

## Religious Seminaries in Pakistan

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### Abstract

The religious seminaries (Madaris)<sup>1</sup> of Pakistan have been a hot topic of discussion in the national and international media. These Madaris are reminiscent of the ancient education system of Islam. They attracted people's attention during the last two decades and especially after the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 incident of New York. Another aspect of interest was their role in the Islamic insurgence (*Jihad*) waged in various parts of the world particularly in Afghanistan and Kashmir. These institutions impart orthodox education based on centuries old syllabus called *Dars-i-Nizami*. The administrators are disinclined to any slight change in the contents of the syllabus thus bringing them to an open conflict with the modern education system and western culture. The Madaris have been divided on the basis of religious sects i.e. Shia, Sunni and *Ahl-i-Hadith*. Of them *Sunnis* are further splintered into many sub-sects such as *Deobandis*, *Brelvis*, etc. But their adherence to the primitive education, Jihad and abhorrence for the western civilization is almost the same.

Despite repeated reference to these Madaris, there are many misconceptions or disinformation about them. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to remove these misconceptions and present a true picture. Besides, historical perspective, vital statistics, curricula and problems and prospects have discussed in the paper in hand.

### A Perspective:

The Muslims are unanimous on the fact that the first Madrassa was established by the Holy prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) inside the Prophet's mosque in Madinnah.. a three feet high Plate form called "Suffah" was constructed in the centre of the Prophet's mosque where students sat on

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rough mats woven of date-palms and the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) used to teach them besides other teachers. It was a residential institution where free boarding and lodging facilities were provided to the seekers of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> As time passed on and Islam spread to various parts of the world, other areas followed the suit. Similar madaris were established Samarqand and Bukhara in central Asia and Timbuktu in Africa. The Madaris then proliferated to cities such as Baghdad, Basra, Kufa, Ghazni, Lahore, Multan, Deoband, Berali, Tehran and Damascus<sup>3</sup>

In the Indian subcontinent, the tradition of madaris was kept alive by successive Muslim dynasties ranging from Ghaznavids to Mughals. Nevertheless the British colonial power damaged the Muslim educational system in India, by taking several steps against them. The significant anti-madaris policy was that the properties donated by well-off Muslims to the seminaries were confiscated and no official grant was extended to them. This policy dried up a great source of income and the madaris were constrained to depend solely on donations from the faithfuls.<sup>4</sup> Muslim Ulama were in the front line of struggle against the British colonialism in India and they took active part in the 1857 war of Independence<sup>5</sup>. The repercussions of the war of Independence were quite severe for Muslims. Both modernist and traditionalist leaders and Ulama came up with their own response to the post-War of Independence conditions. The response of traditionalist ulama was:

“In the aftermath of the failed 1857 Revolt, the Indian ulema, after realizing that armed struggle was pointless, changed their focus, diverting their attention to the field of education by setting up scores of madaris. So, one could say that the madrasas shifted the struggle of the community from violent conflict to peaceful educational activism. The Ulama sacrificed themselves so as to keep the community alive and to maintain the tradition of religious knowledge, surviving on meager incomes and leading simple lives, without expecting worldly rewards. The madrasas that they established provided free education, which particularly helped the poor. The ulema decided that they would depend on community donations, and not on government funding so that they could

thereby retain their autonomy. They thus faced numerous hurdles, including financial, but yet carried on with their work with a sense of mission and dedication.”<sup>6</sup>

After ten years of the War of Independence, on May 30, 1867 A.D Mulana Mohammad Qasim Nanutwi founded a Dar-ul-Ulum at Deoband, District Saharanpur (U.P). It was a land mark decision. The Deoband seminary earned tremendous recognition from Muslims of India so much so that it became a brand name of Muslim educational system in the subcontinent.

Haji Sahib Turangzai established 100 religious seminaries at scattered places in the tribal belt and settled districts of NWFP. In order to provide financial assistance and patronage to these institutions, he constituted local community based organizations or committees. Besides imparting religious education, these madaris served as “training camps for fighters of Jihad-e-Azadi(Struggle for independence)”(Ref). The British Government was closely watching the progress of these seminaries. When people started sending their children to those madaris in a large number, the British Government felt threatened. They planned to establish parallel English education institutions. The task was assigned to Christians missionaries. Edwards Herbert played a key role in that regard. In recognition of his services, Edwards College was set up in Peshawar in 1901.<sup>7</sup>

With coming into existence of Pakistan in 1947, the madaris tradition was shifted to the nascent country. Though there were few madaris in the beginning but with the passage of time, the growth of seminaries picked up the pace. The author of Karak Madaris said:

“When the India sub-continent was partitioned into India and Pakistan in 1947, there were about 137 Dar-ul-Ullooms functioning in the areas that comprised Pakistan. Soon after the establishment of Pakistan, a repaid development took place and the number of such Madaris increased enormously because the very basis of the creation of Pakistan was the urge for a separate homeland for the Muslims where they could shape their lives according to Quran and Sunnah”<sup>8</sup>

### Vital Statistics:

It is very difficult to ascertain the exact number of Madaris in Pakistan. There are many reasons responsible for this lack of vital statistics including: i) There is no fool-proof arrangement on government level for registration/enlistment of Madaris ii) The statistics of those madaris which are affiliated to any of the five madrassah boards are available but then a large number of madaris are not affiliated to these boards either iii) Thousands of mosques all over Pakistan are running evening Quranic learning centres. They too are not included in the available lists.

The difference between the statistics can be judged from estimated given by three sources during July to October 2009.

- a) The Government of Pakistan conducted a survey in the beginning of 2009. The findings of this survey were provided to the print media in July 2009. According to the survey there were 16662 madaris all over the country out of which 4509 did not provide information to the survey teams. The following table shows the break up of those 12153 madaris who cooperated with enumerators :

Serial No.	Category	Number of students
1	Boys	4178
2	Girls	1929
3	Mixed	6046
TOTAL	---	12153

The survey revealed that there were 1.549 million students (both sexes) enrolled in these institutions. It also recoded the number of students in the inaccessible madaris as 0.450 million. As far as finances were concerned, only 11305 madaris provided their financial expenditure statements. These madaris spend

2.7235 billions Rupees annually but they declined to disclose sources of income.<sup>9</sup>

- b) Mr. Abrar Mustafa in his Urdu article titled” Reforms in Deeni Madaris: Reservations of Madaris Boards” published in August 2009 put the total number of Madaris as more than 18000.<sup>10</sup>
- c) The most authentic figure could be the one given by Pakistan’s Interior Minister Rahman Malik in response to a question in the national assembly on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009. He disclosed that there were 20,000 religious seminaries in the country. He told the lower house of the parliament that an umbrella organization namely Ittehad Tanzeemat-i-Madaris Pakistan (ITMP) embodies five madrassa boards. Of them Wifaqul Madaris controls over 12000 institutions while the remaining 8000 are controlled by other boards.<sup>11</sup>

d) As for division on the basis of jurisprudential schools and sectarianism, a survey conducted slightly before the 9/11 incident, gave the following percentage:

Province/Area	Deobandi	Brelvi	Ahle Hadith	Shias
Punjab	20	19	3.9	0.7
NWFP	21	1.05	0.16	0.06
Sind	7	2.02	0.19	0.33
Baluchistan	9	1.12	0.09	0.033
Azad Kashmir	9	0.6	0.06	Nil
Islamabad	2	0.06	Nil	1.2
Gilgit/Baltistan	2	1.2	0.89	0.37

The above table shows that the percentage of different schools of thoughts is Deobandis: 70%, Barelvis: 25% while Ahle hadiths and Shia form collectively 5%. of the total number.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the famous madaris of Pakistan are:

S.NO.	Name of madrassah	Place	S.NO.	Name of madrassah	Place
1.	Jamiah Faridiah	Islamabad	20	Darul Uloom	Saidu Sharif Swat
2.	Jamia Ashrafiyya	Lahore	21	Ahyaul Uloom	Timargara(Dir Lower)
3	Jamia Naeemiyya	Lahore	22	Dar-ul-uloom Rahmaniah	Dargai, Malakand
4	Madrassa Qasim-ul-Ulum	Lahore	23	Jamia Masjid	Faisalabad
5	Hizb-ul-Ahnaf	Lahore	24	Jamia Salfia	Faisalabad
6	Dar-ul-uloom-e-Sarhad	Peshawar	25	Dar-ul-uloom Karachi	Karachi
7	Jamiah Imdadul Uloom Al-Darvesh Masjid	Peshawar	26	Madrassa Arabia Islamia	Karachi
8	Markaz-e-Dar-ul-Qura	Peshawar	27	Dar-ul-uloom Amjadia	Karachi
9	Madrassa Arabiyyia Islamia	Gujranawala	28	Jamia Imamia	Karachi
10	Madrassa Nasrat-ul-uloom	Gujranawala	29	Madrassa-e-Arabia	Karachi
11	Dar-ul-uloom Haqaniyya	Charsada	30	Jamia Muhammadia	Jhung
12	Jamia Ahya-ul-uloom	Charsada	31	Dar-ul-uloom Taleem-ul-Quran	Rawalpindi
13	Jamia Islamia Pakistan	Charsada	32	Dar-ul-uloom Isalmiyya Matla-ul-uloom	Quetta
14	Khair-ul-Madaris	Multan	33	Dar-ul-Hadith Muhammadia	Multan
15	Jamia Hadiqa-tul-uloom	Peshawar	34	Jamia Taleemul Quran	Mardan
16	Jamia	Peshawar	35	Jamia	Karachi

	Ashrafiyya			Farooqiyya	
17	Dar-ul- uloom Haqaniyya	Akora Khattak Nowshihra	36	Jamia Al Muntazir	Lahore
18	Miraj-ul- uloom	Bannu	37	Jamiah Mansura	Mansura Lahore
19	Jamiah Tafheemul Quran	Mardan	38	Jamia Usmania	Peshawar

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### **Pakistani rulers and Madaris:**

The attitude of successive rulers of Pakistan towards Madaris and geo-political development in the region affected Madaris one way or the other. General Muhammad Ayub Khan (r. 1958-1969) had a very strange opinion about Madaris and people associated with them. He was of the view that of the graduates of madaris, very few find jobs as prayers leaders in mosques or teaching slots in their Alma matters. The rest join the “war-like semi-religious and semi-political parties”<sup>14</sup>. These activists then disturb peace all the time. Qudratullah Shahab who was much closed to General Muhammad Ayub Khan revealed that the General was extremely on the warpath against the religious seminaries. In the capacity Central Secretary of Education Government of Pakistan, Shahab tried to soften the anti-madaris viewpoint of General Muhammad Ayub Khan but to no avail. Shahab writes:

“In order to change the anti-madaris stance of General Muhammad Ayub Khan, I conducted a survey of all the madaris in Pakistan. Based on the findings of that survey, I wrote a detailed report. Besides other things, I highlighted the clash between madaris and modern educational institutions. Moreover; I also critically reviewed curricula taught in the seminaries. At the end, I submitted that report in the form of a summary to the forthcoming meeting of Central cabinet of Government of Pakistan. The cabinet did discuss the case but no decision was taken. General Muhammad Ayub Khan appreciated the report but asked me not to butt into that sensitive issue”<sup>15</sup>

During the rule of General Muhammad Yahya Khan (r.1969-71), an Education Commission headed by Air Martial Noor Khan published

its report which proposed some reforms in the system of madaris. The Noor Khan report recommended incorporation of modern subjects in the syllabi of Madaris. The revised syllabus aimed at producing scholars who are not only good Muslims but the ones well versed in science and technology. The Ulama of Pakistan discussed that report and presented their own suggestions. The Ulama proposals were published by Mufti Muhammad Shafi and Mulana Yousaf Benori in Karachi.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1970's, Politics seeped into the Madaris in reaction to socialist politics of Z.A. Bhutto (r. 1971-77) and others. From that time onward, these institutions have functioning as basis of political strength for various religio-political celebrities. Their political influence can be judged from the fact that one religious scholar and leader of a network of Madaris, Mulana Mufti Mahmood, became the Chief Minister of NWFP in 1970's. Similarly, in general elections of 2002, the coalition of religious parties Muthida Majlis-e-Amal(MMA) not only emerged second biggest party in the parliament but also formed government in the NWFP and Baluchistan provinces. More than half of the cabinet ministers in the provincial cabinet were graduates from Madaris. The same government completed its five-year term in 2007. In the successive parliamentary elections clerics have been making their way to the legislatures. Today the religious parties of Pakistan like *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Islam*, *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Pakistan*, *Jamiat-e-Islami*, *Jamiat Ahle Hadith* and *Tehreek Jafria* are deriving political strength from their own brand of Madaris.

The era of General Muhammad Ziaul Haq (r. 1977-88) was quite conducive for flourishing of religious seminaries. He started financing them from zakat fund. (Some points about zakat System) In the 1980's the people at the helm of affairs in Madaris started organizing their armed groups and after necessary military training dispatched them to Afghanistan. Naveed ahmad is of the view:

“Following the 1979 USSR invasion of Afghanistan, large sums of money was injected into Pakistani religious schools to educate Afghan children



growing up in refugee camps and brainwash them against the non-Muslim Soviet occupation of their land. Saudi Arabia and the U.S. were major suppliers of money. In Pakistan, it is also widely believed that even the syllabus preaching Jihad, under fire these days, was prepared in the U.S. in the Cold War era, long before it was taught in Pakistani seminaries.”<sup>17</sup>

After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, training camps reportedly crept along the southern borders of that war-torn country wherein religious enthusiasts from Pakistan and other Muslim countries were trained. The *Mujahideen* passed out from these camps spread all over the world especially in Asia, Middle East and Africa and waged holy war against rulers what they called "usurpers" and "Western Agents" especially those rulers supported by America.

Both Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif (during their tenures as Prime Ministers) adopted the policy of non interference in the affairs of religious seminaries. Interestingly Pakistan People's Party despite its secular stance in politics has been enjoying cordial relations with religious Madaris. Mr. Naseerullah Khan Babur Interior Minister in Benazir Government (1993-96) raised Taliban force in Afghanistan. The logistic and infrastructural support to Afghan Taliban can be judged from the details below:

“Babur set up an Afghan Trade Development Cell in within his ministry to coordinate with other ministries and cooperation on the road project. The Cell, in fact, became a source of considerable logistic and infrastructure support for the Taliban. The Pakistan Telecom set up a micro-wave telephone net work for the Taliban in Qandahar, which became a part of the Pakistan telephone grid. The paramilitary Frontier Corps were used to help the Taliban set up an internal wireless network for their commanders in the field. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and the air force sent in technicians to repair Qandahar Airport. Thus Babur had free hand to 'civilianize' the initial support to Taliban and that way the Taliban are called 'Babur Babies'”<sup>18</sup>

The military dictator General Pervez Musharraf (r. 1999-2008) initially supported Afghan Taliban and Madaris in Pakistan. However, the September 11, 2001 incident of New York and Washington DC and subsequent "War on Terrorism" led to the change of his Taliban policy. Yielding to US pressure, he not only disowned Afghan Taliban but took steps to tame Madaris in Pakistan. The enactment of Madaris Regulations law and ruthless operation at Lal Mosque Islamabad bear testimony to his major policy shift.

As a result of crushing defeat to Musharraf's allies in the February 2008 election, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) formed Government in the centre. The PPP Government retained almost all policies of General Pervez Musharraf especially the one pertaining to Madaris. During finalization of this paper, PPP Government was engaged with high ups of Madaris with an aim to agree on setting up of a Regulatory authority for Madaris

#### Administration of Madaris :

The religious seminaries in Pakistan are affiliated to either of the following Madaris boards called as *Wifaqs* (Federations):

- (i) Wifaqul Madaris (ii) Tanzeemul Madais (iii) Rabitatul Madaris (iv) Wifaqul Madaris(al-Salafiah) (v) Wifaqul Madaris(al-Shia). The affiliation of these Wifaqs to various schools of thoughts and sects is given in following table:

S.No	Name of wifaq	Affiliation
1	Wifaqul Madaris	Deobandis
2	Tanzeemul Madais	Brelvis
3	Rabitatul Madaris	Jamaat-e-Islami
4	Wifaqul Madaris(al-Salafiah)	Ahle-Hadees
5	Wifaqul Madaris(al-Shia).	Shias

### **Critical Review of Madaris' Role:**

Opinions vary on the role of Madaris. In the post-9/11, 2001 era, a debate started on national and international levels about the activities and the role being played by them. In the debate on madaris we come across three schools of thoughts namely pro-madaris, ant-Madaris and reformists. The views of pro-madaris school may be summarized as :

- i) The role of madaris in education poor masses is commendable. There can not be two opinions about the fact that children who neither can afford the mundane schooling nor have the opportunities to go to the madaris certainly sour the ranks of criminals.
- ii) These madaris are vital for maintaining Muslim identity and securing Islamic ideology the very basis of the creation of Pakistan. Keeping in view the existing economic inequality, the prevalent injustice, the institutionalized repression and oppression, the bludgeoning monster of parochialism, the flushing evils of regionalism and resurrecting devil of linguistic division, all threatening the integrity of the federation, these Madaris strengthen the spirit of religion which is the only binding factor.
- iii) The role played by the madaris during the freedom movement and the realization of the dream carving Pakistan can hardly be over-emphasized. The leaders and scholars produced by the madaris were in the vanguard of struggle for Pakistan
- iv) Madaris role in character building and bringing forth honest citizens can not be questioned. The selfless and devoted Muslims with unflinching faith, produced by the madaris, guide the masses selflessly during the period weal and woes in their daily life..<sup>20</sup>

However, alongside the above support for Madaris, there is no dearth of people who are extremely suspicious about their role. Following are ... (Write number) grey areas identified by various analysts:

- a) The deeni Madaris are owned and run by religious scholars who belong to different schools of Muslim thought. These do not teach unified syllabi and often these institutions are in to opposition to each other which, some times culminate in open conflicts and even blood shed. This phenomenon has a very negative impact on national unity and social integration.<sup>21</sup>
- b) The Madaris produce preachers and disputationists rather than unprejudiced scholars. These scholars spend all their life in the defense of their school of thought and consider it as service to Islam. The negative impact of this attitude is that they do not reconcile themselves to listen or comprehend any intellectual opinion other than their own. Their defensive system is activated against any voice of dissention and they organize a front against it. This attitude has resulted into severe sectarianism in our country<sup>22</sup>
- c) Many critics blame Madaris for promoting terrorism. According to them “many of the Madrassas have built extremely close ties with radical millitant groups, both inside and outside of Pakistan. In this capacity, they have increasingly played a critical role in sustaining the international terrorist network”.<sup>23</sup>

### **Curricula:**

The religious madaris in Pakistan follow a curriculum called “*Dars-e-Nizami*” . The title of the curriculum has been derived from the name of Indian curriculum expert Mulana Nizamuddin Sehavi(d. 1747 AD). The purpose of the Dars-i-Nizami was to come up with a blend of Islamic teachings with rational sciences so that the graduates become lawyers, judges and administrators. This curriculum has passed through many stages and many changes have been incorporated in it. The basic structure, however, remains the same.<sup>24</sup>

The Dars-e- Nizami course is spread over 8-year duration. The year-wise distribution of courses is given in the following table:

Year	Level	Courses/books included
First	Al Aamah	Naho-Mir (Grammar) + Irshad-us-Sarf (Grammar) + Ilm-us-Sarf (Grammar) + Traeeqatul Asriyyah (First book of Arabic) + Noor-ul-Ezah(Fiqh) + Jamalul Quran (Learning Recitation)
Second	-do-	Hidayat-un-Naho (Grammar) + Ilmul Seegha (Grammar) + Mukhtar al Qudoori(Fiqh) + Zad-ut-Talibeen(Hadith) + Muallimul Insha(Arabic) + Qirat-ur-Rashid( Arabic literature) + sehlul Adab (Arabic literature)
Third	Al-Khassah	Kaafiah (Grammar) + Riaz-us-Saliheen Part-1 (Hadith) + Usool al Shashi(Principle Islamic Fiqh) + Sharh-e-Al-Tahzeeb-e-Mantiq (logic) + Mirqaat (Logic) + Esa Ghooji (Logic) + Kanz al daqayeq (Fiqh) + Nafhatul Arab (Arabic literature)
Fourth	-do-	Sharh-e-Jami (Grammar) + Riaz-us-Saliheen Part-2 (Hadith) + Noor-ul-Anwaar (Principles of Islamic Fiqh) + Qutbi (Logic) + Maqamaat-e-al Hariri (Arabic poetry)
Fifth	Al-Aaliah	Mukhtasarul Maani(Arabic language learning) + Hidayah al Salah(Fiqh) + Hisami(Fiqh)+ Mukhtaratul Adab (Arabic literature)+Saba Mualaaqat(Arabic literature) + Aasaar-us-Sunan(Hadith)
Sixth	-do-	Deewa-e-Hamassah (Arabic poetry) + Jalalain part-1 (Meaning and commentary of Quran) + Hidayah al Nikah (Fiqh) + Fauzul Kabeer (Meaning and commentary of Quran)+Moheet al dayerah(Arabic poetry) + Masnad Imam Aazam (Hadith) + Siraji(Inheritance) + Haitul Wasta, Fehmul Falkiyat (Astronomy) + Tawzeeh-o-Talweeh (Fiqh) + Sharh Aqayed (Beliefs)
Seventh	Al-alamiah	Beezavi (Meaning and commentary of Quran) + Jalalain part-2 (Meaning and commentary of Quran) + Mishkath (Hadith) + Hidayah Buyoo-o-Shuffah(Fiqh) + Nahbatul Fikr (Principles of Hadith) +
Eighth	-do-	Dauratul Hadees (All six authentic books of Hadith) + Al Tahavi (hadith and hanafite Fiqh) <sup>25</sup>

The break up of 54 books/subjects<sup>26</sup> prescribed for 8 years is such that 16 are about Arabic grammar and literature, 13 about fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), 13 pertaining to Hadith (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), 4 about meaning and commentary of the Holy Quran, 01 on Techniques of recitation, 01 on beliefs, 4 on logic, 2 on Astronomy. The books/subjects on Arabic grammar and literature outnumber the other categories. However, it is interesting to note that even after spending eight years in the system, the graduates can hardly speak or write Arabic. The reason might be lack of tools required for language learning and writing skills. The worldly disciplines included in the curriculum are logic and Astronomy. These might have been relevant subject at the time of launching the dares nizami syllabus but in the modern times, they need to be replaced by contemporary sciences. The subjects/books conspicuous by absence are History, Comparative study of religions, learning of languages, Social Sciences, Politics, International affairs and subjects about income generation

### **Students' Intake:**

Students hailing from extremely poor families turn to the religious seminaries because they offer free education and boarding. Their families cannot support themselves, let alone pay for their children's education in expensive private schools. Almost all these Madaris depend on donations from philanthropists and organizations both in inland and abroad. Traditionally, a large number of students come from Afghanistan followed by Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)<sup>27</sup> and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) of Pakistan.

A regional break up of the 746 passed out graduates in 2009 from Jamiah Tafheemul Quran Mardan amply illustrates the phenomenon:

Area	Number of Students	Area	Number of Students	Area	Number of Students
Afghanistan	231	Buer	8	Batagram	1
Bajur Agency	95	Mardan	63	Kohat	2
Muhmand Agency	4	Swabi	5	Karak	7
Khyber Agency	3	Nowshehra	4	Bannu	2
Dir	235	Charsadda	4	Baluchistan	5
Swat	36	Peshawar	12	Abbottabad	2
Malakand	8	Chitral	7	Mansehra	12
TOTAL <sup>28</sup>					746

The Mohtamim (Rector) of Darul Uloom Haqqania Akora Khattak (Nowshehra) disclosed that he taught 15000 Afghani students between 1980 and 2000 He said that his pupils occupied top slots in the Taliban Government in Afghanistan. He took pride by saying “The holy warriors (Taliban) rate me no less than their Amirul Momineen Mullah Muhammad Umar”<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to remove the misconceptions about Madaris floating in domestic and international media. The historical perspective, vital statistics, curricula and problems and prospects have been discussed in the preceding pages. The setting up of Madaris is an established tradition of Muslim Ummah that can be traced back to the era of Prophet Muhammad (PBUOH). In the undivided India, independent Madaris recorded a mushroom growth due to withdrawal of patronage by the British colonial rulers from the Muslim educational institutions. After partition of India, the Deoband seminary became a model for the prospective Madaris both in India and Pakistan.

The non-availability of accurate statistics about Madaris has been a complex problem over the years. No reforms package or developmental programme can be implemented effectively without reliable statistical data. It is therefore incumbent upon the Government of Pakistan to conduct a census of

the Madaris before embarking on any reform strategy. The Madaris people need to extend full cooperation to any such effort as it is also in their own interest.

The attitude of successive rulers of Pakistan towards Madaris has been influenced by their personal liking/disliking or pressure from international quarters. Ever since the creation of Pakistan in 1947 till the USSR invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistani rulers did not interfere with the affairs of Madaris. General Ziaul Haq (R. 1977-1988), however, established friendly relations with religious seminaries in order to solicit their cooperation in the indirect war against Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan. It is generally believed that the United States of America supported the pro-Madaris policy of Ziaul Haq. The incident of 9/11 in 2001 changed the whole scenario altogether and the old friends including Jehadi elements and Madaris were labeled as terrorists by USA and their allied rulers in Pakistan. General Musharraf (r. 1999-2008) decided to deal with the Madaris with iron hand. His anti-Madaris policy too had the blessings of USA. During his reign, Madaris Reforms Ordinance was promulgated and parleys for devising of modalities to implement the subject law were underway when Musharraf resigned in 2008. The Asif Ali Zardar-led PPP Government retained the Madaris policy of Musharraf but with a different approach. They not only continued negotiations with Ithehad Tanzeemat-e-Madaris Pakistan but also agreed to incorporate fundamental changes in the MRO. Nevertheless the wave of violence and military operations against the insurgents has pushed the Madaris reforms programme to the back burner

In Pakistan, there exist two extreme schools of thoughts as far as advantages or disadvantages of Madaris are concerned. The Madaris are playing a significant role in promotion of literacy and religious education without any financial assistance from Government. This role should be appreciated by the Government and society at large. However, the Madaris people should realize that their system, curriculum, approach and other aspects leave ample room for improvement. They should reconcile themselves with the fact that revisiting



their approach and incorporate changes in the system have become order of the day.

### End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Madrassah is a genuine Arabic formation. It is derived from the radical' d-r-s. The second form of verb, *darasa*, used without a complement meant, "to teach law", "to read", "to study", *tadris*, its verbal noun (*masder*), meant "the teaching of law", the function as well as the post of professor of law; the plural, *tadaris*, or "professor of law", was of later development, when the holding of several professorships of by one doctor of the law became a common practice. The term *dars*, means "a lesson or lecture on law"; *Madaris*, the active participle, means "the professor of law".<sup>7</sup>

The origin of the term *madrassa* has been much debated, but there is evidence that the term was used in the eastern Iranian area as early as the late 9<sup>th</sup> century. It is also uncertain that when the *madrassa* came to be associated with its characteristic architectural form, a rectangular courtyard with a broad arched area (*iwan*) centered on each side and one or two stories of small student cells occupying the remainder of the interior wall's space. This form, considered in the light of certain texts, has given rise to the hypothesis that the *Madrassa* may ultimately derive from a Buddhist monastic model.

When a particular room was set apart for teaching purpose in a mosque, this was often called a *madrassa*. For example six of the Damascus *Madaris* were functioning in the Umayyad mosque. The *Madaris* were often built close beside the large mosque so that they practically belong to them. This was the case in Makkah. The name was decided by the main object of the institution and the special style of the building. Similarly the name *Jamea* was only given if the Friday services were held in it. (Religious *Madaris* in District Karak, MA thesis Pakistan Study Centre University of Peshawar

2009. Also see Muslim Sajjad and Saleem Mansoor, *Deeni Madaris Ka Nizam-e-Taleem*, Islamabad: Institute of policies studies 1993, P.118. S. N. Al Attas, *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education*, Jeddah: King Abdul Aziz. University, 1977, p. 48. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol.9, "Madrassah", by Richard .W. Bulliet London: Collier Macmillan Publisher, P.77.)

<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Zaid Islamic centre, University of Peshawar, Deeni Madaris Ki Jamea Report, Islamabad: Govt Printing Office, 1998, P.2. The writer visited the prophet's mosque i.e. masjid-e-Nabvi at Saudi Arabian city of Madinah in December 2006 as part of the pilgrimage. The Suffah has been preserved. It is adjacent to the tomb of Holy prophet Muhammad(Peace be upon him).

<sup>3</sup> Habibullah Beg, "Madaris in Pakistan", Institute of Regional Studies, Peshawar, 2009, p.1.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Mian Siddiqi, "*Islami Riasat Ki Zamadari Aur Deeni Taleem*" (unpublished) Allama Iqbal Open university Islamabad, 2000, p.2

<sup>5</sup> War of Independence.

<sup>6</sup> Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's *Din-o-Shariat: Din-e Islam Ka Ek Fikri Mutala'* Urdu('Religion and Divine Law: An Intellectual Study of Islam' translated into English by: *Yoginder Sikand*) Al-Risala Publishers New Delhi, 2002 p.74-

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Nasir" Haji Sahib Turangzai: Ek tareekh Saz Kirdar" in the monthly *Tarjumanul Quran* Lahore, October, 2008, pp. 78-79

<sup>8</sup> Irfan Ahmad, *Religious Madaris in Karak* , MA thesis, Pakistan Study Center, University of Peshawar. 2007, p.1

<sup>9</sup> The Daily *Jang*, Rawalpindi, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2009

<sup>10</sup> The Daily *Jang*, Rawalpindi 91th August 2009

<sup>11</sup> The Daily *Dawn*, Islamabad, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009

- <sup>12</sup> Dr. Fakhr-ul-Islam , “Religious Madaris: A Review”, in the Urdu monthly *Dawah*, Dawah Academy, International Islamic University Islamabad, October 2002, p.36
- <sup>13</sup> Irfan, opcit
- <sup>14</sup> Qudratullah shahab,” Sadar ayub Khan: Taleem aur Tulaba” in the *Taleem Islami Tanzur main* vol: 6, Institute of policy Studies, Islamabad, 1987, p.167
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp. 167-69
- <sup>16</sup> Muhammad Mian Siddiqi, “opcit, pp. 7-8
- <sup>17</sup> Naveed Ahmad Madaris in the CACI Analyst available at <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/3368> (Accessed on 07-10-2009)
- <sup>18</sup> Pervez Kahn and Fazli Rahim, *Talibanization of Pakistan(A Case Study of TNSM)*, Pakistan Study Centre University of Peshawar 2008,P.65
- <sup>19</sup> Fakhr-ul-Islam , “Religious Madaris: A Review”,opci. Pp.38-39
- <sup>20</sup> Muhammad Tariq,”Do We Need Madaris?” in the daily *Frontier Post*, Peshawar, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2000
- <sup>21</sup> Prof. Altaf Ahmad, “Religious Schools” in the *Daily Frontier post*, Peshawar, 13-11-2000
- <sup>22</sup> Khurshid Nadeem Column “Islami Nazriyati Council Aur Ulama” in *Daily Jang Rawalpindi*, 25-11-2008 p. J
- <sup>23</sup> Robert Rooney” Reforming Pakistan’s Educational system: the challenge of the madrassa: in the *Journal of social, Political and economic studies*” fall 2003, vol:28 No. 3 p. 261
- <sup>24</sup> Institute of policy Studies, *Taleem Islami Tanazur main*,”Deeni Madais ka Nizam-e-Taleem, Islamabad, 1987, pp. 35-36
- <sup>25</sup> Mulana Gohr Rahman, *Jamiah Islamiah Taheemul Quran Ka Taruf aur Mukhtasar Tareekh*, Maktaba TafheemulQuran Mardan, 2009,p. 12(Also see Curriculum drase nizami by Wifaqul Madaris Multan Pakistan and Mufti Ghulam-ur-Rahman *Daleel*, Jamiah Usmania Peshawar Cantt

Pakistan, ND, pp. 20-23, Curriculum drase nizami by Rabitalul Madaris Lahore Pakistan).

<sup>26</sup> Following is brief introduction of some authors of various book included in Darse Nizami:

- Tafseer Jalalain (Authors: AH Jalaluddin Muhammad Bin Ahmad al Mahalli was born in Cairo (Egypt) in 791 AH and died in 864 AH. . The other author Abdur Rahman Jalaiddin al Sayuti born in Sayut (Ggypt) on First rajab 849 AH and died 19 Jamdul Awwal 911 AH.
- Tafseer Tafseer Bezavi (Author: Abul Khair Abdullah Nasiruddin. Born in Beza (Persia). Date of birth not known. Died in 685 AH
- Tafseer Fauzul Kabeer (Author: Shah Waliullah. Born in Delhi 1703 AD at Delhi (India) and died in 1763 AD)
- Mukhtasar al Tahavi (Author: Abu jafar Ahmad Bin Muhammad, born in 238 AH in Taha (Egypt) and died in 321 AH
- Mishkatul Masbeeh (Author: Abu Abdullah Muhammad. Date of birth not known. He died 748 AH
- Mukhtasar al Qudoori (Author: Abul Husain Ahmad Qudoori. Born in 362 AH at Baghdad (Iraq)
- Hidaya (Author: Abul Hassan Ali bin Abi Bakar. Born in 544 AH in Rashdan (Samarkand). Died in 593 AH
- Kanz al Daqayeq (Author: Abul Barakat Abdullah. Born in Nasaf (Tranoxiana)
- Noor al Ezah (Author: Abul Ikhlas Hassan. Born in 994 AH at Ablola (Egypt). Died in 1059 AH.
- Hisami (Author: Abu Abdullah Muhammad. Born in Farghana. Date of birth and death not known.
- Usool al Shashi (Author: Ishaq Bin Ibraheem al Shashi. Born in 275 AH in Shash (Samarkand) in and died in 325 AH

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- Noorul Anwar(Author: Ahmad Bin Abu Saeed was born in 1048 AH at Amethi(India) and died in 1130 AH

(For the above introduction, the writer has consulted a book, Muhammad Hanif Gangohi, *Halaat Mussanifeen Darse Nizami*, Darul Ishaat Karachi, 2000AD, pp. 27-178)

<sup>27</sup> The Federally Administered Tribal Areas(FATA) is a special; administrative unit under the Government of Pakistan. It is spread over an area of 27220 Sq KMs and an estimated population of 3.8 millions. The whole belt borders with Afghanistan. The geographical arrangement of the seven Tribal Areas in order from north to south is: Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan, South Waziristan. The geographical arrangement of the six Frontier Regions in order from north to south is: Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Dera Ismael Khan. Agencies are further divided into Assistant Political Agencies, subdivisions, and tehsils.

<sup>28</sup> Mulana Gohr Rahman, Opcit , p.6

<sup>29</sup> Interview of Mulana Samiul Haq published in the Daily *Frontier Post* Peshawar, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2000