

The First UK Jamaat's Journey to India by road (1968)

This is a dairy account of Haji Ibrahim Essa of Manubar, Bharuch of India, a UK Citizen from Blackburn. This was the first ever Jamaat that travelled from the UK to India by road in October of 1968.

Sunday, 13th Oct 1968

Our Jamaat was made up of the following 15 sathis with Moulana Yusuf Motala being our Amir.

1. Moulana Yusuf Motala Sb - The Amir (Bolton).
2. Gulam Hussain Sb - Driver (Burnley)
3. Moulana Ibrahim Bobat Sb.
4. Hafiz Yakub Limbada Sb
5. Hafiz Adam Matadar Sb (Bolton).
6. Hakim Ahmed Umarji Sb. (Bolton).
7. Ahmed Ali Kanthariawala Sb. (Bolton)
8. Yunus Vali Sb.
9. Yakub Vali Kanthariawala Sb.
10. Myself - Ibrahim Essa (Blackburn).
11. Vali Bhai Karmadwala Sb. (Nuneaton)
12. Ishaq Bhai Sb. (Nuneaton)
13. Yaaseen Bhai Sb.
14. Mohammed Hanif Sb.
15. Gulam Mohammed Sb. - Driver

By the grace of Allah S.W.T our Jamaat left from Bolton, at around 5.00pm, for Nuneaton by road. Our driver was Br. Gulam Hussain of Burnley, as the van belonged to him.

Alhamdulillah, by the Grace of Allah S.W.T, we performed our Asar salaah on the way on the M6. We later performed our Maghrib prayer at around 6.45pm by pulling the van over to onside of the Motorway.

Alhamdulillah, by the Grace of Allah S.W.T, we reached Nuneaton at around 8.30pm. There in Nuneaton, a local Jamaat was awaiting our arrival since Saturday, 12th Oct. We did our Mashwera with the Nuneaton sathis and made duaas with them.

Tuesday, 15th Oct 1968

We stayed in the Masjid the whole day in Nuneaton and later did our Ghust in the evening. We did our work in accordance with the prescribed ousools. Alhamdulillah, two Nuneaton sathis decided to join our Jamaat.

Wednesday, 16th Oct 1968

After Fajar salaah Moulana Hashim Sb. presented detailed ousools about the Jamaat work. Later after Maghrib salaah we did our Ghust and a Bayan was delivered after the Isha salaah.

Thursday, 17th Oct 1968

Again we did our Ghust in the evening.

Friday, 18th Oct 1968

Being Jumma we could not do our Ghust.

Saturday, 19th Oct 1968

We went to the Bank to get Traveller's cheques. We lost quite a lot of time there. Two to Three sathis could not get the traveller's cheques that they needed.

Sunday, 20th Oct 1968

We did our Ghust after Zohar salaah and then prayed our Asar salaah later. After the Maghrib salaah we returned back to the East Masjid, Nuneaton.

Monday, 21st Oct 1968

In preparation of our travel we lost most of the day in getting things that we needed for the trip.

Tuesday, 22nd Oct 1968

We set off for Dover at around 9.45am from Nuneaton and reached there at 12.05pm. It was Br. Ishaq who drove the van between **London and Dover**. There was much to do as our ferry was scheduled to leave at 12.30pm.

We ate the food that we had brought and had a cup of tea. Each cup of tea was 1 shilling and 2 pence (old money). We performed our Zohar prayer on the Sundeck of the ferry. Many Europeans were watching us. A German guy spoke to us; he praised our devotion to our deen and cause.

Our ferry reached **Ostend, Belgium** at around 4.00pm. Those amongst us with Indian Passports did not have Belgian visas but by the Grace of Allah S.W.T we managed to go through customs without an issue.

We then performed our Asar salaah by the roadside and proceeded towards **Brussels, Belgium**. On the way we also prayed our Maghrib salaah. We had some food on the way and on reaching **Brussels, Belgium** we prayed our Isha salaah on the footpath of the city.

It was around 9.00pm when we reached **Aachen on the German border** and reached Aachen at around 11.10pm.

Wednesday, 23rd Oct 1968

We continued with our journey and on seeing the petrol station sign we left the Autobahn and pulled up for petrol. We parked our van to one side and took rest for about an hour and then performed our Fajar prayer. On completing our salaah we made some tea and had our breakfast on the roadside near a public convenience building. We then proceeded towards Munich, Germany.

We went pass **Munich, Germany** at around 11.30am and proceeded towards **Salzburg, Austria**. We pulled up into a lay-by at around 1.00pm. This lay-by was near a large lake where we had our lunch, made some tea and filled up some drinking water and performed Zohar salaah. We preceded our journey at around 2.35pm and later reached the German - Austrian Border. This took up a significant amount of our time.

We performed our Asar salaah at the customs point at the border and then proceeded with our journey. We went past Salzburg, Austria and left the Autobahn. We proceeded towards **Graz, Austria** via 'A' roads. This is a very mountainous and hilly route. We marvelled at Allah S.W.T's creation with awe. At all times we engaged in our Zikr and Taleem.

We pulled up into a lay-by along a hillside and performed our Isha salaah. We then had our dinner inside the van. Up until this time we had our meals outside and this was the first time we had food sitting in the van. By midnight we had travelled approximately 130 miles and had reached the Yugoslavian Border. We reached **Zagreb, Yugoslavia** (now in Croatia) and then proceeded towards Bulgaria.

We changed drivers and at the same time fog descended on us offering only 30 yds visibility. Both frost and cold was significant. Two of our sathis needed to perform their ghusl and Allah S.W.T had eased their need with the provision of hot water.

Thursday, 24th Oct 1968

From Zagreb to Belgrade is approx 480km (300 miles). We performed our Fajar salaah and topped up drinking water for the journey. The road is smooth and straight, flanked by lovely fields on both sides.

We reached **Belgrade** (currently in Serbia) around 12.00 noon. There, via the city, we found our motorway route to Nis, Serbia. We stopped at a local village but found the shops shut. We returned to the Autobahn and stopped on a lay-by to have our afternoon lunch. We had a break and made wudhu for our salaah. We prayed our salaahs and proceeded towards Nis. We stopped to pray our Asar salaah at a local petrol station. We recited our Yaaseen Sharif 41 times and made duaas to Allah S.W.T and proceeded with our journey toward Nis after performing our Maghrib salaah.

We reached **Nis (Bulgaria, now Serbia)** around 7.15am. Some sathis went to buy some milk; there a guy compelled us to have some of his yogurt as a way of showing his hospitality.

We later proceeded towards the **Dimitrovgrad (Bulgaria)** border at around 7.45am. Again, a mountainous region started here. It was around 9.00pm when we reached the end post of **Yugoslavia** and after a small break we entered **Bulgaria** at around 10.15pm. At the border control we had our passport stamped in order for us to proceed ahead. We made wudhu to perform our salaah and then made tea and had our meal.

We then headed towards **Sofia (Bulgaria)**, which is still some 60km away. We reached there around 12.45am. At Sofia we saw a very beautiful masjid, which was closed. However, we got to learn that five times prayers do happen there, including Jumma. Two to three sathis went to look around the masjid. The masjid is approx 700 years old but by the Grace of Allah S.W.T, considering the age, it is still in good condition. We pray that may Allah S.W.T continue to safeguard it (Aameen).

Friday, 25th Oct 1968

We headed towards Bulgaria. We drove all night and by the morning had done about 200 miles. One of our sathis needed to perform his ghusl. Alhamdulillah, we found a

small stream where the sathi did his ghusl and we also performed our wudhu. As we proceeded with our journey we noticed the minaret of a Masjid in a small village, there we prayed our Fajar salaah and reached Bulgaria at around 6.50am.

Ahead of us was the **Bulgarian / Turkish border**. There we made tea and took our personal relief break. We also took the opportunity to write to our respective families and then proceeded with the journey at around 10.00am.

At around 10.30am we reached **Edirne (formerly Adrianople)**, located in the **Northwest of Turkey**. There we saw a masjid built in Hijri 816 (1403 - 1414 AD) by Amir Sultan, Musa Salibi and Suleiman Muhammad. It is a reminder of Hazrat Uthman R.A'S Khalifat era. Some of us prayed 2 rakats Tahyatul Masjid there.

Later, around 12.00 noon, we prayed our Jumma at a masjid in a small village. We found ourselves surrounded by a large local crowd of worshippers. They affectionately marvelled at us with love and wonderment. It seemed that they were reminiscing their past Islamic way of life. We noticed some ladies in their purdas, which pleased us immensely as they were still following Islamic traditions in a European Environment. Even so, we sadly witnessed the poor state of masjid management. Here the Khutba delivered was too long and salaah being very brief, where one Aayat was recited per rakat only. The Imam was clean shaven and had donned a tie. The name of this town was **Corlu**.

We had our meal around 1.40pm by the side of a riverbank and headed towards Istanbul. Around 3.30pm we passed **Silivri**, which seems like a holiday resort; it is beautiful. We saw the minaret of a masjid in the city. On passing the city we went by some open fields and saw a petrol station along the journey.

Our road is now ascending along some low lying hills. We passed several small villages along the way with minarets signifying the presence of village masjids.

To our right, we came across a village of Salim Pasha. It is situated by the sea. Along one side of the village we saw a local cemetery. Our road is now manoeuvring along the edge of the sea and we can now see Istanbul in the distance. It is breathtakingly beautiful.

Around 4.15pm we went to Hazrat Ayuub Ansari R.A's resting (Mazar) place in **Istanbul**. This Mazar was built in the Roman Era before Amir Sultan Muhammad's rule. At present the walls of the compound surrounding the Mazar are eroding away. This brought us the memories of the battle of Constantinople, where one can immerse themselves of the times faced by the people then.

We paid homage to Hazarat Ayuub Ansari's Mazar after praying our Asar salaah and Salaatul Tahyatul-Masjid. We engaged in our individual prayers, keeping in mind the sacrifices of Hazarat Ayuub Ansari R.A's and those of our other beloved Sahab-e-Kiram R.As. I prayed that Allah S.W.T., we cannot compete with the sacrifices our Sahab-e-Kiram made but, grant us tawfiq until our dying days to follow their footsteps and grant us death in your path as you gave the Sahab-e-Kiram R.As.

Here we noticed that only the elderly had beards, who met us with deep love and affection. They all had radiant happy faces. We completed our dars of 41 Yaaseen Sharifs and offered it to all the deceased of the Muslim Ummah. The locals also joined us in our group duas. At all times we also had to be vigilant for the safety of our belongings and the van.

We proceeded towards Ankara taking our evening meal with us.

Saturday, 26th Oct 1968

We stopped to one side of the road and fell asleep. We woke up for our Fajar salaah and prayed after one of our sathi had his ghusl. We primed the stove to make our tea. We all had our breakfast then proceeded with the journey.

The route is very hilly and mountainous. By 11.00am we reached the village of Ova Cayi, Ankara, Turkey where several streams were flowing. We took the opportunity to perform Ghusls in them.

The road from here is pretty much flat with fields flanking either side. Farms scattered both sides where we saw the odd farmer working in them. The ladies were modestly dressed in loose fitting clothing. The farmers were cultivating watermelons.

We are fast approaching Ankara, whose population is marked on a board as being 902,228. We entered the city of **Ankara** at around 12.30pm. We headed towards Arjroom where we wished to exchange our traveller's cheques. The way to the bank is congested with traffic. Most of the people, including women, are donning western type clothing. Allah S.W.T guided us to **Arjroom** with ease. The precincts surrounding Ankara is quite populated.

We left Ankara and stopped our van to buy some food at around 2.00pm. On seeing a large crowd we postponed our meal and proceeded with our journey. At around 2.15pm we stopped by a small stream to have our food before proceeding. We stopped to pray our Asar salaah almost before sunset. We again proceeded with our

journey and prayed our Maghrib in the masjid of a small village. We purchased some bread and meat and proceeded onwards.

We arrived at **Corum**, where we stopped by to pray our Isha in a Masjid. On arrival we noticed that people were leaving the masjid. On seeing us people gathered around us. On the Imaam's insistence we entered the Masjid to pray our Isha. There were over 50 people watching us.

Upon finishing our Isha salaah, the Imaam sb. beckoned us all to sit as he wanted to say a few words. He said a few things upon which Moulana Yusuf Sb and Brother Ghulam Hussain conversed with the Imaam sb. in Arabic. Moulana made duaah which impressed them significantly. The Imaams sb. insisted that we accept his Daawat for tea. We accepted and went with him to a big masjid in the area. There we met the Imam and Muezzin and here the basis of conversation was predominantly on Imaan and Yakeen. The congregation of the other masjid remained with us at this main masjid. We sat in the Imaam's office and here Br. Ghulam Hussain did most of the Islamic Daawat talk and did Tashkil of the Imaam of the small masjid and made intention for 4 months for the Tabligh Daawat work. May Allah S.W.T accept his intention. There seemed to us that the congregation was also keen to do this work, may Allah S.W.T accept them all and raise them for this work as Allah S.W.T had accepted their forefathers before them. We then left at around 8.30pm after taking care of our personal break.

Sunday, 27th Oct 1968

It was around 1.00am at night when we by passed **Samsun**, a city on the north coast of **Turkey**. From here the road is getting worse. On one side is the sea and on the other are rocky mountainous hills.

The road ahead was blocked so the traffic had come to a standstill. One of our sathis made ghusl using water from the sea and we then prayed our Fajar salaah.

The road ahead is all washed out and for 15 to 20 km the road was mostly a dirt track. Later the road became good and we reached **Trabzon**, which is located in the **northeast of Turkey**.

From here on, we went uphill which is approximately 6600 feet on an upward incline. Along the way we suffered a minor accident, where the mudguard on the wheel arch had got damaged. Alhamdulillah, Allah S.W.T safeguarded our safety. The mountains are still along the way and road is getting more difficult to drive on. Scattered along the way are small localities. We stopped along the way for personal reliefs.

We noticed that women are wearing Islamic purdahs. We stopped by a stream to perform our wudhu and prayed Zohar salaah. The road now cuts through mountains. On the other side of the stream an elderly Turkish man was observing us and gestured us to stop as he wanted to come over. He came over with a basketful of apples. We offered him money but he declined. He said it was a gift and then went away. May Allah S.W.T grant him eternal recompense, both in Duniya and Akhirah.

We proceeded ahead at around 2.25pm. From here on the road became treacherous and the speed limit is restricted to 20mph only.

We prayed our Asar salaah. The mountainous area is now receding. We stopped over to pray our Maghrib at 5.00pm, where upon one Turk joined us in the salaah. We proceeded with our journey at 5.15pm. We completed Yaaseen Sharifs on the way before Isha. We made Duaa and reached Bay Bust. The locals there were preparing for their Isha so we also joined in.

As we were preparing to make our tea outside the masjid, the Imaam called us in to make our tea within the compound of the masjid. On finishing our meal the Imaam requested that we stop over the night in the masjid and leave in the morning. After doing our Mashwera we slept over as invited.

Monday, 28th Oct 1968

We prayed our Fajar and set off once again. The road was bad for a while but improved thereafter.

At around 8.30am we passed the city of **Erzurum (Eastern Anatolia)** and headed towards the Iranian border. We had our breakfast before setting off. At around 12.30 pm we reached **Eskerit**. We bought some ghee and bread. Here the meat is very expensive. There was a small hotel and the locals were looking at us.

We stopped by a stream where we cooked ourselves our meal. We prayed our (Zohar) salaah and had some tea. We proceeded ahead and later prayed our Asar salaah around 4.10pm.

The road ahead is now better but getting narrower. **The Iranian border** is ahead of us but we prayed our Maghrib on the Turkish side.

At exactly 5.10pm we reached the **Turkish / Iranian border**. Both borders are side by side, separated by railings. There was no hold up on the Turkish side of the border but our luggage was checked by the Iranians.

We set off around 7.00pm and reached a small town of **Maku (Iran)** about 14 miles from the Iranian border. The roads here are first class. We bought some meat from a local hotel and had our meal outside the city. We set off again after our Isha salaah.

Tuesday, 29th Oct 1968 (The Day of the Accident)

We reached **Tabrez (East Azerbaijan - Northwest Iran)**. From here on the road again becomes very hazardous but by the Grace of Allah S.W.T we passed it safely. The road later improved.

Around midnight I sat alongside the driver in the front of the van. The vehicle was going with some speed now. At around 4.00am I briefly woke and then slumbered again. The road came to an abrupt end around 5.00am to 5.30am. Without any warning at all our vehicle collided with a large Boulder in the road way and became airborne. The vehicle tumbled and then collided with another boulder at the edge of a bridge. The boulder shattered but by the amazing mercy of Allah S.W.T our vehicle was prevented from toppling over into the ravine by the bridge's metal framework.

As to how the accident actually happened I do not know and who got us out of the vehicle I still have no idea. I also have no idea as to who got me out from the vehicle. When I came around I noticed that I had injured my hand.

When I came around I noticed the following at the scene of the accident:

1. Br. Ghulam Hussain, the driver, was lying on the road outside. He had sustained injuries to his arm and leg. He was also bleeding from his mouth.
2. I, Ibrahim Essa, suffered injury to my lips. They had split causing them to bleed.
3. Br. Haider suffered injury to a vein in his neck. He was lying unconscious. Unfortunately he passed away 4 days later in the hospital where he had been admitted. I.L.I.W.I.R.

4. Br. Ahmed Jamala, of Bolton / Kantharia, was conscious for a short while but later passed away at the scene of the accident. I.L.IW.I.R.
5. Br. Muhammad Hanif suffered a minor injury to his leg, which caused it to swell.
6. Our Amir, Moulana Yusuf Motala, suffered injury to his right hand, causing it to fracture. He was also bleeding from the nose.
7. Br. Hafiz Adam Matadar, suffered an injury to his leg, causing it to break. He also suffered an injury to his head. He was taken to Hospital where he remains.
8. Br. Vali Ismail Karmadi (Nuneaton) suffered an injury to his mouth and head. He also suffered a broken tooth and had to have stitches to his head in the hospital.
9. Br. Hakim Ahmad Umarji (Bolton / Kantharia), suffered an injury to one side of his eye which required stitches.
10. Br. Yaaseen suffered abdominal injuries.
11. Br. Ibrahim Bobat had suffered injuries to his body, including his eyes and head. His eye had become clotted with blood.
12. Br. Yakub Limbada suffered injuries to his head.
13. Br. Ishaq suffered injuries to his leg and body.
14. Br. Yunus Vali suffered a minor injury to his leg.
15. Br. Yakub Malji suffered a minor injury to his leg.

Furthermore, all our luggage and belongings had toppled over from the vehicle and scattered on the roadway. Our luggage was salvaged from the river by a local Turk, Br. Yunus, Br. Ibrahim Bobat and another Jamati Sathi.

The Police and Ambulances services were called and they took us all to the hospital. We stayed in the hospital for a week to rest and receive our treatment.

Tuesday, 29th Oct - Monday, 4th Nov 1968

We rested in the hospital and Brother Yakub Limbada decided to return to the UK.

Tuesday, 5th Nov 1968

Today, eight of us, including myself arrived at the Miyan railway station to catch a train to Tehran. To ensure our safety the ambulance crew, supported with nurses and doctors, came to drop us off at the railway station. Alhamdulillah, they all looked after us so well.

We caught the 9.00pm train to Tehran.

On the way the train stopped at a station where a call for Fajar salaah was announced where we performed our salaah. We reached the **Tehran** station around 8.00am. We then went to a Musafir Khana (Guest House).

Wednesday, 6th Nov 1968

After breakfast three sathis and I went to the Indian Embassy where we met the High Commissioner Mr. Joshi. He expressed deep sympathies on hearing our plight. He organised the travel tickets for those with Indian Passports. He also phoned the British High Commission and made arrangements for those of us who had British Passports. He advised us to go there and make our travel arrangements there.

We went to the British High Commission, where we were given £25 & 10 shillings in Iranian Currency for our travel tickets. We later bought the tickets. Because of there being a national holiday most of the city and bazaars were closed, including the day of the Jumma. Most of the people wore English type clothing but the women were in Burkhas but their inner clothing was mostly English style. May Allah S.W.T guide them all and grant them Hidayat.

There were still 5 sathis in hospital and from amongst them Br. Ghulam Haider passed away and joined Allah S.W.T's rehmat. Brothers Ishaq and Vali Bhai later joined us in Tehran on Friday, 8th Nov 1968. From them we got to learn that there are two sathis still in the hospital. The two brothers who joined us agreed to follow to India. They went to the ticket office on Saturday to purchase their tickets but for them they had to go to Khuram. We booked railway tickets for 10 sathis.

Saturday, 9th Nov 1968

On Saturday evening we arrived at the Tehran Station. The station was packed with people but the access gate to go on to the platform was still shut. At around 3.30pm the gates were opened and around 4.00pm we prayed our Asar salaah on the platform. The train departed the station at 4.30pm. We prayed our Maghrib onboard the train. We later prayed our Isha at a Kum Station, where the train had stopped. We performed our Fajr at another station on the way and reached **Khuram City** at around 9.15am on Sunday, 10th Nov.

Monday, 11th Nov 1968

An official from the Indian Council came to see us and gave £14.00 each to those with Indian Passports. We were told the boat has arrived at the port at 5.00pm but will only let passengers embark at around 7.30am the following day, Tuesday, 12th

Nov. Those with Indian Passports (4 Sathis) were invited to go to the Indian High Commission. They were treated with respect and were issued with magazines to read on their journey and given lunch for their journey to the ship.

The travel fare for each passenger was 100 Riyals. Taxi fares and food cost are also low here. We did our taleem for a short while. Eight of our sathis took visas for Iraq, where the ship will travel to Basra. Those with British Passports were charged 191 Riyals, those with Indian Passports 121 Riyals and those with Pakistani Passports 11 Riyals.

Tuesday, 12th Nov 1968

After the Fajar prayer we had our breakfast. Our waiter, who had brought us our breakfast, came along with a baggage handler at our hotel to help take our luggage to the bus. After 7.00am our transport took us to the docks. After going through customs and immigration we were allowed to go through by about 8.30am. We boarded the ship at 9.45am, which left the docks at 11.00am. Palm Date Trees flanked both sides of the canal. It was very scenic and beautiful. One side is Iran and on the other is Basra, Iraq. At around 1.30pm we reached Basra Docks. Basra city is approx 6 to 7 miles from the docks.

We saw a bridge over the river Furat. There is a small island in the river. We learnt that there is place by the name of **Zubari**, where a number of Sahabas are resting in their Kabars. Insha'Allah we intend to pay our respect there and make duaas for them.

We were served with good food in the ship where many of the crew members are Muslims. They were dumbstruck listening to our plight; Allah S.W.T placed sympathy in their hearts. Two of our sathis went out that evening and from one Iraqi exchanged £1.00 for 850 Faloos (1000 Faloos is equiv to 1 Dinar).

Wednesday, 13th Nov 1968

After breakfast we made preparations to go to the village of Zubari. At 9.00am they noted our passport numbers and other details before they allowed us to go. We hired two taxis. Our route was via Basra city and some 15 km away and we paid a visit to Hazarat Talha R.A's Mazar. The Mazar is located in the field where the battle of Jamal was fought.

Thereafter we went to a small masjid that was built by Hazarat Ali R.A. The masjid is famously known as Jame-e-Ali, where we prayed 2 rakats salaah and made duaah. We then went to an old fort nearby and visited Hazarat Zubair bin Awwam's Mazar.

We later returned to Basra. Two of our sathis went to a local bank. On the way back to our ship we bought a watermelon for 650 Faloos. We reached our ship by 1.00pm and had our meal and later prayed our Zohar prayer.

Thursday, 14th Nov 1968

We did taleem between 9.00am till 11.00am. The ship is being loaded up with goods but none of the passengers were allowed to board. It is expected that the ship will leave tomorrow, the 15th Nov. We bought quite a bit of Dates. We lost our Tabligh Nisab with some of our belongings at the time of the accident. Moulana Yusuf had his Fazail-e-Durood with him which we used. We also made our Halqas and Muzakira of 6 Numbers.

We ate our meals in two groups. We had requested that we be served food in groups rather than individually.

Sathis are engaged in their Nafl Ibaadat, including recitation of their Quraans, Salaats and Tasbihats.

Jumma (Friday), 15th Nov 1968

Today most of our luggage is being loaded up. We are expected to leave for Karachi later on today. We have a lot of goods for Karachi as we intend to stop over for a while. The arrangement for having our meals is in the lower deck of the ship. The timetable for which is Breakfast at 6.00am, Lunch at 11.00am, Tea at 4.00pm and Dinner at 6.00pm. On the menu they will be serving us with Meat, Fish etc.

Passengers are boarding around 9.00am. Most passengers appear of Shia sect, Bories and Lebanese. The ship left the shore around 11.30am. Insha'Allah we are expected to reach Kuwait around 3.00am.

We met a person by the name of Suleiman on the ship, he is a trader. Alhamdulillah as luck would have it, he had a copy of Tabligh-i-Nisab on him.

Saturday, 16th Nov 1968

We reached Kuwait around 3.00am as expected but did not dock until around 7.00-7.30am. The boat stopped with its floating buoys in place.

They are going to be boarding around 200 passengers at 11.00am.

The boat then left for Bahrain at around 3.45pm.

By the Grace of Allah S.W.T we are able to complete our Yaaseen Sharifs and make Duaas daily. After Zohar we were also able to do our Taleem.

Sunday, 17th Nov 1968

We are expected to reach **Bahrain** around 12.15pm this afternoon. Here 69 passengers boarded. We had intended to go on to the land but we were slightly late in doing so. Again we did our Taleem and recited our daily Yaaseen Sharifs. The boat left the shore around 6.45pm.

Monday, 18th Nov 1968

We reached **Qatar** around 7.30am. Passengers are boarding. We left for Dubai around 1.00pm. It got a bit windy here.

Tuesday, 19th Nov 1968

We reached **Dubai** around 7.00am. Because of windy conditions we could not dock and had to remain afloat until the next day. The boat was swaying because of high winds. We performed our salaats but kept them brief.

Wednesday, 20th Nov 1968

The sea is a little calmer today.

The passengers started boarding in the morning. Around 1.30pm we sailed towards Karachi. At Dubai we met Br. Ishaq's cousin, Moulana Iqbal. We sadly learnt from him that Br. Haider (our sathi) had passed away in the hospital (I.L.W.I.R.J). This news of his death was announced in the Baroda (India) Ijtima. We have no idea as to how they came to know about it in Baroda. We had only posted our letters to Nizamuddin Markaz, India only on the 9th Nov 1968. It is good thing that the message about us had reached them because they must have made duaas for us.

Thursday, 21st Nov 1968

We are sailing in the Indian Ocean today. We were served Pilaw and Jarda. The ocean is quite calm today. There is no hint of windy conditions, but the boat is however swaying.

After Maghrib we saw the Moon for the beginning of Ramadhan. It was br. Yaaseen who saw the moon first. Insha'Allah we shall be praying our Taraweeh. The boat sailed the whole night.

Friday, 22nd Nov 1968

I took a bath in my cabin and changed my clothing. After fasting the whole day we did our Iftari in the evening. We reached the port of **Karachi** around 6.00pm. After praying our Maghrib salaah we prayed our Awwabin Salaah. We later had some food.

I saw that my Brother-in-Law, Ibrahim Bhai, My Mother, Masi (Ibrahim Bhai's Mother), Bibi Bahen Musa Essa, her 4 sons, and my nephew (My Sister's Son) Maqbool had come to the port to greet me. Both they and I were extremely happy to see each other.

Those of us (three sathis) with British Passports were allowed to go through Immigration without an issue. It was Br. Ishaq, Br. Ahmed Umarji and I got the permission to go through. It was around 8.30pm when my mother, the boys and I came out.

We went to Makki Masjid with my brother-in-law, Ibrahim Bhai and performed our Tarawih there. We met Karachi's Amir Sb., Br. Yamin Sb. He listened to our plight very intently and comforted us with his heartfelt condolences.

He recalled to us an incident where Hazarat Abdullah-bin-Zabir R.A entered Masjid-e-Nabwi to see our Beloved Prophet, Hazarat Nabi-Karim Muhammad S.A.W, in a state where his hair was dishevelled and his face seemed sad. On seeing him in such a state our Beloved Prophet S.A.W asked what seems to be the matter? He replied my father became shahid in the battle of Uhad and I have 7 sisters who are yet to be married off. On hearing this beloved Prophet S.A.W said shall I tell you how Allah S.W.T treated your dear father. Hazarat Zubair R.A said please do. The Prophet S.A.W said Allah S.A.W met your father without any veil between them and said Zabir R.A ask whatever you desire. Zabir R.A said please bestow me with life again so that I may say to those in the world that those who gain martyrdom in the path of Allah and tell them how you would greet them without there being a veil between you and them. Allah S.W.T replied that it is not our practise to return those who have died back to earth. However, I (Allah S.W.T) can let them know. On hearing this Hazarat Zabir R.A became very happy because he knew what Allah S.W.T said will remain for evermore. The following Ayaats were then revealed in support of what Allah S.W.T had promised. The closet meanings of the verses

revealed are: 'Those who become martyrs in the cause of Allah S.W.T, do not call them dead, as they are still alive and are provided rizk continually. On hearing this story we too became very elated and ecstatic. We sat with the Amir Sb. for a while and later asked for his leave.

We then went to buy some fruit for those sathis who were still remaining on the boat. One local sathi paid for the fruit despite our strong insistence to pay for it. He also made arrangements for our breakfast, again he did not take no for an answer. The local brother is quite elderly and frail but Alhamdulillah he has great concern for the work of Jamaat. On recalling the events of the Baroda Ijtima there were some (non-muslims) who wanted to stop the Ijtima from taking place. They insisted that that if they were to follow similar arrangements to those followed by the Kawi Ijtima then they will give full support and assistance. Once agreed, they then ordered others to meet all the needs requested. At that Ijtima approx 4000 to 4500 sathis came out in Jamaat, together with a high number of Jinns. It was the first time that the Jinns had come out into Jamaats.

The brother arrived with the breakfast so Hakim Sb, Br. Hanif Musa Sb and I went to Musa Bhai's (my brother) house. Br. Ishaq and Br. Ibrahim Mohammed (my Brother in Law) went to the ship to hand over the food to the other sathis and returned back at around 11.00pm. Thereafter, Br. Ishaq and Br. Ahmed Umarji went to bed. Later my cousin Br. Ismail Haji Umarji arrived with Br. Ghulam Rasool (Darji) and whilst they were there Br. Yusuf (my Mumbai Boss's Brother in Law) came. We talked a while but he then left with Br, Ghulam Rasool.

Br. Ibrahim Mohammed, Br. Ismail Umarji, my mother, masi, Bahen Bibi and I sat up late talking through the whole night. We later woke up other sathis for their Shehri around 4.30am. We finished Shehri around 5.00am and went to a local masjid for our Fajar salaah at 5.45am. After Fajar, Br. Ishaq and Br. Ismail went to the Makki Masjid and we went home and waited for Br. Yusuf and Br. Omar to arrive. We waited till 8.15am for their arrival but they never came. We then went off with Br. Ghulam Rasool to Br. Yusuf's house. There we learnt that Br. Yusuf went over to Br. Omar's house after Shehri. We also learnt that Br. Yusuf went to Br. Omar's house with his son Abdul Razzak. At Br. Omar's house we learnt that he went off to Br. Musa Essa's house. We however took the opportunity to meet Br. Omar's household. As we sat there Br. Yusuf arrived. We, Br. Ibrahim, Br. Ahmed and I went to Sister Hurbai's (my maternal niece) house with Hanif and Usman. My eyes welled up on seeing Sister Hurbai's amputated leg (this was following a train accident she had).

May Allah S.W.T give her comfort and strength. We then went to my sister Zulekha's house. I met her there and we talked a lot. We later begged her leave.

As we were waiting for a bus, we met Asmal Ali Dada. I was so pleased to see him. He took us to his house where we stopped for a short while. I borrowed 20 Rupees from Bibi Bahen to see my brother's Ustaad (Molvi Saheb). I was pleased to see him but later around 12.00 noon begged his leave to go to Makki Masjid. On the way we paid a visit to Br. Alibhai Dhola's (of Kantharia) house. I saw Br. Hakim Sb. there. From there we went off to Makki Masjid. Zohar time had been established, so we made our Wudhu and entered the Masjid. On entering the Masjid we noticed that Br. Yaaseen and Br. Hanif had been waiting for us. They arrived from the boat since 11.00am. We talked a while and prayed our Zohar salaah. We then went off to Br. Hafiz Ismail's house. There we met his children and then begged their leave and returned back to the Masjid. Br. Ishaq then asked us to go and get food for the Iftari. We went and returned with the food and prayed our Asar salaah on our own as the Jamaat had already taken place.

On completing our salaah we went to the docks to board our boat, which sailed off at 6.00pm for Mumbai.

Before we reached Karachi one passenger recounted a very strange incident that is noteworthy. He stated that a bus was travelling in Punjab and all of a sudden saw a person in the roadway beckoning the bus driver to stop. The bus driver stopped and said to the conductor open the door for the passenger to board. The conductor opened the door as instructed. However, on opening the door he noticed that there was no one there on the road. The conductor said that there is no one there and that the driver should drive on. To his astonishment he saw that the driver had slumped over the steering wheel dead. Other passengers had also witnessed the man in the road way hailing the bus to stop. Others in the bus understood that it was Malikul-Maut (Angel of Death) who wanted take the driver's Ruh only. His purpose was to take the driver's Ruh only and to ensure that no harm come to anyone else. It then dawned on us as to how Allah S.W.T works in mysterious ways. We recalled that whenever a Jamati sathi, brother Amir Bafter, went out in the path of Allah S.W.T he used to make dua to Allah S.W.T that Ya-Allah do not return me to my family. On one occasion when he went to Jamaat in Urdan, Allah S.W.T did accept his dua.

Despite it being the winter season in Karachi it is quite hot here.

A few words about Karachi

The roads in Karachi are 3rd class and its population quite dense and congested. Everything seems very expensive, One dozen Bananas 1 rupee 14 annas, one dozen Apples 6 rupees. Even the clothes here are very expensive.

The working class is extremely poor. Those amongst the ranks of the Police, Customs Officers etc are accustomed to taking bribes. I was quite saddened to see such practices. May Allah S.W.T give them all Hidayat (Aameen). The common culture amongst the masses is quite devoid of deen. Amongst the poor there is practise of taking drugs, alcohol etc. Most of them are earning a living through operating Horse carts, Camel carts, Scooters, Rickshaws, Taxis and Privates Buses.

Saturday, 23rd Nov 1968

We met Rander Madrassa Hussaniya's Moulana Ismail Ahmed Mulla on the boat. He is one of Madrassa's management members. He led our Taraweehs and our Salaats.

Sunday, 24th Nov 1968

It is quite hot today and the boat is still far from the Indian coast.

Monday, 25th Nov 1968

A notice had been placed of us reaching **Mumbai** around 7.00am but there is no sign of us getting there yet. At around 8.00am we can just about see Coloba in the distance. At around 9.30am they threw the mooring ropes for the boat to dock. As the tide is low we cannot yet moor until 1.00pm, as this is when the tide is expected.

Special Forces from the customs boarded the boat. They were checking the goods that seemed suspicious to them. They sealed the goods that they wanted to check later. They were particularly after gold, silver and contraband goods.

The boat docked at exactly 1.45pm at Victoria Locks. At around 1.55pm the Immigration Officers boarded. Our Jamaat sathis came up from the lower decks with their passes. Allah S.W.T came to our aid and we came out from the customs quite quickly. We made duaas outside and reached the Khokha Bazaar's Masjid. I have become so engrossed in activities that I do not have sufficient time to write my diary.

Tuesday, 26th Nov 1968

We worked in the 3rd street of Kamathipura's Masjid and stayed the night there. I was pleased to read the letters that I had received from the UK.

Wednesday, 27th Nov 1968

We have planned to work in the evening in the Mehndi Masjid, which is located near the Mumbai Central Station. From there we plan to set off for Navsari and from there we shall spend 2 days in Malekpur and from there Surat and then off to Nandewar and then Bharuch. From there we shall go to Kantharia, Manubar, Karmad, and Valan. From there we shall go to Ahmadabad and the Vadodra. From there we hope to reach Delhi.

It is quite hot in Mumbai.

Late in the evening Br. Alauddin Chaiwala took us to meet Hazarat Qari Taiyyab Sb. He is extremely frail. He listened to our Karguzari and was quite sympathetic to what he had heard. He comforted us with the benefits of the struggles faced in this work. He made lots of duaas for us. He stated that the struggles faced in this work are far more superior to struggle faced in the Jihad requiring the use of arms. It carries much greater rewards.

End of Dated Account in the Diary

Some Noteworthy Advice and Nasiyyat written in the Diary

There are occasions when you need to kindle the fire and there are occasions when you need to extinguish the fire.

Insan (Mankind) needs to think before he utters anything. He needs to weigh up before he says anything.

Nowadays Insan is putting a lot of effort into earning his daily bread. Bread is made with the use of two hands, saying everything has pairs. Deen and Duniya is such a pair as is the sky and earth.

Allah S.W.T has given Insan a vessel. He either fills it with food or with gold and precious stones. Insan has been given that choice. A Heart is a Vessel.

Duniya is an example of a dirty vessel. Allah S.W.T has given free will to man. Shaiytan's betrayal is to put man in a quandary and confusion so that he fails to understand the true purpose behind Allah S.W.T sending him to Earth. If Allah S.W.T were for you to worship him alone then the whole of his creation is doing this

anyway. A son has a right over his father's wealth, as his heir. And for this reason Allah S.W.T sent his beloved Prophet Hazarat Nabi-e-Karim Muhammad S.AW as a Prophet for the Mankind. As such for this reason there is a special Allah S.W.T's love for the believers when compared with others in the Mankind.

What is Kufr & What is Islam

Kufr is where there is nothing but talk of Kufr only. Islam is what our beloved Prophet Hazarat Nabi-e-Karim Muhammad S.AW has brought us. It is where one has true and unquestionable belief: (1) Imaan (Faith) in Allah S.W.T's existence (2) in Allah S.W.T's Angles (3) in Allah S.W.T's Revelations through his Books (4) in Allah S.W.T's sent Messengers (5) in the existence of the Day of Judgement (6) in Good or Poor Taqdir (Fate) and (7) in Death.

Benefits of Durood Sharif

On the day of Jumma between Asr and Maghrib recite Durood Sharif 80 times, as Allah S.WT will erase 80 years of Sins.

Account about Jannat

Is a Mansion where there are over 100 stations. Between each station there is a distance that where if an Arab stallion would gallop at its fastest speed would take him over 500 years to reach. The mansion has musk filled between its gold and silver brickwork and has scent laden earth. The pebbles on its earth are scattered freely with Pearls and Gems. The utensils within the Mansion will be of Gold and Silver.

The highest station in Jannat is **Jannatul-Firdaus**. In there will be 4 streams. They will be of Milk, Honey, Liquor and Water. On top of Jannatul-Firdaus will be the Arsh (Throne) of Allah S.W.T. Our beloved Prophet Hazarat Nabi-e-Karim Muhammad S.AW said 'O my people seek from Allah S.W.T Jannatul-Firdaus. In Jannat there will be Palm Trees, whose seeds will be of Gold. The Faces of Jannatis will have a radiant glow about them, donning Beards and Moustaches. They will glow like the 14th Moon and the Stars in the Sky. The Hoors and Servants will surround them waiting to fulfil their each wish and command. The Hoors will be so beautiful that if an edge of their veil were to dangle on to the earth the Sun would fade in its glow. They will be served with an abundance of the food of their desires, immediately on their command. There will be a wide range of desserts and delicacies for them to enjoy. There will be no urge to pass urine or waste. On burping they will scent up their surroundings. Description of the bounties of Jannat is beyond Human Imagination. Allah S.W.T declares that the bounties of Jannat are such that no

eyes, nor ears, or any imagination has ever pondered or considered over. Above all one will get the Deedar of (Allah S.W.T's presence), which will cause the Jannatis to gain the Ecstasy of Allah S.W.T.

Account about Jahannam

What is Jahannam?

Jahannam is where there is nothing but blazing fire. This blaze is 70 times more intense than the blaze of the fire of this world. It is so deep that it would take a large boulder 70 years to reach its depth. It has been fanned for over 3000 years. It has become totally black. It is so fierce that over 70000 angles have restrained it with over 70000 chains. It will be inhabited by Snakes and Scorpions the size of Camels. Their venom will be so intense that its poisonous effect will not lessen for over 40 years. For food, there will be nothing but puss, blood and thorn laden cactus.

Deen and Duniya

One is dependent on oneself and the other on shariyat. That which requires dependence on following the shariyat is Deen. Seeking bodily pleasures causes Shaytan to gloat and seeking shariyat gains the pleasures of Allah S.W.T and his Prophet S.A.W. Worldly dependence causes bodily fulfilment. Acquiring and gaining activities that gains Allah S.W.T's pleasure becomes Deen. The minutest fulfilment of Shariyat is significantly greater than the entire world and its contents. The world power has no value before of Allah S.W.T. Those who are engaged in the Zikr of Allah S.W.T are like glittering stars.

If one who wears expensive clothing and is loaded with the wealth of this world, and is equipped with high intelligence, and has good oratory skills and worldly respect and power is not even equivalent to a wing of a mosquito in the eyes of Allah S.W.T. In comparison one is in ragged clothing, has no abode, he is in the eyes of Allah S.W.T is much respected as if he were the Moon and Shining Stars. He shines similar to those in the Halqas of Zikr and those engaged in the glorification of Allah S.W.T. Allah S.W.T's pleasure is in spending one's wealth, health and self being in his cause.

On disobedience of Allah S.W.T will cause the cactus tree to stifle our throats and for quenching of thirst will be absolutely boiling water. This will cause the lips to rupture and swell as broad as his chest. The boiling water will cause his entrails to spill out of his body and the pain will be totally unbearable. May Allah S.W.T bestow his mercy upon us from such calamities and give you and us the salvation from such Jahannam (Aameen).

Why is Taleem carried out

With focus on Allah S.W.T, to spend one's self and wealth in the cause of Allah S.W.T. and to learn Ilm (Islamic Knowledge) by coming out in the path of Allah S.W.T. All these are the ways of a Daaee (one who calls others to the ways of Allah S.W.T and our Prophet Nabi-e-Kareem Muhammad S.A.W).

There is a saying when wealth enters, enters complacency and one loses focus. To gain spirituality one should participate in Khankas.

Jamaats are Madrassas because one is engaged in Taleems. Here one gains knowledge and is engaged in Zikr. Those who walk with their bistras in the path of Allah S.W.T are putting all their belongings in the cause of Allah S.W.T. It is not the purpose of Jamaat to lecture others but to uplift every member of the humanity to become the Daaee of Allah S.W.T.

One of the biggest failings we have nowadays is that we neither sacrifice ourselves nor our wealth for Allah S.W.T's cause. For the sake of gaining Duniya we sacrifice both ourselves as well our wealth. Allah S.W.T has given us a lot of Duniya. The Duniya is spread over us and it has suppressed our Deen as a dead person is suppressed by the soil in his grave. No matter how hard the mankind tries one can never suppress Deen, it will always shine and will be supreme, Insha'Allah. Our life is eroding away from us and is following the path of Karoon, Nimrod and towards the ignorance of Abu-Jahal. Though they all knew but they chose not to believe. We are no different in that we believe but choose not to follow. There seems to be no difference between the Non-Believers and us (the Muslims). We therefore need to work very hard through the work of Deen and Daawat to ensure that we do not follow the ways of the Non-Believers. We must not follow the ways of animals, which the non-believers tend to adopt. Remember that upon death we shall all be made to stand before Allah S.W.T and give account of what we did in our life on earth. Animals will not be held to account before Allah S.W.T of their beliefs. It is well to remember that all aspects of our lives are nothing but temporary and in no way should this hamper our ultimate eternal life in the life hereafter.

Jamaat Route in India

Mumbai, Navsari, Malekpur, Surat, Bharuch, Nandewar, Manubar, Karmad, Valan, Ahmadabad, Baroda, Bhuj (Kutch), Palenpur, Ajmer, Jaipur, Delhi, Mewat, Nakpur, Jurehra, Jehmat, Hultana, Sehsan, Kuthor, Devband, Kutheshra and Sahranpur.

Note

The above account is from my father's diary (Late Haji Ibrahim Essa) that he wrote in Gujarati during the First ever UK Jamaat trip by road to India in Oct 1968.

The translation is done in memory of my late father (may Allah SWT be pleased with him and grant him and others who were in his Jamaat the highest station in Jannat-ul-Firdaus). May Allah SWT also include my dear mother (Late Hajyani Mrs. Bibi Ibrahim Essa) to join him in Jannat-ul-Firdaus, as without her support and sacrifice, my father's trip would not have been possible.

1st Ramadhan Hijri 1440 (6th May 2019)

Mohammed Iqbal Essa