed the reading of the complete Qur'an. He also obtained his primary Islamic education from his paternal aunt.

Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib's paternal grandfather was always very conscious of the Maulana's further higher education. A very close friend of Maulana's father was Maulana Ahmad Mukhtaar Siddiqui رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. When he returned from his Hajj, he enquired about Maulana Khatib's progress. He insisted that the Maulana be sent with him to pursue higher Islamic education, as a fulfilment of the promise he had made to the Maulana's father. The Maulana's mother eventually agreed and sent him for higher education with Maulana Mukhtar Sahib and Maulana Abd Al Aleem Siddiqui رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

At Meerut, Maulana was admitted at Madrasah Imdaad-ul-Islam in Sadr Bazaar as a student of Hifz-ul-Qur'an under the then able leadership of Hafiz Hafeezullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib Sahib completed the Hifz of the Qur'an in two-and-a-half years. He then went to Madrasah Qawmiyyah in

Khair Nagar for his initial studies in Arabic and Persian where he spent a whole year. During this period, he was in the custody of Maulana Ahmad Mukhtaar Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Thereafter, he was finally sent to Lucknow where he was officially admitted as a resident student at Madrasah Islamiyyah Firangee. There he spent seven long years studying for the Alim Faazil Course. It was here that he had begun reading Naaths both in Urdu and Persian in the presence of large gatherings. He was fortunate to serve and be in the company of a great spiritualist Hazrat Allamah Maulana Abdul Baari Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. It was in this noble company that Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib Sahib was given the gift of reading the Qur'an, Mathnawi of Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, Deewane-Haafiz and other Nazms of social and political nature in public gatherings. Maulana Khatib also served as Imam in various Masaajid throughout the world. He served as Imam in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Jaami` Masjid (Bombay) as well as in Lorenzo Marks, Maputo.

Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib spent 10 years in Lorenzo Marks, Mozambique from 1934 to 1944. The Lockhat family in Durban was in search of an imam for the Ahmedia Masjid in Mayville, Durban. In 1944, Mr Ahmed Timol found himself in Lorenzo Marks and was an audience to Maulana Khatib's lectures. He immediately contacted the Lockhat family and indicated that he had found the right imam for the Ahmadiyyah Masjid in Mayville.

He established the first Hifz School in Lorenzo Marks, making numerous Huffaath such as the likes of Hafiz Mohamed Bhika. In 1944 Maulana Khatib moved to Durban, South Africa and

became the Imam of the Ahmadiyyah Masjid in Mayville on appointment by the Lockhat family.

There, he had also started imparting Islamic education to many students. Almost everyone knows the Maulana by name, but very few really know his capabilities as an Alim. Maulana Khatib's favours are still being counted amongst Muslims, specifically in the larger Durban area. Those who had completed their Hifz under his able guidance are still leading the Taraweeh Salaah during the month of Ramadaan in various Masaajid.

Maulana Khatib used to lead the Taraweeh prayers and was invited in 1952 to perform Taraweeh in Pretoria, which he did until 1957.

He was Imam of Ahmadiyyah Masjid in Durban for 10 years. He was thereafter appointed as the inspector of all the Madaaris in the Durban area. In 1958 he was appointed as Imam of the Jumuah Masjid in Grey Street, Durban, which he served from 1958 to 1975. In 1974 he moved to Marino Heights, Durban, where he spent the remaining five years in attendance at the Soofie Alpine Road Masjid in Durban.

In 1956, he started publishing his monthly magazine and the annual Islamic calendar under the name of AL-HAADIL AMEEN. He served as the Imam of the Jami' Masjid in Grey Street, Durban, for many, many years. This was greatly beneficial to the Muslim community there. He breathed his last on 8 January 1979 in his birthplace village of Damman and was also buried there. Alas! What a great loss to the Muslim community.

Maulana Khatib on one occasion whilst serving as imam in Colombo, spent 11 nights in the Masjid seeking answers as to which direction he should take in life. He received glad tidings to go to the bottom of Africa to spread Islam and its teachings. It was always his wish and desire that when Allah ﷻ calls him that he should be buried in his home town Damman, India, which he left at an early age. Allah ﷻ granted him his wish and on Monday 8th Safar 1399 (8th January 1979) and as the Muathin called the Athaan for Zhur, he passed away and left this world leaving behind his wife Habiba Khatib and nine children namely:-

1. Hafiz Abulhasan Khatib, 2. Saajida Haffejee, 3. Hafiz Saeed Khatib, 4. Hajee Abu Tahir Khatib, 5. Hajee Abu Nur Khatib, 6. Amina Khatib, 7. Fatima Khatib, 8. Hafiz Mohamed Anees , Khatib, 9. Ayesha Khatib

Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib left a long standing legacy by teaching Qur'an to his students who carried on his legacy by teaching the Quran to others as well. Amongst his students are:

1. Hafiz Jabaar, 2. Hafiz Dawood Limalia, 3. Hafiz Moosa Ismail, 4. Hafiz Ahmed Saeed, 5. Hafiz Soofie Paruk, 6. Hafiz Kajee, 7. Hafiz Abulhasan Khatib, 8. Hafiz Hanief Khan, 9. Hafiz Abdurahman, 10. Hafiz Imam, 11. Hafiz Tootla, 12. Hafiz Dawood Makda, 13. Hafiz Suleiman, 14. Hafiz Yusuf Haffejee, 15. Hafiz Mohammed Moolla, 16. Hafiz Abdullah Miagee , and many, many others.

Maulana Abu Bakr Khatib has left an indelible mark in the community in Durban, South Africa and he is still remembered today by all those who had the pleasure of meeting and learning from him.

HADRAT MAULANA ABDUL KADIR SAHIB

رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1322-1419)

Maulana Abdul Kadir Sahib was born in Durban, 4 Safar 1322 (20 April 1904), and lost his parents at an early age. Being orphaned at such an early age, he was fortunate to have found care at the Soofie Sahib Centre at Riverside, Durban, under the great care and guardianship of Dada Jaan, the elder son of Hazrat Soofie Sahib rahimahullah. At an early age he had shown great keenness in Islamic education and he was thus encouraged to pursue higher Islamic education. In the early days of Islam in Natal, the Soofie Centre at Riverside was the hub of Islamic activities.

At the tender age of 15 years, he had completed the study of such great Persian works like the Gulistaan, Bustaan and Kareema, regarded as prerequisites for higher studies overseas. Because of this and other achievements, he was sponsored by some generous merchants of Durban, to further his studies at the Darul Uloom in India. In 1337H (1919) he left the shores of South Africa via ship. He first studied at Madrasah Mazaahirul Uloom, in Saharanpur, UP and thereafter at the famous Madrasah Ameeniyah in Delhi under the Grand Mufti of India at that time, Mufti Kifaayatullah Sahib (Rahimahullah). Having completed most of his early studies at these two institutions, he was advised to carry out his final stage of the 'Aalim Course' at the Darul Uloom at Deoband. However, in 1346H (1928) some luminaries and doyens of Islamic scholarship from Darul Uloom Deoband had moved over to Daabhel, in Surat. So he moved over there and graduated in 1348H (1930). Among his Asaatizah (tutors) were

intellectual giants such as Allamah Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri (Rahimahullah) and Allamah Maulana Shabbeer Ahmad Usmani (Rahimahullah).

The young Maulana Abdul Kadir Sahib (Rahimahullah) returned to South Africa in 1349H (1931) and took on his first assignment at Stanger as Imam and Ustaad at a Madrasah there. A year later he married and then moved to Verulam where he was also an Imam and Ustaad. He moved to Durban in 1362H (1943), holding the post firstly as principal at the Madrasah Shaukatul Islam in Essendene Road, Overport and thereafter at Madrasah Mazaahirul Uloom in Villa Road, Sydenham. In the early fifties up to mid-seventies, for twenty five years, he was Imam of the Muhammadiyyah Masjid in Sparks Road, Sydenham. During this time he went to the great Al-Azhar University, in Cairo and successfully achieved the highest diploma, from the Kuliyatul Lughah (Dept. of Arabic Language), equivalent to a Ph.D.

He then moved from Overport to Chatsworth and was Imam of the Masjid An-Noor in Unit seven, for seven years. During the last part of his life, he was in great demand as guest Imam in the various Masaajid in and around Durban, where he delivered lectures and tafseer of the Noble Qur'an. He always stressed the point that people should get back to their roots i.e. the Qur'an and Sunnah. It was a great honour for him to be one of the founding members of the Jamiatul Ulama Natal. He was one of the most senior Ulama, and he passed away on Saturday, 1 Jumadal Ula 1419 (23 August 1998) at his residence in Woodhurst, Chatsworth at the age of 94 years (97 years - Hijri Calendar).

Among those who attended his Janaaza were thousands of his students and members of the community whom he had served very eagerly. They all expressed the same great joy, to be either taught by him, their marriage officiated by him and now to be present at his funeral which they all said was one of the largest ever in Durban. After the Janaaza Salaah at the Grey Street Jumu'ah Masjid, he was laid to rest at the Flower Road Muslim Cemetery in Clairwood, Durban. May Allah grant him Jannatul Firdaus. Ameen. (Courtesy of Jamiatul Ulama (KZN) - Publications Department)



MOULÂNÂ SAYYID ZUBAIR ALI رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1332-1387)

Introduction - Moulânâ Sayyid Zubair Ali was one of the many luminaries who hailed from Tonk in India. Born and brought up in Tonk, he decided to serve the cause of Dîn in South Africa. He was of those Ulamâ who sowed the seeds of Islâmic teachings in South Africa and the later generations are now reaping the fruits of his efforts.

Moulânâ hails from the noble family of Sayyid Ali Tirmizî of Sarhad (North West Frontier Province in Pakistan). Moulânâ Abul Hasan Nadwi R.A has written tremendous praises of this family in his book, 'Sîrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahîd'. This family was renowned in the entire district for its generosity, bravery, sincerity, piety and steadfastness. They supported Sayyid Ahmad Shahîd in all his endeavours till the end. Moulânâ's father was Qâri Sayyid Zuhûr Alî Sâhib. His mother was Batûl Bibi. After she passed away, Moulânâ Zuhûr Ali, married Sughrâ and after her demise, he married Amatullâh.

Birth - Moulânâ Zubair Ali was born in 1332H (1914) in Tonk. At the age of about 6 years, he began memorising the Qur'ân and completed his hifz in four years. He subsequently took admission at Jamiah Husainiyyah in Rander where he attained his initial Persian and Gujerati education.

When he was twelve years old, his mother passed away (1926) and he returned to Tonk where he studied qirâ'at under the expert tutelage of Qârî Habîbullâh Sâhib and Qârî Abdul Mâlik Sâhib. He completed his âlim course in 1354H (1935) at Dârul

Ulûm Nâsirîyah. He later went to Lucknow for post graduate studies.

Service to Dîn - In 1355H (1936), the winds of independence began blowing throughout the country. The Ulamâ and students began participating in the freedom movements. Moulânâ Zubair Ali who was an excellent orator also began participating in the freedom struggle. His friends gave him the title of Zubair Âzâd, a reference to Moulânâ Abul Kalâm Âzâd who was the most endeared leader of the Indian Muslims at that time.

Marriage - Moulânâ's studies were as yet incomplete when his father immediately recalled him to Tonk in 1355H (1937) where he was married to Kubrâ. After his wedding, he travelled to several places in search of employment. He first went to Puna and then to Jaipur. In 1357H (1939), his wife suddenly passed away. She had no offspring. In 1358H (1940), he married his uncle's daughter, Sâ'idun Nisâ. She was a very pious lady. During this year, Moulânâ's father was invited to South Africa. Qârî Zuhûrul Haq appointed his son, Moulânâ Zubair Ali as his deputy and proceeded to South Africa. Qârî Zuhûrul Haq stayed for six months in South Africa and promised the people of Standerton that he would send his eldest son, Moulânâ Zubair Ali to South Africa. After Qârî Zuhûrul Haq's return to India, earnest preparations began for Moulânâ Zubair Ali's journey to South Africa. He applied for a job in 1358H (1940) and the necessary visa formalities took two years to complete.

Journey to South Africa - In 1359H (1941), Moulânâ Zubair Ali had a daughter, Wahîdun Nisâ. She suddenly passed away in

1360H (1942), while Moulânâ Zubair Ali was working at an educational institute, Anjuman Islâm. During this year, he proceeded to Standerton in South Africa, where he was appointed to teach at the Muslim Educational Institute, one of the earliest Islâmîc institutes of the country. He taught at this institute for seven years and he also fulfilled the responsibilities of Imâmat.

Qualities - He revelled in serving the community. He was extremely simple in his ways and never had any attachment to wealth. He spent profusely on his children, parents, relatives and the poor, and he never kept anything for himself. He habitually sent charity to institutes, musjids and orphanages in India and Pakistan. He had a great love for reading Urdu books, magazines and newspapers. His sons have preserved these gems till today in their libraries.

He abstained from issues that contained differences of opinion. He wanted Muslims to refrain from all kinds of disputes. He never liked to foist his views on anyone else. He even read the literature of Jamâ'at Islâmi while on the other hand, he participated in the work of da'wat and tablîgh. In 1367H (1948), he returned to India where he obtained a diploma in Unani medicine. He passed the examination with distinctions and became a registered practitioner.

Offspring - In 1368H (1949), Moulânâ Zubair Ali proceeded for haj with his wife. On the return journey near Bombay, his wife gave birth to Sayyid Abbâs Ali (1 Muharram 1369 (23 October 1949)). He was later to become the renowned Moulânâ Abbâs Ali (after qualifying in Deoband). He served Springs and Perth in Australia in particular. In 1369H (1950) he returned to South

Africa where he was employed by the Leslie Jamâ'at. On 18 Zul Hijjah 1371 (8 September 1952) Qâsim Ali, the second son was born, in Leslie. He was later to become the well known Moulânâ Qâsim Ali (r.a) after qualifying in Deoband, who served the Benoni community and later settled in Johannesburg. He had dedicated his life to da'wat and tabligh.

During this year, his father in law Sayyid Manzûr Ali passed away. In 1373H (1954) he proceeded again for haj. On 7 Rajab 1379 (6 January 1960) the third son, Sayyid Zahîr Ali was born in Leslie. He later qualified as an Âlim in Deoband to become known as Moulânâ Zahîr Ali. He is presently serving the Kingross community as he has been doing for several years.

Demise - Moulânâ Zubair Ali had a heart attack. This was the first time he had an attack since leaving India. On 18 Shawwal 1381 (25 March 1962), a fourth son, Muhammad Ali was born in Leslie. He qualified in Deoband as an Âlim and served the community of Potchefstroom before moving to Middleburg where he presently resides. In 1383H (1964), a daughter was born. In 1374H (1955), Moulânâ's father, Qârî Zuhûrul Haq passed away. After 1380H (1961), Moulânâ Zubair Ali continually fell ill. On 25 Muharram 1387 (5 May 1967), Moulânâ was at a bank in Leslie when he had a heart attack. The doctors realised that the end was near and thus called for his two sons from Waterval Islamic Institute in Johannesburg. At this time Hâfiz Abbâs Ali was 18 years old and Hâfiz Qâsim Ali was 15 years old. The father heaved a sigh of relief on seeing his two sons, and rendered some advice to them. At night his condition worsened and he called his son Hâfiz Abbâs Ali to recite Surah Yâsîn. However, his time on this earth had expired and he recited the kalimah before breathing

his last. He was 54 at the time. His youngest daughter was barely four years old. His wife displayed exemplary patience at his demise. She brought up all her children correctly and made her sons into huffâz and Ulamâ. She herself began teaching in the Madrasah in place of her husband. She also had all her children married. She passed away in 1415 (1992). About 1500 people participated in his janâzah. South Africa had lost one of its finest Ulamâ. The gap that he left behind would be very difficult for the later generations to fill.

Moulânâ was a saint and a khalifah of the Naqshbundi silsilah. He was a model teacher who sacrificed his life for the sake of Dîn. Moulânâ was also a gifted writer and a poet. His articles were published in Urdu magazines in India and Pakistan. He also left behind a large number of Islâmîc books. Three days after Moulânâ's demise the Leslie Jamâ'at convened an important meeting. It was unanimously decided at this meeting that the Moulânâ Zubair Ali Memorial Trust be formed so that it could benefit his family and also be a means of Sadaqah Jârîyah for Moulânâ. The first task carried out by the Trust was to have a house built for Moulânâ's family. It subsequently purchased other houses and the Trust is functioning till today. (Reproduced from An-Nasihah)



MAULANA AHMED MUHAMMAD HATHURANI رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1335-1428)

Early Life and Education - Hadrat Maulana was born in Hathuran, a village in district Surat, Gujarat in India, of a pious family in 1335H (1917). He lost his mother at an early age, but this did not deter him from completing his elementary Islamic education in his village. He then enrolled in Jamiah Husainiyyah, Rander, for further Islamic studies. Here he completed memorizing the Qur'an and embarked upon his 'Aalim Faadil course. After staying in Rander for a few years, he proceeded to Dabhel where he enrolled at Jamiah Islamiyyah whence he completed his 'Aalim Faadil course, graduating with distinction. After having graduated from Dabhel, he proceeded to Nadwatul 'Ulama in Lucknow for postgraduate studies.

Amongst his illustrious teachers were the great Muhaddith 'Allamah Shabbir Ahmed 'Uthmani, Maulana Badr-e-Aalam Muhajir-e-Madani, Maulana Yusuf Binnori, Maulana Aziz Ahmed Bihari, Qari Yameen Sahib, and a host of other brilliant academics.

South Africa - Upon the invitation of a well-known family of Bloemhof, Hadrat Maulana came to South Africa somewhere in 1359H (mid-1940's). His first appointment was in Bloemhof, a small town in the Northern Province, where he taught for six years. Whilst here, he married in RabiulAkhir 1366 (March 1947).

After this, Hadrat Maulana proceeded to Potchefstroom where he served Deen for approximately seven years. He also taught for short periods and led the salaah in Middleburg, Witbank and Roodepoort. He subsequently joined the Bethal Jamaat where he stayed for about 10 years. In Bethal, he kept children at his home from the various country towns which did not have adequate madrasah facilities. A lot of children who are now mothers and successful professionals and businessmen, benefited from his kind and considerate personality. They all imbibed the qualities of hard work, diligence, humility, simplicity and discipline in their lives by observing Hadrat Maulana's character and approach in life. Although not very wealthy himself, Hadrat would make hot drinks for all his students with his own hands at night before they slept.

In 1390H (1970), Hadrat Maulana eventually left Bethal for Laudium at the invitation of the Pretoria North Muslim Educational Institute. At the time of his departure, there was not a person in Bethal who did not come to his house to bid him farewell with tears in their eyes. At this stage, Hadrat had already a few sons and he had sent them all for further Islamic education to the Waterval Islamic Institute and then to Newtown Madrasah in Karachi, Pakistan. Hadrat taught in Laudium until 1987 whence he relocated to Johannesburg and devoted most of his time to his literary activities.

Academic Career - Besides being an excellent educationist and a master of the Persian language, Hadrat Maulana was also a prolific writer.

He translated and authored in excess of 50 books in his lifetime, mostly from Arabic and Urdu into Gujarati. His contemporaries regard him as one of the greatest Gujarati scholars in the world in this time, ranking with such scholars of the time such as Munadi Sahib of Surat. His more memorable works are an extensive biography of our noble Master Muhammad Mustapha ﷺ entitled *Sirat al-Rasul* in two volumes, *Musلمان Pati Patni*, a book providing guidance on marital relations which would be given as a customary gift to the couple at the time of their marriage, the *Quatrains of Farooqi* (the Persian version is in his own handwriting) and a translation of the monumental *Sirat ibn Hisham* in three large volumes.

All his publications were done at his own expense. He never once went out and asked people to sponsor the costs of his publications and in retrospect, never benefited a cent out of the sale of his books. Hadrat would personally write his books by hand (even after the onset of the typewriter and the modern computer) and proof-read all his works and have it printed to his satisfaction. Such was his meticulousness in his printing that he had the third volume of the monumental *Sirat ibn-Hisham* reprinted as it was not up to his standard. Just before his demise, Hadrat authored a book called Hikmat, Ibrat aur Ghammat ni waato (*Wisdom, wit and Humour*). In this book, Hadrat employed the same methodology as Imam ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah in his book *Lata'if 'Ilmiyyah*.

For about 40 years or so, Hadrat also contributed extensively towards the Ta'limi division of the Jamiatul 'Ulama. In fact, he was one of the first persons to set and write the syllabus of the Jamiatul 'Ulama. He was also one of the senior members of

the Jamiatul 'Ulama's *Majlis-e-Shura* (Consultative Assembly) and always kept himself abreast of what was happening around him. Currently, his son, Qari Rafeeq Hathurani, is also part of the Ta'leemi wing of the Jamiatul 'Ulama.

Character - In terms of personality, Hazrat was humbleness personified. He always wore meticulously clean and white clothes. If his children visited, he personally attended to them and served and advised his family to treat their children like friends. This quality of his won him the love of everybody. In terms of piety, for many years he woke up regularly for Tahjjud salaah, never disturbing anybody when he awoke, and would proceed for Fajr salaah as early as possible. Many people are witness to the fact that they saw Hadrat Maulana cleaning various Masaajid with his own hands long before the people would normally come to the Masjid.

Another sterling quality of Hazrat Maulana, was his overpowering generosity. He would purchase clothing and shoes regularly for the mu'ezzin and his children wherever he happened to be.

Hadrat was spiritually associated with the late Maseehul Ummat, Maulana Masheullah Khan Sherwani Sahib. He was also a great admirer of Maulana Husein Ahmed Madani, and once confided in one of his friends that his excellent health and memory was due to the du'a of Maulana Husein Ahmed Madani.

Hadrat was very health conscious and was a regular jogger upto the time he could walk at the age of 89. He was also very particular of what he consumed. He loved honey and butter,

and was not a fan of oil, sugar and margarine. He also loved all types of fruit and was an expert in choosing ripe and juicy fruits.

Hadrat Maulana passed away peacefully on Yaumul-Ahad 14 Rajab 1428 (29th July 2007) at this home on 12th Avenue, Mayfair, Johannesburg. Until he was conscious, he kept on reciting *istighfaar* and verses pertaining to the mercy of Allah from the Qur'an. May Allah ﷻ, in His infinite mercy, forgive Hadrat for his shortcomings, grant him Jannatul Firdous and elevate his ranks in the hereafter. May all be granted the fortitude to bear this great loss with fortitude! (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



HAFIZ ABDUR RAHMÂN MIA SAHEB **(1336-1426)**

Hadrat Hafiz Saheb was born on the 23rd Jumâdal-Ulâ 1336 H in Simlak, India. His father, Hajee Ebrahim was a man of exceptional piety. He was firm on Sunnah and âdâb and punctual in salâh. He respected and loved the ulemâ and went out of his way to be in their company. Hadrat Hâfiz Saheb completed his hifz in Dabhel. He then proceeded to Khurjah in U.P. to further dînî studies.

He was spiritually linked to Moulana Abdul Ghaffoor Abbâsi, Muhâjir Madani. Hadrat enjoyed a close spiritual relationship with his Shaikh. At the request of his father, he left the shores of India and arrived in South Africa. He first worked in White River for the Gardees and then was transferred to Lydenburg where he worked for the Mias. He then joined the Head Office of S.I. Mia & Company, where he taught a group of high-school pupils on a part time basis and continued with his book keeping work.

In 1378H (1959), at his pious father's request and instruction, and after many weeks of istikhârah, he left Johannesburg and proceeded to the Waterval Islamic Institute to join as a full time ustâdh, accepting a substantial reduction in salary in the process. He made ends meet on a meagre salary. For the remainder of his life, he taught the Qurân Majid with such devotion and sincerity which cannot be comprehended. At that time, it was difficult to find some-one to recite the full Qurân in tarâwih, but by Hâfiz Saheb's efforts, so many huffâz were produced by him, directly or indirectly, that they now are spread throughout the length and breadth of the world. Many

hifz ustâdhhs and ulemâ present in South Africa are all students of Hadrat Hafiz Saeheb.

Adab – He possessed great love and respect for his asâtidha. Even though he was a renowned and highly respected ustâdh, he would rise upon seeing Mufti Sanjâlvi, hasten to receive him at the door and arrange his shoes with utmost respect. This was when Hadrat Hafiz Saheb’s beard was white due to age. This was because Hafiz Saheb had studied some Persian kitâbs under Mufti Sanjâlvi.

Devotion – He hardly ever took leave of absence from class. When seriously ill, students were called to recite at his bedside. When his sons left to study Dîn abroad, he did not consider going to the airport to bid them farewell. When his youngest son, the apple of his eye, Hâfiz Ma’âz passed away in a tragic accident at a young age, he did not absent himself from class, but rather entrusted the burial arrangements to his other sons.

Many times before the holidays, he would inform the students that they would have to spend a substantial portion of their holidays in the hostel, to continue with lessons. He sacrificed his free time for the progress of his students. In some months of Ramadhân, it was not uncommon for him to listen to the revision of about sixty huffâz, coupled with his own tilâwat and wazâif. He never accepted a salary for teaching in Ramadhân. Though receiving a pittance for his duties, he never complained about salary. The only occasions he absented from class was for inspection duties for the Jamiat, in service of the Qurân. Even in old age and with illness, he would make so many journeys to establish the makâtib across

the province. No family weddings, functions or engagements could lure him away from attending to the progress of his students.

Sincerity – Hadrat’s total dislike for publicity and his deep love for anonymity can be gauged by the fact, that even though he kindled the culture of Hifz in South Africa at a time when towns had not heard of a hafiz, he shunned the glare of a public jalsah. His dislike for fame and love for anonymity can be gauged from the fact that many living in Lenasia had not heard of this great servant of the Qurân living in their midst.

Once his eldest son asked him how many huffâz he had produced. He replied, “Is this a question to ask?” He did not even reveal to his children how many huffâz he had produced. Once a similar question was posed to him by Hadrat Moulana Shah Hakim Akhtar Saheb (rahimahullâh). He answered, “That I will only come to know in the qabr – it depends how many have been accepted by Allâh ﷻ.” Hadrat said, “If I had R100 000, I would have given it to Hafiz Saheb as a reward for such a high spiritual answer.”

A few lessons from Hadrat’s life

- * Serving Allâh ﷻ sincerely, without seeking rewards or recognition
- * Not to make one’s deeds admirable in one’s eyes
- * To sleep and eat halâl sustenance within limits
- * Rise early for tahajjud
- * Consistent Zikr and tilâwat
- * Total sincerity in all actions and total dissolution of the ego
- * Complete dedication to the knowledge of Dîn

- *No desire for name, fame, as well as worldly wealth and comforts
- *Unlimited generosity, love and affection for the creation at large
- *Strict adherence to the Sunnah
- *Love for the young, respect for asâtidhah, sympathy for the needy
- *Guiding with wisdom
- *Punctuality in tasks and consistency in mutâla'âh of dînî kitâbs
- *Unselfish love for one's pupils and recording their progress
- *Not focussing on the creation and always focussing on the Creator
- *Seeking istikhâra in all one's aims
- *No aggression or anger

Hadrat passed away on Friday, 3 Jumadal Ulâ 1426 (10 June 2005) at 2100hrs after Esha. His burial was the next morning in the Lenasia cemetery. A huge crowd gathered. The janâzah salâh had to be delayed as the crowd was huge. This lover of the Qurân was then laid to rest. He was shown his Palace near Sidratul-Muntaha, within walking distance to Hadrat Ibrâhîm عليه السلام (as conveyed in a dream to Shaikh Lutfullah Abbasi of Madinah Munawwarah). (Summarized from the foreword of Thzikhullah Lil Aalameen.)



MOULANA YUSUF AHMED CASOOJEE

رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1335-1427)

Moulana Yusuf Ahmed Casoojee, one of the early 'Ulama to have migrated to South Africa, was born in Lachpor on Friday, 23rd Jumad al-Awwal 1335AH (17th March 1917). His initial Islamic education was provided in one of the two Maktabas of the village. Learning Urdu and completing the recitation of the Qur'ân, Moulana Yusuf completed his initial primary education at the age of seven.

Education - He enrolled at the Darul 'Ulum in Dabhel at the age of eight. He first completed his Hifz al-Qur'ân, and then went on to complete his 'Alim Fadil. Moulana is credited to have been from amongst the first batch of Hifz graduates of the Darul 'Ulum, and was known for his excellent memorization capabilities.

Amongst his more prominent teachers were 'Allamah Shabbir Ahmed 'Uthmani who taught him hadith, Moulana 'Abd al-'Aziz Kamilpuri who taught him Arabic, Moulana Muhammad Yusuf Binnori who taught him logic and philosophy. In 1359H (1940), he graduated as 'Alim Fadhil from this institute. From amongst his contemporaries were Moulana Ahmed Hathurani, the eminent teacher and writer, who later also came to South Africa.

Experience - The first eight years after his graduation was spent in conducting Hifz classes in his home-village. In 1368H (1948), he was invited by Mr Ismail Muhammad Jada of Heidelberg to come and take up an Imamate post and assume

teaching at the Maktab there. In this way, his South African experience began.

After spending eight years in Heidelberg, he spent another eight years in Johannesburg teaching at Madrasah Islamiyyah Quwwatul Islam. After this, he transferred to Vrededorp where he taught in a much larger madrasah. Thereafter, he spent two years in Rustenburg as an Imam and a teacher, and then relocated to the North Western town of Potchefstroom. He seemed to have enjoyed the serene country atmosphere for he stayed here for a full ten years.

After moving and shifting a number of times, Moulana finally came to his last destination Lenasia, -in 1389H (1969). By then, Moulana had three daughters and four sons, all of school-going age. In Lenasia, Moulana Yusuf took up an Imamate and teaching post in Saberie Masjid, ext. one, and for many years performed Naf'l Salâh (the entire Qur'ân in one night) at this venue. He, however, only stayed at Saberie Masjid for five years, and for the next twenty years until his retirement in early 1423H (2002), he served at the Madrasah Sham'ul Islam, Lenasia.

In all these years, Moulana was a dedicated Maktab teacher. Thousands of students passed through his hands, and no amount of difficulty could dissuade him from giving up his dedication to religious education.

A remarkable trait, one would say "miraculous" was Moulana's retentive memory with regard to the Qur'ân. Due to old age and illness Moulana often forgot the names of his children and his immediate family, his whereabouts and small items, but he

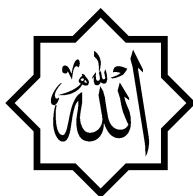
never forgot the Qur'ân. He was able to correct people's mistakes at any given time. Even more remarkable was his ability to recite from any verse of the Qur'ân after merely providing him with the sûrah and verse details. He could also recite the verses before that and thereafter without hesitation all in the age of forgetfulness.

This was indeed living proof of the miraculous nature of the Qur'ân and his love and dedication for it.

Contemporaries and Students - The more prominent 'Ulama of his time were Moulana Muhammad Akhalwaya, Moulana Muhammad Nana, Moulana Yusuf Ishaqjee and Moulana Muhammad Saeed Ooni, particularly the latter with whom he maintained close association until his demise.

Moulana performed the Hajj twice in his lifetime, the first in 1340H (1922) as a minor, and the second in 1406H (1986). Moulana entered in to the mercy of Allah in 1427H (October 2006) whilst living with his eldest son, Dr. Bashir Patel.

We make du'â that as Moulana jealously guarded the Qur'ân during his lifetime, the Qur'ân will jealously guard him and protect him throughout all his stages in the hereafter. Amîn.
(Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



MAULANA AHMED MUHAMMAD GARDA

رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1337-1433)

A few men were anxiously drumming their fingers on a table, one afternoon in a small cottage in Pretoria North, discussing a pressing issue affecting their maktab. One gentleman said, "There just aren't any qualified Ulama in South Africa at the moment." Another said, "We need to have a standard in our Madrasah. Our children need to have proper Islamic education. Our present teachers are not suited for the post." Eventually a person named Ebrahim Moosa Bhana spoke up. He said, "Gentleman, I have the perfect solution. My niece is married to a distinguished Aalim in India. He already has ten years teaching experience in the village Madrasah. If you allow me, I will sponsor 200 pounds for his passageway to South Africa." Everyone breathed a sigh of relief and agreed to this proposition. This eventually led to the coming of Maulana Ahmed Garda to South Africa in the October of 1368H (1949). He was one of the very few qualified Ulama of South Africa at the time.

Maulana Ahmed Garda was born on 7 Zul Hijjah 1337 (2 September 1919) in Lachpur, a village in Gujarat, India. He was born in a religious family, and opted to become an Aalim just as his other two brothers. He enrolled at the Darul Uloom in Dabhel and taught for ten years in his village Madrasah before being invited to South Africa. He was well versant in Arabic, Persian, Urdu as well as Gujarati and possessed a closet full of books which he regularly read until the end of his days on the eve of Eid al-Fitr, 1433 (18 August 2012).

As soon as he arrived in Pretoria North, he proved his mettle. Due to a shortage of teachers at the time, he taught a class of up to 60 children single-handedly with iron discipline. The supervisors from the Waterval Educational Institute (Mia's Farm) always marvelled at his results, producing better results than four teachers combined. He was well-known for his particular attention to tajweed and he could listen to several children at a time.

When Laudium was proclaimed an Indian township by the Apartheid government in the 1380's (1960s), Maulana Garda, who was now united with his family from India, also moved to Laudium. At the time, there was only one makeshift Jamaat Khanah in Laudium situated on 2nd Avenue. Maulana Garda led the prayers there and also taught in the afternoon Maktab. When the Jewel Street Jumu'ah Masjid was established, he also lectured there on Fridays and other significant occasions along with other 'Ulama such as Maulana Abdur Razzaack of Ladysmith (the then Imam of the Queen Street Masjid) and Imam Abdul Gaffoor Ebrahim.

Due to the high enrolment of children, another maktab was established at the Jacaranda Primary School in 1391H (1971) which boasted an enrolment of 600 children and 26 ustads at its peak. Maulana Garda served as the principal here with a starting salary of R150-00 per month until his retirement in the Ramadaan, 1407 (1987).

He retired from a fruitful teaching career of 38 years –all under one institute. In appreciation of his loyalty, Maulana Garda was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Pretoria North Muslim Educational Institute. The otherwise healthy Maulana only stepped down to make way for younger Ulama who could relate to a new generation of English-speaking children.

He taught three generations of appreciative students. Amongst the galaxy of students that he left behind is Maulana Abbas Ali Jeena, the current president of the Jamiatul Ulama South Africa.

In character, Maulana is best described as a “military man.” Whatever he did, he did with precision. If he taught Qur'an, his students had to recite with perfect tajweed. There was no compromise on time and punctuality. Preserving one's health was paramount for him. In salaah too, he was very conscious of his postures. Those who did not perform these perfectly were often candidly told to rectify their postures.

In addition, Maulana was particular in his dressing. Not a crease was seen on his clothing. He would awake at 3am daily, make various exercises for an hour and then engage himself in the recitation of Qur'an until the time of Fajr. This was his daily routine for many years.

As a learned scholar, Maulana was consulted on many religious affairs. He was also the custodian of the nikah register at the Mink Street Jamaat Khanah and he made it a point to visit the sick and be present at funerals. Indeed, he was a selfless community activist in his day which many may have forgotten due to his home-bound condition in his last few years of life. Maulana's Janaazah salaah was held at the Darus Salaam Eidgah on 1 Shawwal 1433 (19 August 2012) with thousands in attendance. His demise, just days before he could turn 95 marks the end of a distinguished class of early Ulama responsible for the flourishing of Islam in the Pretoria area, and maybe even South Africa. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)

MOULANA MOHAMMED CASSIM SEMA

رحمته الله عليه (1338-1428)

Moulana Mohammed Cassim Sema was born on 23 Shabaan 1338 (12 May 1920). He completed his junior primary schooling at the St. Oswalds School in Newcastle and left for India in 1935 to pursue his dream of becoming an âlim. He enrolled at Jamiah Islamiah Dabel where he pursued his studies with distinction. He was blessed to have sat at the feet of some luminaries among who were Moulana Yusuf Binnouri and Moulana Badre Alam.

Moulana graduated in 1361H (1942) at the age of 23 during the period of the Second World War. As an emergency measure, a steamboat named 'Tilawa' was especially chartered to transport passengers to various parts of Africa. On the 14 Zul Qadah 1361 (23 November 1942), Moulana left India onboard the 'Tilawa' hoping to return to the shores of South Africa. After five days of journey a Japanese submarine torpedoed the ship which killed majority of the passengers. Moulana together with a few passengers managed to get onto a life boat and now had to brave the ravages of violent sea storms. Moulana who was seriously ill had a vision of Moulana Buzrug encouraging him to constantly remain engaged in Durood. This ordeal which lasted thirty-eight hours was ended by a rescue by a British ship called the "Birmingham." Only a hundred and twenty-five survived. They eventually returned to Bombay once again. Stranded in India, Moulana applied to the Majlise Ilmi in Dhabel for a post as a researcher. Moulana was asked to make *takhrîj* [referencing] of the footnotes of "Athar al Sunan" by Allama Nimwi رحمته الله عليه, which is a compilation of hadeeth relating to Hanafi fiqh. He completed the first volume in one year under the tutelage of Moulana Yusuf Binnouri. When the Majlise Ilmi closed for two months,

Moulana traveled to Delhi which is a thousand miles from Dabel. It was on this trip that he met Moulana Ilyas (r.a), the reviver of Tabligh. Thereafter he journeyed to Deoband to meet Moulana Hussein Ahmed Madani. However, this was not possible as Moulana Madani was incarcerated by the British. After a brief sojourn, Moulana went to Lahore where he met Moulana Ahmed Ali Lahori, a great wali and a renowned Aalim. Moulana's thirst for 'sulook' drove him to walk for two days to Raipoor so that he could meet Hadrat Moulana Raipoori Saheb. Moulana eventually left for South Africa in 1363H (1944). Moulana married in 1364H (1945) and was blessed with five children. He began serving the Wasbank community as teacher and Imaam. In 1368H (1949) Moulana began da'wa activity among the indigenous community in a reserve called Msinga Reserves. **Over a period of ten years approximately 900 people embraced Islam.** In 1380H (1960) the first Ijtima in South Africa took place in Wasbank. Moulana's da'wa activity attracted constant harassment from the authorities until he was arrested for not having a permit to enter a "Black Reserve."

Moulana was eventually released after paying a fine of five pounds. After twenty three years of service in Wasbank Moulana returned to Newcastle in 1386H (1968), to take up the position of teacher and Imaam. During this time Moulana with the help of three other Ulama developed a curricular for madrassahs in Natal under the auspices of the Jamiatul Ulama in Natal. This syllabus was called "Nisab Qasimi." Ever since his arrival from India, Moulana had a burning urge of initiating a Darul Uloom on the shores of South Africa. After several unsuccessful attempts since 1365 (1946), it was only in 1387H (1969) that he came a step closer to realizing his dream. The St Dominic Academy was purchased from the Vatican in

Rome. With extremely limited resources, Moulana had to embark on transforming the church into a place of worship. An existing classroom was used as a dormitory, another for teaching.

The Darul Uloom was officially opened in Newcastle on 10 Rabiul Ukhra 1393 (13 May 1973). The syllabus was developed with the help and guidance of Moulana Yusuf Binnori. Classes officially began on 11 Shabaan 1393 (9 September 1973) with nine students. For the first three years Moulana taught, cooked food and did the laundry, apart from doing all the administration of the institute. He also served as both Imaam and Muazzin for the five daily prayers. Darul Uloom has since produced more than 300 ulama and approximately five hundred huffaaz.

Moulana lost his life companion fondly known by the students as "Appa" in 28 Muharram 1419 (25 May 1998). Moulana remarried in 1421H (2000) and he is survived by this wife and a daughter from his second wife together with four sons and one daughter from his first wife. Despite extreme pain and difficulty Moulana continued teaching up to his last illness. He spent the last three weeks in hospital and eventually passed away on the 23 Jumadal Ula 1428 (9 June 2007). It should also be mentioned that Moulana had supervised the project of rendering the Qur'an into the Zulu language at the Darul Uloom in Newcastle. Moulana's death is an irreplaceable loss to the ulamâ fraternity; his demise brings with it the end of an era. He will forever be remembered for his humility, piety, his trust in Allah and for his knowledge and wisdom. While his family have lost a father, his students have lost the foundation of their wisdom and guidance. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)

MAULANA 'ABDUL HAQQ OMARJEE رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1344-1423)

Maulana 'Abdul Haqq Omarjee ranked from amongst the foremost of early 'Ulamâ in South Africa. He was an embodiment of beautiful character, piety and he carried the aura of the Deobandi 'Ulamâ and their tradition wherever he went. Well-versed and well-read in almost every field of Islamic learning, he could be engaged on almost any topic with any one 'Alim or non-'Alim- including contemporary politics and the entire breadth of Islamic history. He had the unique ability of conversing and discussing academic points for hours on end without tiring. Along with this exterior knowledge, he was spiritually enlightened too and was a deputy of Maseehul Ummat, Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sherwani(RA).

The respected Maulana was born on 28 Rabilu Awwal 1344 (17 October 1925) in Umzinto, KwaZulu Natal. His father, Hajee Ismail, was a disciple of Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi, himself quite disciplined and very particular of the spiritual upbringing and environment of his household. Never would he allow a salât to be neglected. He himself remarked once to his children that since the age of 10, not once did he miss any salât and never in his adolescence did he cast a lustful glance to any strange woman. His teacher was the famous Maulana 'Abdul Haqq Hazarwi of Kathor, and it was after his teacher that he named his son, hoping that his son may walk in the footsteps of his teacher. Fate had it that Maulana 'Abdul Haqq Omarjee fulfilled the epithet of his name and spent his entire life in the pursuit of spiritual excellence and service to Islam.

After completing the basic madrasah education offered in Umzinto at the time, Maulana 'Abdul Haqq undertook a trip to India to further his Islamic education. He enrolled for the hifz programme in Jamiah Husainiyyah, Rander and thereafter proceeded to Darul 'Ulum Deoband, to complete his 'Alim Faadhil course. He successfully completed his course and proved himself an able student under the renowned teachers at the time. He was also afforded the privilege of studying the Sahihal-Bukhari under Maulana Husian Ahmed Madani, the sage who had taught the hadith for 17 years in Madinah Munawwarah. Apart from gaining benefit from this eminent teacher in class, Maulana Omarjee spent much of his free time with Maulana Madani and spent two complete Ramadans with him.

Amongst his contemporaries was Maulana Husain's son, Maulana Asad Madani, who is presently the President of the Jamiatul 'Ulamâ Hind and Maulana Bayazid Pandor. Maulana Omarjee completed his 'Alim Fadil course in 1369H (1950), and had ever since maintained his devotion to his eminent teacher. After his studies he returned to South Africa. At the time, there were only about six 'Ulamâ in Natal and practically no religious concern amongst the people, except for certain communities in the poorer areas. Maulana Omarjee hailed from a wealthy family, and the presence of an 'Alim from such a family created quite a stir. Upon his return, Maulana Omarjee started rendering free Imamât service in the West Street Masjid for a few years, until a fixed Imâm could be found. During this time, and until his demise, he devoted his energies to the reformation of the Muslims and creating an Islamic consciousness within them. In his speeches, this burning concern was always conveyed in eloquent tones.

During this time, Maulana Omarjee maintained regular contact with his mentor, Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani, the then president of the Jamiatul 'Ulamâ Hind, and was well aware of the activities and the importance of a Jamiat office for a particular province or country. This created the desire to create a similar Jamiat office in Natal, and along with a few other 'Ulamâ like Maulana Qasim Sema and Maulana Ansari, the foundation-stone of the Jamiatul 'Ulamâ Natal was laid in (1370H) 1951. Maulana Omarjee successfully ran the office for many years and saw to its progression, but retired during the end period of his life due to health reasons. He nevertheless continued to render guidance to the Jamiat and was still linked to certain of its programmes. A few of the highlights of Maulana's activities in the Jamiatul 'Ulamâ Natal were as follows:

He initiated the halaal division of the Jamiat which continued until the formation of SANHA (South African National Halaal Authority)

The first eidgah in the Durban area was held due to his efforts in 1380H (1960).

A speciality of Maulana Omarjee Sahib was that wherever he went, whether on lecture tours, visiting, or other engagements, he would constantly encourage people to either enrol their children for hifz or to become 'Ulamâ. Realising that the future of the children lies with their parents, the parents were made to realise the importance of Islamic education and of preserving the din in South Africa through the medium of 'Ulamâ. By the grace of Allâh, many people heeded his call, hifz classes were set-up all over Natal and

many also made the trip to the Indopak Subcontinent to become 'Ulamâ. Maulana also addressed the various baseless customs and practices prevalent within the society with tact and wisdom. He always said that if Islam was to be practised, it was to be practised according to Qur'ânic prescriptions, and not according to how people perceived it should be practiced. Maulana would often invite the leading 'Ulamâ of India and Pakistan to come and conduct lecture tours in South Africa. He would make up their itineraries and would accompany them during their trip. He was also an active participant in the activities of the Tabligh Jama'at. Times were difficult when Bhai Padia initiated the work of tabligh in 1383H (1963), and Maulana Omarjee afforded him full support in his activities. Maulana also prepared a jama'at for Mauritius in 1386H (1966) and was appointed its amîr. Another burning concern of Maulana was the lack of institutes of higher learning (Darul 'Ulums) in South Africa. In conjunction with Maulana Qasim Sema, Darul 'Ulum Newcastle was built, and Maulana Omarjee remained its patron and head of shura until his demise. Shortly thereafter, a hifz class was added and a separate girls Darul 'Ulum was founded. After this, many other Darul 'Ulums were established in South Africa. Maulana Omarjee also served on the Board of many institutes of Islamic learning in South Africa, he was the Chairman and the initiator of the "Awqaf al-Madaris" [Federation of Madâris] here in South Africa and in India his constant endeavour was upgrading of knowledge and standards.

Back in Kathor (India) Maulana's mother village a long-established institute, Darul 'Ulum Haqqaniyyah, under the principalship of Maulana 'Abdul Haqq Hazarwi, had to unfortunately close down. Maulana immediately took steps to

re-open the Darul'Ulum, and in about 1402H (1982), it successfully reopened. Until the end, Maulana always cared for this Darul 'Ulum and constantly enquired after its welfare. Maulana's most significant character traits can be summed up as follows: He had the ability of making and maintaining friends with almost anybody and from all walks of life. Due to his warmness and openness, many people confided in Maulana who in turn, offered sound and genuine advice. Although he would not adopt a hostile approach when addressing an anti-Sunnah practice, he was nevertheless quite frank in his approach and spoke in a way that drew the people closer to him. He had a broad vision, would read all types of literature, was well-versed in current affairs, and his concern for the Ummah was pragmatic and balanced, not one based on emotion. Those who sat with him would perceive the broadness of his vision. He respected his juniors as much as his seniors. Coupled with this, he was quite hospitable, and would regularly invite people to his table. He was determined and steadfast in whatever he undertook. For many years before his death, Maulana was diabetic, a condition due to which his feet became gangrenous. Local doctors suggested amputation, but Maulana instead opted for homeopathic treatment and made a trip to Mumbai whence he was cured. The sickness however recurred a few years later and caused much pain and anguish - often unbearable – to Maulana which he bore with great spirit and courage. Once again, he proceeded to India in Ramadhân 1423 (November 2002) and underwent successful treatment, after which he proceeded to Kathor in order to rest and oversee the affairs of Darul 'Ulum Haqqaniyyah. His return ticket was booked for Zul Hijjah 1423 (end of February 2003), but fate had decided otherwise. After imparting some advice to the students on the morning of

Friday 21 Thul al-Qa'dah 1423 (24 January 2003), he proceeded to the guestroom where his health rapidly deteriorated and he passed into the mercy of Allâh at the time when the Jumu'ah sermon was in progress. The news of his demise spread all over India and South Africa. Besides a significant number of 'Ulamâ of Gujerat, many of the ordinary people also attended his funeral. Maulana Ismail Mota, the Principal of Jamiah Husainiyyah, led the huge crowd in Janazah salât. It is said that the village of Kathor never experienced such a huge gathering ever before. Maulana marhum was laid to rest at the old cemetery in Kathor alongside Maulana' Abdul Haqq Hazarvi. It is said that Maulana had repeated on a few occasions before proceeding to India: "My place of resting is taking me to my motherland, India." Indeed, Maulana held a passion for his homeland and visited the country on numerous occasions during his lifetime. Maulana is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters. May Allâh shower His blessings on Maulana, give him a part of His choicest blessings and grant his successors the ability of exercising patience. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



MAULANA BAYAZID MAHMOOD PANDOR

رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1346-1430)

Born on a farm in Springs in Jumadal Ukhra 1346 (mid-December 1927), Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah acquired his elementary Islamic education under the guidance of Maulana Ismail Kachwee rahimahullah at Madrasah Islamiah in Johannesburg, more commonly known as Tramway Building Madrasah.

At the young age of thirteen, his quest for knowledge took him to the shores of India where he was enrolled at the well-known institution in the Gujarat Province, Madrasah Jami'ah Islamiah, Dabel/Simlak. Owing to certain challenges at the time, the institution was forced to temporarily close its doors. After a brief two year stay here, he sought the company of two luminaries, Maulana Yusuf Binnori rahimahullah and Maulana Habibur Rahman rahimahullah, both of whom had directed individual attention towards his educational development. This had allowed him to become proficient in the Farsi and Arabic languages together with its related sciences.

In 1367H (1947) Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah was honoured to have completed the study of Sahih al-Bukhari and other distinguished works of Hadith under the tutelage of Shaikhul Islam Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani rahimahullah. After graduation, he resigned himself to the khanqah of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri rahimahullah in order to spiritually uplift himself and to acquire the skill of developing a close relation with Allah. Upon the instruction of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri rahimahullah, he returned to serve his teacher,

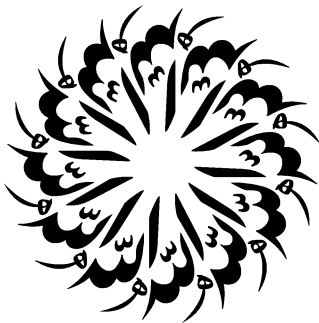
Shaikhul Islam Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani rahimahullah. This was at a time in the history of the sub-continent when the partition of India and Pakistan, and freedom from British colonial rule was at the centre of Muslim hearts. Foremost in the struggle was Shaikhul Islam Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani rahimahullah and thus, Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah developed a keen interest in politics and the freedom movement.

The close association he enjoyed with Shaikhul Islam Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani rahimahullah allowed him to have access to his teacher at times when many others were not allowed to visit. This had engendered within him great potential in the path of Sulûk. He would make the thikr of Allah with such zeal and fervour that at times his spiritual self would gain the upper hand over him. Recognising his ability in this regard, Shaikhul Islam Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani rahimahullah conferred the mantle of khilaafah upon him at a rather early age, thus making him his only Khalifah in SouthAfrica. Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah was also privileged with the company of Maulana Yusuf Khandhelwi rahimahullah, whom he had assisted, although partially, in the compilation of Hayaatus Sahabah. He journeyed to Mewat, areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bombay for the purposes of Tabligh and also played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Tabligh work in South Africa in the 1370's (1950's), soon after returning to the country.

Many who knew Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah may have at times felt uncomfortable with his quality of straight forwardness and speaking the truth no matter whom it may be. It was only later on that his words of wisdom were

appreciated. He always lived by the Arabic adage -'Speak the truth even though it may be bitter.' However, it was his simplicity and meticulous adherence to the Sunnah of Rasulullâh ﷺ which had won him respect in the hearts of people. Another remarkable trait which he always strove to instil in the lives of his children and students was to be particular of performing Salâh correctly while adhering to all its requisites. After returning to South Africa, he began teaching in Germiston and thereafter served the Muslim communities in several towns including Roodepoort, Rustenburg, Johannesburg and Lenasia.

Maulana Bayazid rahimahullah passed away at the age of 82. May Allah forgive him and crown his contribution towards Islam with acceptance. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



QARI ABDUL HAMID DHUDAT (1350-1432)

1388H (1968) marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Muslims in Johannesburg. A devout soul set foot in the 'City of Gold' to take up the leadership post at the first Masjid of the city. For him it was not simply leading the congregation in Salaah, rather he came as a breadth of fresh air in creating a revival of Islam. The gold hidden in the hearts of its people now began to be mined.

Qari Abdul Hamid Dhudat *rahmatullahi alayhi* was born on 9 Jamad al-Thani 1350 AH (21 October 1931) in the village of Panoli, near Ankleshwar in the district of Surat, Gujarat, India. He was fortunate to have studied under the tutelage of the illustrious saint, Shaikh Raza Ajmeri *rahmatullahi alayhi*, at the Jami'ah Ashrafiyyah, Rander. In the years that followed, he served as the Imam of the Quwatul Islam Masjid in Rander and was famed for his beautiful recitation of the Noble Qur'an. This was in addition to teaching the science of Qira'ah at his *alma mater*.

Then he turned his steps to South Africa. Johannesburg was a very different place at the time. Finding a person who had committed the Noble Qur'an to memory was a rare commodity. During the month of Ramadan people had to be called in from far off places to lead the Taraweeh Salah. Criminal gang activity was rife in the community while sports and frivolous entertainment was the favourite pass time of the youth.

In addressing the prevalent indifference to Islam, Qari Abdul Hamid *rahmatullahi alayhi* began his tireless efforts on several fronts. He established a Hifz class at the Kerk street Masjid with many memorising the Qur'an under his tutelage. This class however had a different aura. At its peak, it was home to some twenty odd students who were drawn by the personality at its helm. The first graduate from this class completed memorizing the Noble Qur'an in 1390 (1970).

The other area of his focus was the youth. He would befriend them and join them in soccer in order to win them over. With great wisdom and tact he would encourage them to frequent the Masjid for Salaah. During his initial years, he lived alone at the Kerk Street Masjid whilst his family remained behind in India. Thus he would spend time with the youngsters until late into the night advising and nurturing them.

It is perhaps his hard work in establishing the effort of Dawah and Tabligh that he is fondly remembered for. It was something unheard of to the people. The few Masaajid were frequented by a hand full of elderly people, whilst not many had an understanding of Deen. Western culture and foreign ideologies were the norm in society. Under these conditions, he began his house visits - knocking door to door, night and day, encouraging all towards coming closer to Allah. Many a times, he would even chat to the gangsters encouraging them to come to the Masjid for Salaah and to accompany him in these home visits.

Despite his challenge of conversing in English, his warmth touched the hearts of the people. Black or white, young or old, men or women - all were equal. If he met a person even once,

long thereafter he would be able to recollect his name and origin. Constantly he would encourage establishing an environment of dīn in the home as well as spending time in the path of Allah.

It was not long that his efforts began bearing fruit. Kerk Street Masjid soon became a beacon of light for many other towns in South Africa. It was the only Masjid at that time that hosted jamaats while every Wednesday evening brothers would meet here to discuss activities for the next week. Soon thereafter the first *shabguzari* (weekly gathering for Islamic activities) began here. The fabric of Johannesburg began to change.

In addition to this, he was instrumental in establishing Musallahs (places of prayer) in various towns around South Africa. Many of his students would be sent to lead the Fajr Salaah in Musallahs where no Fajr Salaah previously took place. During the month of Ramadaan, his students would visit many towns to lead the taraweeh prayers in communities.

In 1983 he moved with nine of his students to a farm holding outside Lenasia where he laid the foundation of Darul Uloom Zakariyya. Initially he envisaged an institute that would cater for hundred odd students. Even though he only remained here for three years, his sincerity bore fruits of an establishment that today is home to almost 750 students from more than 50 countries around the world.

Under the instruction of his Shaikh, Qari Abdul Hamid *rahmatullahi alayhi* returned to India in 1986. Here he founded Jami'ah Hamidiyah in his village, which is an institute of higher

Islamic Learning for girls. Currently it has a roll of 950, primarily of students who are orphans and from vulnerable circumstances. Prior to his passing on, he was in the final process of completing the construction of a similar institute for boys. Besides these, he supervised some 280 makaatib (elementary level madaaris) and many other upliftment projects in scores of villages in India and Bangladesh.

Over time his health deteriorated and old age set in. The last few months were a continuous downward spiral for him, in and out of hospital. On the night of Eid al Adha, he breathed his last in the early hours of Yaumul-Ithnain (Monday morning), 10 Dhul Hijjah 1432 AH (7 November 2011). His janaazah Salaah was performed by Qari Rasheed Ajmeri, the son of his esteemed Sheikh.

Amongst his many outstanding qualities was his love for the Noble Qur'an. His burning concern for the welfare of the Ummah and dedication towards their progress was another hallmark trait. Those associated with him in the early days aptly regard him as a reviver of the Deen who has left behind a remarkable legacy. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



"CHOTA MOTA" DESAI رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (1352-1430)

The year 1352H (1934) witnessed the birth of the blessed soul of Shabbir Ahmed Desai Soofi on 30 Zul Qadah (March 16), in the village of Targeshwar, Gujrat, India. As a young lad he made his passage to the shores of South Africa accompanied by his mother, sister and elder brother. Their aim was to reunite with their father, Haji Ibrahim Ahmed Soofi, who had arrived here some years before and had already been serving the Paddock community as an Imaam.

The next home of the family was the South Coast town of Umzinto. Here Haji Ibrahim also served the community as an Imam and a teacher at the local Maktab. He was fortunate to be in the service of Deen until his demise in 1382H (1963). Following in the footsteps of his honourable father, the young Haji Shabbir Ahmed was requested by the community to take up the legacy his father left behind. Thus he now became the Imam and teacher of the Maktab in Umzinto. This marked a new era in his life, his long and dedicated service to people for the sake of Islam. Enthusiasm, dedication and punctuality were hallmark ingredients to this enviable journey until his last breath.

Owing to ill health and other circumstances beyond him, Haji Shabbir Ahmed resigned from his post as the Imam. After a period of recuperation at home, he began work as a Dye House Manager at a textile factory in Umzinto called Mymtex. It was during this period that his attention was drawn to the dire need for basic Islamic Education in a little sugar cane village on the South Coast called Sezela. This laid the foundation of the Da'watul Haq group of Madaris.

Accordingly, a Maktab was established in Sezala and within a short space of time many other similar institutes had taken root in the surrounding rural areas such as Renishaw, Park Rynie, Breamar, Umkomaas, etc. Gradually, the number of these Makaatib increased to about thirty and the reach extended to other larger towns in the South Coast such as Umzinto, Port Shepstone and Harding, as well as others in further afield places like Isipingo Beach, Isipingo Rail, Isipingo Hills, Phoenix, Ixopo, Danhauser and Pomeroy.

Since the number of the affiliated Makaatib increased considerably, the need arose for a syllabus which could be implemented in all of them. Hence, Haji Shabbir Ahmed began compiling the renowned and well accepted book called Ta'leemul Haq. This treatise was prepared under the guidance of 'Ulama such as Moulana Yunus Patel and Moulana Uthmaan Kadwa. Many other booklets like Asbaaq, Chehel Hadith, etc. were also compiled in order to supplement the syllabus.

The next step for Haji Shabbir Ahmed or "Chota Mota" as he was fondly remembered was to identify intelligent and capable learners studying at the different Makaatib to further their Islamic Studies. Thus the process began where he would head hunt learners and send them to the Waterval Islamic Institute (Mia's Farm). It was here that these students began memorizing the Noble Qur'an under the tutelage of the esteemed Haafidh Abdur Rahmaan Mia *rahimahullah*. Over time, the number of students such students reached approximately one hundred. Twice a year, Chota Mota would himself transport them to and from the various towns in KwaZulu Natal to Mia's Farm. Over and above that, he would

pay them a monthly visit taking along with him parcels of food and other items for them.

Many of those who completed memorizing the Noble Qur'an at Mia's Farm proceeded to India to become 'Ulama. During the 1400's (1980's), on many occasions Chota Mota had personally taken some students to India in order to pursue the Aalim course.

In 1406H (1986), the Hifz division of Madrasah Da'watul-Haq incorporating a boarding facility was established at Chota Mota's residence in Umzinto. Initially, twenty students were housed here. As the number of students grew, the need arose for an extension. Another piece of land was purchased and the building of Madrasah Da'watul-Haq commenced. Over a span of several years, the building gradually reached completion and it presently accommodates about sixty students. This Madrasah now stands as a landmark of Umzinto and a legacy of Chota Mota.

Chota Mota was closely attached to the institute and often referred to it as his baby. On many occasions he sold some of his artwork to accrue funds for building purposes. Other than this, he always took a keen interest in the cleanliness and neatness of the Madrasah, the supervision of the students, attending to their comforts and even overseeing the preparation of the meals. He would personally dish out the food for them and kept a close eye on the character, clothing and eating habits of the students.

At the advanced age of 76, he would personally attend to matters of the institute. Many had witnessed him personally

mixing concrete for the building work in the hot sun. Whilst his day began at Tahajjud, it would only end at 10pm when the students would retire to sleep. As a result of his unvarying concern and attachment to the students, they became very fond of him. They affectionately called him with the acronym "Cho" and he never took the slightest offence. If there was a need to discipline he would be stern but thereafter he was a friend to all the students alike.

Although he may not have been an Alim in the formal sense, but truly he was the spiritual father of scores of 'Ulama and his service to the Deen were unparalleled. He was a man of great wisdom, action and farsightedness. No doubt his demise has created a vacuum and he will be greatly missed. (Condensed from Ar-Rasheed)



HAAJI GOOLAM MOHAMMAD ISMAIL PADIA (HAJI BHAI PADIA) رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ (1354-1419)

Hajee Bhai Padia Saheb was born in Umzinto on Thursday 10 Rabiul Akhir 1354 (11 July 1935). His mother was very pious as was his grandmother who would maintain an islâhi connection with Hadhrat Thânwî rahimahullah through letters. From a young age, he had two praiseworthy qualities viz. piety and determination. As a youngster he was inclined to Dîn and he used to teach other students how to read Qurân Sharîf. He used to wear his shirt out of his pants as a youngster, when kurtas were an unfamiliar sight. He would show great respect for the Day of Jum'ah.

In around 1380 (1961) Haaji Saheb went for his first Hajj when he came into contact with the people of the work of Dawat and Tabligh. One day Moulana Umar Palanpuri rahimahillah addressed the Hujjaj in the Haram. Haaji Saheb was affected and gave his name to go for four months immediately. In Nizamuddin, he met Moulana Yusuf rahimahullah. His life was now dedicated to the service of the dîn of Allâh ﷺ.

He then returned to South Africa and began the effort here. The first program held was in the Grey Street Masjid. The first person to accept his call to assist him was Hadrat Moulana Yunus Patel Saheb rahimhullah. Upon returning home, he started his efforts on his family and relatives. All dressing not confirming to the Shariah was disposed. He insisted that his sister and female cousins were not to go to high school. There was much commotion and meetings amongst family members. Alhamdulillah, the elders of his family accepted his viewpoint, and dîn was not sacrificed for unislamic or personal desires.

As the ambiyâ were taunted, Haaji Saheb too was taunted and even called a madman. This did not deter him from his efforts.

Haaji Saheb, with the assistance of close family members, then moved to Isipingo, so that he could be closer to the city and the majority of the Muslims. As the work of tabligh became established, foreign jamâts began streaming into South Africa. The first Jor was held in Ladysmith. After a few years, the first ijtimâ was held in South Africa. Thousands of people's lives have changed and are still changing due to the efforts of the jamâts going out throughout the world. Haaji Saheb also made effort in other provinces as well. Through his efforts, many homes changed and families became conscious of dîn. Many of these families sent their sons to become ulemâ.

In 1386H (1966), the first jamât to leave the soils of South Africa was prepared. The amîr was Moulana Abdul Haq Omarjee. This jamât was sent to Mauritius and Reunion Islands. One of the first jamâts to go to the West Indies and the first to go to the USSR (Soviet Union) was taken by Haaji Saheb from South Africa. His contribution to present day Islam as well as in the West Indies, Fiji Islands, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Britain, France, Brazil and Russia is phenomenal. His motto was, "Learn Islam, practise Islam, teach Islam and propagate Islam."

Haaji Saheb was extremely conscious of Allâh ﷻ, and always sought the help of Allâh ﷻ in all his efforts. He would constantly turn to Allâh ﷻ for help and success in all his efforts. He would engage in duâ and crying for long periods of time.

He possessed many outstanding attributes and qualities. A few worthy of note are:

- * His burning desire for the well-being of the ummah
- * His regular practise of shedding tears and weeping in the court of Allâh ﷻ at the time of tahajjud whilst making duâ for the ummah
- * The wise and loving manner in which he would address diverse categories of people, thereby winning over their hearts for the sake of dîn
- * The respect and love he would display to all ulamâ, who tended to respond in a like manner
- * The passionate, undying love he had for sunnah
- * Simplicity – His humble dressing and home remained the same till the ending.
- * Conduct – He was an epitome of superb character. He would not cause pain to others and forgive those who harmed him. On one occasion, when he was unwell and travelling by plane, the airline provided him with a wheelchair and an attendant. However, the attendant failed to control the wheelchair, causing him to fall down and roll several metres. He sustained injuries and lost some blood. Despite the pain, injuries and advice of many to sue the airline company, his venerable character made him remark, "I have forgiven the attendant and shall not take any further action."

May Allâh ﷻ grant us similar values! Amîn

On Monday, 14 Jumadal Ukhra 1419 (5 October 1998), Haaji Saheb left this world to meet his Beloved. He was buried at the Dayal Road cemetery, with about 3000 people attending his janâzah. (Extracted and condensed from "Our dear Haaji Bhai Padia")

CONCLUSION

It is sad to note that no concerted effort has been made to document the lives of our pious pioneers and elders who laid the foundation for the establishment of Islam on our soil. It is hoped that this *kitâb* will inspire someone to prepare more detailed biographies of our elders, which will remain a legacy for future generations. It will be appreciated if those possessing information or incidents regarding our predecessors of South Africa to forward it to the following address so that a more comprehensive biography can be prepared in future:

P.O Box 9786 Azaadville 1750
Email: darululum@webmail.co.za

May Allâh ﷻ grant us the ability to be inspired by these pious predecessors and to follow in their footsteps! Amîn

