



**THE DEVIANCE  
OF THE  
BID'AH  
'KHAANQAHS'**

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# **THE GRIEVOUS ERRORS OF KHAANQAH AKHTARI AND OTHER SIMILAR KHAANQAHS**

## ***SEEKING THE LIMELIGHT***

Promoting itself to be in the limelight which is in total conflict with the spirit which should imbue a khaanqah, and which is in diametric contradiction of the attitude of *Ikhfaa' and Goomnaami (concealment and being unknown)* which are among the fundamental constituents of *Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah (Beautiful moral character)* for which Khaanqahs had been established by the Auliya, the institution in Azaadville, dubbing itself 'khaanqah akhtari', advertises such of its activities which are in stark conflict with the *Maqaasid (Objectives)* of Tasawwuf which are supposed to be the profession of a khaanqah.

Among the advertised activities which are in total negation of the life of a khaanqah, the following are cause for lament:

## **BOOTLICKING THE PUBLIC – CANVASSING FOR MUREEDS**

Appealing to the public to participate in its programmes. This is absolutely revolting for a khaanqah and for personnel who operates a khaanqah. It portrays total lack of *ghairat* of the shaikh operating the khaanqah which is nothing but a 'khaanqah' in name.

The Imaani *ghairat* (*honour*) of a genuine Shaikh of Tasawwuf does not tolerate fishing for mureeds. The Mashaikh are extremely averse and critical of a Shaikh who fishes for mureeds. The motive for increasing the circle of mureeds is *nafsaani*. It is motivated by *hubb-e-jah* (*love for name and fame*) and *hubb-e-maal* (*love for wealth*).

It is this despicable love which has ruined all the shaikhs and their khaanqahs of this era. It is this evil of *hubb-e-dunya* which prevents them from proclaiming the *Haqq* and which constrains them to conceal the *Haqq* or to deceptively adorn it with the inspirations whispered to them by shaitaan and the nafs. Rasulullah (Sallallahu

alayhi wasallam) said: “*The love of this dunya is the root of every evil.*”

Whilst the profession of the genuine Mashaaiikh of genuine khaanqaahs was always the effort to expel the love of the dunya from the hearts of the mureedeen, the emphasis today of the shaikhs and their khaanqaahs exercises is the very opposite. There is no resemblance between these khaanqaahs of today and the Khaanqaahs of the true Mashaaiikh of Tasawwuf.

Since the khaanqah akhtari has taken the liberty of misconstruing Allaamah Sha'raani's statement pertaining to thikr majaalis, we emphasize that the sheikh of this khaanqah in particular, makes an indepth study of Allaamah Sha'raani's kitaab, *Tambeehul Mughtarreen*, as well as his other Kutub on the subject of Tasawwuf. If he accepts this *naseehat*, studies the Kitaab with *ikhlaas* and with the *niyyat* of understanding the brazen deviation of his khaanqah operation, he shall not fail to discern the lamentable folly of his methodology which is the very antithesis of Tasawwuf and in total

conflict and nugatory of the *Maqsad* of Tasawwuf and the purpose of a khaanqah.

For the edification of all the shaikhs or so-called shaikhs of today's so-called khaanqahs, we mention here some *naseehat* of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) of the 10<sup>th</sup> Islamic century. In *Tambeehul Mughtarreen*, the venerable Allaamah states:

*“My Ghairat-e-Imaani has constrained me to write such a kitaab in which I make known those signs of Akhlaaq-e-Muhammadi (the Moral attributes of excellence of our Nabi – Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) which have been eliminated from the Ulama-e-Zaahir and Ulama-e-Baatin of this age. Therefore, this Kitaab is equally beneficial for every Faqeeh and Sufi. No one is independent of studying it. ....*

*What relationship does the haal (spiritual and moral condition of excellence and perfection) of these Mashaaiikh (of former times) have with the mashaaiikh (of this tenth century) who journey from Misr or Hijaaz or Shaam to Room and Iraq? They come requesting from the kings estate and status whereas they had ample means of sustainment in their homelands.*

*For them it was appropriate to have refused any gifts from a king even if he presents it of his own accord.....*

*It is known that the very first step of the Mureed in Tareeqat (Tasawwuf) is to eliminate his wealth from his possession and to cast it in the ocean of despair.”*

Commenting on the putrid state of the crank sufis, Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) says:

*“Some of them link up with such people (i.e. crank shaikhs) who have not journeyed even a single step in Tareeqat. They swot of some words about fana and baqa and some shat-hiyaat (profane words of jaahil sufis) which have no support in either the Qur'aan or Hadith. Then they don a jubbah (cloak of the sufis) and an amaamah. Then they tour the lands of Room, etc. making a show of austerity and silence whilst expecting gifts from the rulers. Generally, a stipend is fixed for them (by the Sultans).*

*Thus, in this manner do they fill their bellies with haraam for they have acquired such wealth from the rulers by deception.”*

Unfortunately, this is precisely the methodology of today's shaikhs. To promote their khaanqaahs. They tour the country and even foreign countries ostentatiously projecting their thikr majaalis to impress and rope in mureeds. Their public thikr majaalis and halqah thikr sessions are the chimera with which they deceive people. They have cronies who prowl around like wolves roping in mureeds for the sheikhs. Some of their moron khalifahs smoke, use profanities and even four-letter vituperations, and have no regard for even Jamaat Salaat, leave alone the Sunnah in their everyday life activities.

Some of these moron, vile khalifahs are even paedophiles and indulge in sodomy even inside the Musjid in the auspicious month of Ramadhaan, in I'tikaaf during the last Ten glorious days and nights. They seek out deceptive ways for communications with female 'mureedahs'. Invariably they become entrapped in acts of moral turpitude and even zina with their 'mureedahs'.

To enable themselves to maintain *langar khaanahs* (public kitchens), and to indulge in

sumptuous feasting and merrymaking, the shaikhs of our time bootlick and flatter the wealthy fussiaaq traders. They stay in their khaanqah business with their ostentatious public 'thikr majaalis' to advertise the idea of their 'piety' and having attained lofty spiritual ranks. All of this is to impress the wealthy class to ensure a regular flow of funds to sustain their wasteful and merrymaking khaanqah operations in the name of Tasawwuf.

In this manner they consume haraam, feed their mureeds and others whom they rope in with haraam thereby destroying their dunya and their Aakhirat. Whilst the Sunnah *Tareeq* of all the Auliya was austerity and extreme frugality, the sheikhs of today have destroyed themselves and others with their gluttonous indulgence in merrymaking, mass I'tikaafs, jalsahs, and deceptive halaqh thikr sessions which have no relationship with the Sunnah. Yet they have the naked audacity of tearing from its context a statement of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) to bolster their *baatil* and *israaf*.



Any brand of sufi'ism or tasawwuf which is in conflict with the Sunnah is Satanism. What resemblance does today's khaanqah akhtari or khaanqah zakariyya or any other khaanqah have with the type of Khaanqah described by Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh)? There is no resemblance whatsoever. On the contrary, the khaanqahs of today are worldly institutions camouflaged with an extremely thin, see-through 'deeni' veneer. The reality of the deviation of these khaanqahs is not hidden from intelligent men of even the dunya.

Addressing one jaahil sufi, such as the sufis of our age, Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

*“O my Brother! It is Waajib by Ijma' to rectify Ibaadat in terms of the Zaahir of the Kitaab and Sunnah. A man who does not differentiate between haraam and makrooh is a jaahil. It is not at all permissible to follow a jaahil whether in the Zaahir or Baatin.”*

This is the condition of the sheikhs of today's khaanqahs. They argue away the haraam and makrooh *ahkaam* of the Shariah to

accommodate their nafsani desires and nafsani objectives. That is precisely how they justify luring women from their homes to attend their majaanis and merry-making functions. Truly, these sheikhs who lure females out of their homes in stark conflict with the Shariah's prohibition are *shayaateenul ins* (human devils).

Continuing his *naseehat*, Hadhrat Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

*“The Salf-e-Saaliheen always stressed the imperative importance of being confined to the Qur'aan and Sunnah. They would emphasize abstention from Bid'ah, and acquit themselves with exceptional harshness in this matter. When Ameerul Mu'mineen, Hadhrat Umar Bin Khattaab (Radhiyallahu anhu) contemplated doing something, and if someone would say that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not do this act in this manner nor did he instruct doing it, he (Hadhrat Umar) would then refrain from it.”*

But the sheikhs of today's khaanqaahs become extremely annoyed and even offensive when their attention is drawn to the grossly un-Islamic

and anti-Sunnah functions and activities which they have innovated. They seek out flimsy narrations and obscurities to bolster their bid'aat and wasteful functions. One such example is the narration of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) pertaining to thikr majaalis. They ignore the wealth of *Naseehat* proffered by Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) to sufis, sheikhs, quack shaikhs and bogus khaanqah operators. Not even in their wildest dreams are the present-day khaanqah personnel able to hallucinate the exceptional austerity and frugality which according to Allaamah Sha'taani (Rahmatullah alayh) are Waajib constituents of Tasawwuf.

The lifestyle of the today's sheikhs drowned in opulence, in comparison to the advices of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), is pure *shaitaaniiyat* and *nafsaaniyat*. These sheikhs of the khaanqahs of our era do not realise that they are filling their bellies with haraam. Their attitudes are haraam. Their functions/jalsahs are haraam. Their thikr majaalis are bid'ah and haraam. They have not even smelt the fragrance of Tasawwuf, leave alone having set foot in this sacred Pathway. But they dig out a narration

which they hallucinate to be in support of their bid'ah functions.

The dunya and its attractions have fossilized their brains and their hearts, hence they ignore all the advices of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) which are imperative for the cultivation of *roohaaniyat and baseerat*, and they gloat over a narration which tenders absolutely no support for their bid'ah halqah thikr sessions. Their khaanqah activities are underlined by worldly and nafsaani objectives, hence they require public thikr programmes, jalsahs, functions and the like to stay in the 'khaanqah' business which has become their source of livelihood, not only livelihood, but for amassing wealth. For adding shaitaani colour and adornment to their bid'ah and haraam functions for attracting and entrapping the ignorant and the unwary, they deem it necessary to lure the womenfolk out of their homes for participation in the shaitaaniyat they organize in the name of the Deen. And, they lure the womenfolk out despite the prohibition of the Qur'aan and Ahaadith. The Hadith: "*Woman is Aurah. When she emerges, shaitaan lies in*

*ambush for her.*”, has absolutely no meaning for these sheikhs who have ruined themselves and countless others whom they have ensnared into their tentacles.

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (Rahmatullah alayh) as well as other Mashaaikh have said that when Allah Ta'ala desires to humiliate someone, He embroils him in fitnah with women and *amaarid* (*young lads*). Both these evils are on the increase with khaanqah and madrasah personnel.

Proffering advice regarding observance of the Sunnah, Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) advises the sheikhs and the sufis: “*O my Brother! Follow the Sunnah of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in your words and deeds. Do not contemplate doing any act as long as you have not ascertained if it complies with the Sunnah.*”

It is incumbent for these sheikhs to ascertain whether their halqah-congregational thikr sessions, their merry making jalsah functions, their mass i'tikaafs, their luring women to attend

their functions, etc. conform with the Sunnah or conflict with the Sunnah. For acertitude, they will find no support in the Qur'aan and Sunnah nor in the Tareeq of the Salafus Saaliheen for any of these acts of *bid'ah* and *israaf* which they have satanically innovated in this belated 14<sup>th</sup> century.

## **ADVERTISING ITS HALQAH / CONGREGATIONAL THIKR PROGRAMMES.**

On its website, khaanqah akhtari very ostentatiously advertises its bid'ah 'ibaadat' programmes. There is no conundrum underlying their motive of the advertisement. The motive is to attract the juhala to enter the circle of this khaanqah and become mureeds of the sheikh. The advert is most despicable. It has the aur'a of bootlicking and the objective of traders. It is a huge disservice for Tasawwuf and a misguidance for the laymen who will gain a lopsided, oblique understanding of the meaning of Tasawwuf.

Khaanqah programmes are not meant for public consumption, not even Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) whom this khaanqah akhtari baselessly cites in support of its thikr activities, as well as the innumerable Auliya, never advertised their khaanqaahs. They had no programmes to rope in mureeds. There is no support for khaanqah akhtari in Allaamah Sha'raani's view regarding the *Istihbaab* of thikr majaalis. Insha-Allah, we shall revert to this topic further on in this *Naseehat*.

It is indeed lamentably surprising for a khaanqah to go on an advertising campaign to promote its wares, and in this case bid'ah wares which have no origin in the Sunnah. Advertising 'thikr' is motivated by *riya* and other unwholesome objectives such as the desire to increase the circle of mureeds, receiving contributions for the the sheikh's projects presented in 'deeni' hues, etc. Proffering *naseehat* to sheikhs of the dunya, Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

*“Do not be like those who acquire knowledge as the Ulama do, but then you act like the juhala.....The punishment of the Ulama is the death of their (spiritual) hearts.”*

What is the meaning of the *Maut* of the heart? Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *“The Maut of the heart occurs when the dunya is pursued with the Amal of the Aakhirat. By means of the Deen, he (the sheikh) seeks the taqarrub (proximity) of the people of the dunya.”*

That is precisely why these khaanqaahs of today are advertising themselves, bootlicking the public, luring women out of their homes to attend their bayaans and thikr majaalis, and to even enter into their circles as ‘mureedahs’. The motive for all their advertising is to gain the *taqarrub* of the people of the dunya. They should hang their heads in shame and scrutinize the innermost recesses of their hearts to understand the eternal damage and destruction they are causing to their dunya and Aakhirat. They are among the worst type of *mudhilleen* who misguide the juhala, leading them along the pathway to Jahannam.

Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *“The best Ilm and Amal are those which are concealed from the people.”* But these



khaanqaqs have made it their obligation to gain maximum publicity, hence they utilize the media for promoting themselves. It is unthinkable for people of Tasawwuf to descend to such despicable levels of *nafsaaniyat*.

Hadhrat Yusuf Bin Asbaat (Rahmatullah alayh) said: “*Allah Ta’ala sent Wahi to one of His Nabis: ‘Instruct your people to conceal their A’maal.’*”

By advertising himself and his khaanqah, the sheikh is in negation of one of the fundamentals of Tasawwuf, viz. *Tark-e-Ikhtilaat (abandoning mingling with people)*. By advertising themselves, these khaanqah sheikhs of today are seeking the *taqarrub* of the wealthy. Offering *naseehat* to the khaanqah advertisers and promoters, Allaamah Sha’raani (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

“*Of the akhlaaq of the Salafus Saaliheen was to sever ties with any of their friends who maintained an association with the wealthy without a valid Shar’i motive, e.g. Amr Bil Ma’roof Nahy Anil Munkar. They acted in this manner on the basis of the Hadith which*

*mentions that in Jahannam there is a valley called Muheeb which Allah Ta'ala has prepared for oppressors and the mudaahin Ulama (Ulama who resort to flattering the wealthy, concealing the Haqq and compromising the Haqq for gaining worldly benefits)."*

The misguided so-called 'sufis' and 'sheikhs' of this era dwell in the self-deception of them being *zaahids* simply because they operate *khaanqaahs* which have in reality no relationship with genuine *khaanqaahs* of the Auliya of former times. Shaitaan has deceived them into this disbelief. Hadhrat Bilaal Bin Sa'd (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"When a faqeer (buzrug/sheikh of tasawwuf) makes false claims of zuhd, then shaitaan dances around him mocking and jeering him."*

Commenting on the *riya* of advertising *ibaadat*, Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"Riya' has overwhelmed the Ulama of this age. He makes the ibaadat of people conspicuous for them whilst their baatin is saturated with malice, envy and hatred."*

It is for this reason that despite proclaiming themselves as khaanqah operators and sheikhs of Tasawwuf, they are unable to tolerate valid criticism. Any *naseehat* regarding their villainous conduct is misconstrued and they and their juhala mureeds who lack the faintest idea of *islaah-e-nafs* react vindictively and vengefully. Giving *naseehat* to such hypocritical sheikhs, Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

*“O my Brother! Examine your nafs. Is it the same inward and outward or not? Recite Istighfaar in abundance. Know that he who advertises himself in conflict with his baatin is a munaafiq. On the Day of Qiyaamat, he will be cast into the pit of the munaafiqeen.”*

Whereas the Mahshaaikh of Tasawwuf incumbently adopted seclusion and despised publicity, today's claimants of Tasawwuf are the very opposite in all fields of Tasawwuf. Publicity, projecting and advertising themselves were extremely abhorrent to the Mashaaikh of the genuine Khaanqahs. Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (Rahmatullah alayh) said 13 centuries ago:

*“Rare are the Ulama who are able to abstain from ujub (vanity/self-esteem), whose circle of dars is large.”*

He would not allow more than three persons to sit in his dars. One day, due to oblibviousness (*ghaflat*) in this regard, he was overcome with fear when he suddenly noticed the largeness of the gathering. Overcome with fear, he left the gathering and commented: *“Alas! I have become trapped in my ignorance. Wallaah! If Ameerul Mu'mineen Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) had to see a person like me in such a gathering, he would immediately expel me and informed be of my disqualification.”*

While teaching Hadith, if a cloud would pass overhead, he would become silent with fear, and would comment: *“I fear that perhaps the cloud is laden with stones for raining on us.”*

Once when Hadhrat Ta-oos (Rahmatullah alayh), was sitting in the Haram of Makkah imparting Hadith to a huge circle of people, Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alayh) passed by. Observing this scene, he approached

Hadhrat Ta-oos and whispered in his ear: "*If this scene pleases you, then get up and walk away.*" Hadhrat Ta-oos (Rahmatullah alayh) spontaneously rose and left. He had momentarily gazed into his heart and discerned the hidden thief of *ujub* to which Hadhrat Basri (Rahmatullah alayh) had alerted him, hence he ignored the huge crowd, immediately discontinued his dars without apologizing or explaining and departed. That was the demand of the *Ikhlāas* of an illustrious Sufi Shaikh of Tasawwuf.

Once when Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (Rahmatullah Alayh) passed by the *halqah-e-dars* of Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (Rahmatullah alayh), he detested the large circle of mureeds and students, and he said: "*If this was the halqah of even a Sahaabi, he would have had the fear of ujub.*"

In the Qur'aan Majeed, Allah Ta'ala says:

*"Verily, those who conceal the clear injunctions of guidance which We have revealed after We have explained it for the people in the*

*Kitaab, verily they are the ones whom Allah curses and those who curse (also) curse them."*

Commenting on this Aayat, Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) said: *"If this Aayat had not been in the Kitaab of Allah, I would never have narrated Hadith to you."*

The Mashaikh of the Salafus Saaliheen as well as our Akaabireen who followed in the footsteps of the early Mashaikh, were vehemently averse to publicity. But the sheikhs of today's mock khaanqahs depart from even the *Zaahiri* dimension of *Siraatul Mustaqeem* to promote and advertise themselves, their khaanqahs and their bid'ah activities. They promote bid'ah as if it is the Sunnah, and this is a sign of Qiyaamah. In this regard, the Hadith states:

*"Soon will there dawn an age when all the Aabideen (buzrugs such as today's khaanqah sheikhs and khalifahs) will be jaahil, and all the Ulama will be fussiaaq (such as the ulama-e-soo' of our age.)"*

Khaanqah akhtari and khaanqah zakariyya which are in the forefront of advertising and

promoting themselves should resort to some sincere soul-searching in the mirror of the naseehat and lifestyle of the genuine Mashaaiikh of the *Salaasil* which they claim to represent. We say without hesitation that they are a disgrace to the Akaabireen whom they claim to be following.

What is the affinity between Tasawwuf and publicity? From whence did they acquire the shaitaaniiyat of advertising khaanqahs and 'thikr' activities? Personal Ibaadat and khaanqah activities are private affairs to be effected in seclusion. It is abhorrent and evil to advertise ibaadat as if it is carrion chickens advertised by SANHA, MJC and the other vile, corrupt agents of Iblees. We warn these khaanqahs that they too are becoming entrapped in the tentacles of shaitaan to become his agents.

Among the outstanding characteristics of the Mashaaiikh was *khalwat* (*seclusion*) and abhorrence for publicity. The desire for publicity is motivated by *riya* and other despicable worldly and nafsani objectives. The 'khaanqah' which advertises its weekly and nightly

programmes of thikr is not a true Khaanqah in the meaning of the Khaanqahs of Tasawwuf of the Auliya of former times and even of our Akaabireen. In fact, observing the absolutely lackadaisical attitude and conduct of mureeds, Hadhrat Masihullah (Rahmatullah alayh) commenting about his *own* Khaanqah said: *“This is not a khaanqah. It is a mehmaan khaanqah. (i.e. a place for guests/visitors).”*

Once when Hadhrat Masihullah (Rahmatullah alayh) went to Saharanpur, he went to meet Hadhrat Shaikh Zakariyya (Rahmatullah alayh). On this occasion, Hadhrat Shaikh was reclining on his bed with two or three khaadims at his bedside. When Hadhrat Masihullah (Rahmatullah alayh) entered the room, Hadhrat Shaikh sat up. He was *ma'zoor* in his legs and unable to walk. He ordered his khaadims to leave the room. Then he beckoned to Hadhrat Masihullah to come near. When Hadhrat Masihullah was close to him, Hadhrat Zakariyya grabbed him in an embrace and cried profusely, saying: *“Take care of the khaanqah. Today the khaanqahs are all desolate/destroyed (weeraan).”* This writer heard this episode



directly from Hadhrat Masihullah (Rahmatullah alayh). Yes, today's khaanqahs are mock 'khaanqahs' – a disgrace to Tasawwuf and the Akaabireen.

(3) Is the khaanqah a hotel?

The akhtari 'khaanqah' advertises with pride: *“Many local and foreign brothers spend the entire Ramadaan at the Khaanqah....Brothers are requested to bring their own bedding. All meals are provided. The Khaanqah also offers a laundry service weekly. Parking facilities for cars are available. Brothers that are arriving by air or by bus can also be picked up if arrangements are made prior to arrival.”*

The only 'laundry service' a true Khaanqah offers is to purify the nafs from *Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah* (the evil, despicable attributes of the nafs). But this 'khaanqah' has been effectively converted into a type of holiday inn. People are coming for picnicking or camping to this holiday inn-khaanqah. What affinity is there between a khaanqah which has to cater for the acquisition of the *Maqaasid of the Aakhirat*, and all this

merrymaking paraphernalia befitting only hotels and other worldly institutions?

Is there any condonation for these type of holiday-picnicking activities in any of the writings of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), or in the writings of our Akaabireen or in the Ahaadith or Qur'aan?

The one and only activity of a khaanqah is *Islaah of the Nafs*. The obligation of the Shaikh who operates a khaanqah is to attend to the moral reformation of his mureeds; to cultivate *zuhd* in them; to weaken their worldly ties and to strengthen the bond with Allah Ta'ala. In a khaanqah the *ta'leem* and *tarbiyat* are divestment of the dunya. A khaanqah gives real meaning to Rasulullah's description of the dunya, namely: "*This dunya is jeefah (carrion)*." But these khaanqahs of today are the very antithesis of the *Objective* for which Allah Ta'ala has sent the Ambiyaa (Alayhimus salaam). Did any Nabi ever operate a holiday inn type of 'khaanqah'?

A khaanqah is not supposed to hanker after public funds and seeking donations to feed and house guests, and to ensure merrymaking and picnicking facilities for local and foreign brothers. It is evil to use these strategies for roping in people to become mureeds. Even their majaalis activities are designed for soothing the nafs of people, to flatter them and to gain worldly benefits from them.

The emphasis accorded to these bid'ah activities is not directed to the Masnoon acts of Ibaadat. A khaanqah has no 'slots' and no 'programmes'. A khaanqah is supposed to be akin to *Ghaar-e-Hirah*. But under the exceptionally flimsy 'khaanqah' veneer, the holiday inn and worldly objectives are being pursued. Nowhere in Allaamah Sha'raani's writings is there the slightest support for the activities which these mock 'khaanqahs' organize to lure men and women into their *nafsaani* tentacles.

The mass, mock i'tikaaf is the climax in their entertainment programme. Whereas the last ten days and nights of the Mubaarak Month of Ramadhaan are the most precious moments for

total immersion in Ibaadat, the holiday-khaanqahs violate the sanctity of the Musjid and the auspicious Days and Nights with merrymaking, gluttony mock programmes which have neither origin nor sanction in the Sunnah.

All four fundamentals of Tasawwuf are insidiously discarded and despite being in a Musjid environment, the aur'a of the *jeefah* of the dunya preponderates. The style of operation of this holiday inn-khaanqah militates against these four fundamentals:

- Qillat-e-Kalaam (Little/less talk)
- Qillat-e-Ta'aam (Little/less food)
- Qillat-e-Ikhtilaat (Little/less mingling / association with people)
- Qillat-e-Manaam (Little/less sleep)

Every act advertised by khaanqah akhtari is nugatory of these fundamental requisites of Tasawwuf which khaanqahs are supposed to diligently and vigorously impart and cultivate.

The khaanqah has totally lost the direction. Instead of attending to the laundry of the *nafs* – of the *Baatin*, it has taken upon itself the

profession of *dhobis* (*washer men*) to wash the dirty clothes of people. The *maudhoo* of a khaanqah is to wash and purify the nafs, not the physical clothes.

A khaanqah has to develop the *Rooh/Baatin* with spiritual nourishment by adorning mureeds with *Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah* which is not possible without stringent adoption of the Sunnah and the *Zaahiri* Shariah. The Bid'ah, khuraafaat (nonsensical activities), the merrymaking and picnicking bloat the nafs and emaciate the Rooh.

### **LURING WOMEN**

Among the conglomeration of *baatil* organized by the holiday inn-khaanqah is its diabolical luring of women out of their homes in stark contradiction with the Shariah. Under 'deeni' cover, the women are exhorted to participate in the picnicking activities of the mock khaanqah. The so-called 'separate ladies facilities' are flagrant fisq and fujoor. It is an insidious attempt to bestow 'deeni' acceptability and respectability to an act which is abhorrent to Allah Ta'ala and His Rasool (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

The 'separate ladies facilities' are a disingenuous attempt to camouflage the fisq and fujoor of the haraam act of luring women out of their homes. What does the sheikh sahib of this khaanqah say regarding the question of women coming to the Musjid for Salaat. We believe that hitherto he is still of the opinion that it is not permissible. If our understanding is correct, then we ask him: By what stretch of Imaani logic do you invite women to come out of their homes in droves to attend your merrymaking khaanqah programmes? Have you eliminated every vestige of Imaani *ghairat* and *hayaa* in the pursuit of achieving your nafsani goals?

Since the akhtari khaanqah has taken the liberty of attempting to justify its bid'ah majaalis thikr on the basis of a statement of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah), it devolves on the sheikh of this khaanqah to discover what Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) says on the issue of women attending the Musjid and on female emergence on the whole. Furthermore, it will have a salutary effect on the hearts of the khaanqah people if they study with *Ikhlāas* the numerous and lofty requisites of a khaanqah

explained by Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) in a number of his spiritually reinvigorating kutub. It is chicanery and deception to dig out from his kutub only the view pertaining to thikr majaalis. Sufis are not supposed to conduct themselves like humbug politicians who are bereft of any principles.

The sheikh, we are sure, will accept that despite women attending the Musjid during the time of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Sahaabah banned them. They cancelled this initial permissibility despite their age being *Khairul Quroon (the Best of Ages)* when the highest degree of Taqwa flourished. What satanism has now constrained the sheikh to lure women from their homes in this belated evil era of fitnah and fasaad to attend his holiday inn-khaanqah activities?

Only a veritable shaitaan will today claim that women attending these deceptive 'deeni' programmes and functions will emerge in the state of *Tafilah (dressed like old hags, shabbily and smelly)*. They emerge from their homes decorated with their finery and well-perfumed,

and deceiving the world with bright and sparkling abayas. So many of them simply slip in behind the driving wheel and drive to the haraam functions and programmes of the deviant sheikhs. These driving aunts are *mal-oonat* (*on whom is Allah's curse*) according to the Hadith.

What has happened to the Aql and Imaan of a sheikh who exhorts women to emerge from their homes to attend his programmes when Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had said: "*Woman is (totally) aurah. When she emerges, shaitaan lies in ambush for her.*" When the Qur'aan commands: "*Remain (glued) inside your homes...*", what constrains a sheikh who advertises himself as a sheikh of Tasawwuf to flagrantly violate this prohibition and insidiously call on women to attend his programmes? Indeed the sheikh has lost the path and is following in the footsteps of shaitaan.

Every argument which this sheikh, the liberal *gumrah* molvis and modernists fabricate for not only condoning female emergence, but for blatantly overriding the prohibitions of the



Shariah by treacherously luring and exhorting women into the public domain has been adequately answered and refuted by us in six booklets on the topic of women attending the Musjid. Anyone interested in these books, may write for copies. The books are also available on our website.

While the emphasis of the Qur'aan and Hadith is on concealment of women, the mock khaanqaqs of today advocate display and self-expression for them. *Wala houla wa la quwwata.....* This trend of promoting jahl and baatil by supposedly Deeni personnel will be on the increase with the approach of Qiyaamah as predicted by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). *“All the aabideen (buzrugs / Sufis / sheikhs of khaanqaqs) will be juhala, and all the ulama will be fussiaaq.”*

There is no support in the writings of Allaamah Sha'raani nor in any of the writings of the Salafus Saaliheen and our Akaabireen for the convoluted view of the khaanqah sheikh regarding his exhortation to women to abandon

their homes for participating in his deviant, bid'ah, haraam 'khaanqah' programmes.

### ***THIKR GATHERINGS IN THE MUSJID***

The only shred of 'evidence' the akhtari khaanqah has proffered in the attempt to sustain its bid'ah thikr programmes is a view attributed to Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh). This is a flapdoodle 'proof' for the bid'ah thikr gatherings which the khaanqahs of today organize.

While khaanqah akhtari seeks to extravasate *daleel* from the view expressed by Allaamah Sha'raani in the 10<sup>th</sup> century of Islam, we present the categorical view of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) who was one of the most senior among the Sahaabah. His Fatwa precedes and pre-empts Allaamah Sha'raani's view by six centuries and by the authority vested in him by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He was among the most senior Sahaabah. He was constantly in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He was among the greatest Authorities of the Shariah.

When Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) was once informed of a thikr majlis taking place in the Musjid, he hastened to the Musjid and had the 'khaanqah' group of bid'atis physically expelled from the Musjid.

Once Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) was informed of a group of people engaging in a peculiar form of Thikr. The leader of the group instructed his companions to recite *Laa-ilaha illaallaahu* 100 times. Then in chorus the group recited. Then he instructed them to recite *Subhaanallaah*, then *Allaahu Akbar*, each 100 times. This they did in unison. Meanwhile they were counting the number with pebbles. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), addressing them said:

*“Use the pebbles to count your sins. I guarantee that none of your virtuous deeds will be destroyed (by counting your sins). Alas! O Ummah of Muhammad! (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). How swiftly have you fallen in ruin! The Sahaabah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) are still numerous in your presence. The garments of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi*

*wasallam) have not become old and his unbroken utensils are still present. But you have opened the door of deviation.” (Musnad-e-Daarmi)*

Allaamah Qaadhi Ibraahim narrates as follows:

*“I am Abdullah Bin Mas’ood. I take oath by Him (Allah) besides whom there is no deity. Verily, you have produced a dark bid’ah or you have surpassed the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).”, i.e. in knowledge and practice” (Majaalisul Abraar)*

Shaikhul Islam Ibn Daqeeq presents the *riwaayat* as follows: *“I am Ibn Mas’ood. So, whoever knows me, knows who I am. Whoever does not know me, then know that I am Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood. Do you think that you are more guided than Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Ashaab? Verily, you have innovated a dark bid’ah, or you have acquired greater status in knowledge than the Ashaab of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).” Ibn Mas’ood has refuted this act notwithstanding the probability of it coming within the scope of Thikr in general.” (Ahkaamul Ahkaam)*

Allaamah Muhammad Bin Muhammad Al-Khawaarzami narrates:

*“Thikr bil Jahr is haraam since it has been authentically reported that Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu) had expelled a group from the Musjid. They were reciting Tahleel and Durood loudly, and he commented: ‘I deem you to be nothing but mubtadieen (bid’atis).”*  
(Shaami)

Although the sheikh of the akhtari khaanqah is well aware of this episode, he deems it appropriate to cast a blind eye and to sweep it under the carpet. In his grossly deviant understanding, the 10<sup>th</sup> century view has greater veracity than the unequivocal Fatwa of prohibition of this illustrious Sahaabi who had given practical effect to his Fatwa with physical expulsion from the Musjid of the gang of bid’atis who sought to override the Sunnah of the Sahaabah with their newly innovated thikr majlis.

Furthermore, the Qur’aan and the Fatwa of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) explicitly proclaim such audible / loud thikr

gatherings to be *haraam*. Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) ruled that it is *haraam* to raise the voice in the Musjid with thikr and even with Tilaawat of the Qur'aan.

Despite many Ahaadith mentioning the virtues of Thikrullaah, there is not a single episode of loud thikr gatherings in the Musjid organized by any Sahaabah. While the akhtari khaanqah seeks *daleel* in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the real *Daleel* for a practice is in the first century in the lives of the Sahaabah and in the rulings of the Aimmah Mujtahideen.

It is unbecoming of Ulama to bypass the rulings of the Aimmah Mujtahideen and Fuqaha who were the authorities of the Sunnah, and to seek support in the statements and practices of the Sufiyya of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Regardless of the extremely lofty status of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), it is improper and baseless to cite his view in refutation of the Sunnah of the Sahaabah, of the Sunnah of the Salafus Saaliheen and of the clear rulings of the Aimmah Mujtahideen.

We have, Alhamdulillah, discussed and explained the issue of Thikrullaah in great detail in our book, *Thikrullah in the Mirror of the Sunnah*. Whoever is interested, may write for a copy. It is also available on our website.

It should also be understood that the type of thikr mentioned by Allaamah Sha'raani was free from all the *khuraafaat* which khaanqah akhtari, khaanqah zakariyya and the other mock khaanqahs of today have innovated. In fact, these mock khaanqahs are merrymaking, picnicking institutions which are guilty of perpetrating flagrant fisq and fujoor with their penchant for women. They despicably lure women out of their homes to participate in public programmes. They should hang their heads in shame!

Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) did not promote these modern-day khaanqah programmes. Whoever makes a study of his kutub will know the lofty degree of austerity, Zuhd and Taqwa which he propagated. There is not a single one of his teachings which can be found in khaanqah akhtari which specializes in

feasting, merrymaking, entertainment and bid'ah programmes involving even women.

The akhtari khaanqah has also quoted selectively from *Raddul Muhtaar*. In the very same paragraph, Shaami mentions that raising the voice with thikr is *haraam*. Thus, it appears:

*“Raising the voice with thikr: The statement of the Author of Al-Bazaaziyah is perplexing (confusing) on this issue. Sometimes he says that it is haraam, and sometimes he says that it is permissible.*

Here are two separate issues: One – *Raf'us saut* , i.e. raising the voice when making thikr. Two – Public thikr gatherings. On the first issue (audible thikr), the rulings are widely divergent, vacillating between Haraam and Mustahab. There are different Ahaadith on this issue, hence the conflicting rulings of the Fuqaha. But this is not our topic of discussion in this article which is intended to refute the thikr gatherings of the akhtari khaanqah.

There is valid basis in the Hadith for audible thikr, i.e. pure thikr in general without innovated



paraphernalia such as the form (*hayte kathaaiyyah*) which constrained Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) to brand the group of thaakireen as 'bid'atis' and expel them from the Musjid. However, there is no basis for the type of public thikr gatherings innovated by khaanqah akhtari, khaanqah zakariyya and the other mock khaanqahs of this age.

The '*istihbaab*' mentioned by Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) in this context does not mean *Sunnah*. There is no basis in the Sunnah for such public gatherings even of the pure ones devoid of bid'ah accretions which Allaamah Sha'raani describes as 'mustahab'.

An act of the Sunnah can be *Mustahab* in the technical meaning of the term given to it by the Fuqaha. Acts which are technically *Mustahab* are all Sunnah acts. There is a basis in the Sunnah for it. However, even such Sunnah acts have to be abandoned when bid'ah practices and forms have become attached. The principle of *Tarkus Sunnah (abandoning Sunnah)* when it is bedevilled with bid'ah, is well known. The molvis of the khaanqahs despite being aware of

this principle, deliberately innovate bid'ah activities which have absolutely no basis in the Sunnah. That is precisely why khaanqah akhtari scrounges for proof in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, instead of in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and in substantiation of its bid'ah thikr majaalis produces Allaamah Sha'raani's view in which there is no condonation for the bid'ah types of thikr gatherings which lure women into the public domain, and which spawn merrymaking and feasting, etc.

*Istihbaab'* in the context mentioned by Allaamah Sha'raani does not refer to technical *Mustahab* which is also Sunnah. The term regarding the thikr sessions mentioned by Allaamah Sha'raani has a literal meaning, which simply means *good, preferable, meritorious*. The statement: "*The Ulema of former and latter times have agreed that Zikrullah in the Masjid in a gathering and other places is Mustahab....*", is not borne out by the Sunnah. The 'Ulema of latter times' mentioned here do not include the Sahaabah nor the Ulama, Fuqaha and Aimmah Mujtahideen of the Salafus Saaliheen era (*Khairul Quroon*). There is simply no

substantiation for claiming that the '*Salaf*' in the context of Allaamah Sha'raani's statement also includes the Ulama of *Khairul Quroon*. If it had, khaanqah akhtari would not have contented itself with a 10<sup>th</sup> century view.

There is not a single incident of the Sahaabah having engaged in the kind of public/Musjid thikr majlis programmes. On the contrary, the episode of the illustrious Sahaabi, Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) expelling the new, bid'ah form of thikr majlis, unknown to the Sahaabah, is well known. The Sahaabah – all of them – were most vehement in their rejection of the slightest form of innovation in Ibaadat and in the Deen. It will serve the khaanqahs immense Deeni benefit if they would, instead of citing the belated, ambiguous view of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), to reflect on the attitude and action of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) to enable them to bring their errant khaanqahs in line with the Sunnah. However, since these bid'ati sheikhs do not discern any nafsani glamour in the pure and simple practices of the Sunnah, they cling like leeches to bid'ah, and

worse, they mislead the people into believing that their bid'ah is Sunnah, but for which they lack even a vestige of evidence.

The attempt to present bid'ah as Sunnah has also been predicted in the Hadith. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) narrated to a group of people (Sahaabah as well as Taabieen):

*“How will you be when you are engulfed by such a fitnah which will render the elderly senile and the young ones old? The people will adopt the fitnah (bid'ah) as if it is Sunnah. If anything from it (the bid'ah) is omitted, they will say that a Sunnat has been deleted.”* The people asked: *“When will that happen?”* He answered:

*When your Ulama (the Ulama-e-Haqq) have departed (from the dunya); when your qaaris are in abundance; when your Fuqaha are few; when your rulers are numerous; when your trustworthy ones are few; when the dunya will be pursued with the amal of the Aakhirah, and when Knowledge (of the Deen) will be acquired for purposes other than the Deen.”*

What has been predicted in this Hadith as well as in many other narrations is what is transpiring

today. The Madaaris, the khaanqahs and the Deeni institutions such as the Tabligh Jamaat, are all pursuing nafsaani and worldly objectives under the deception of a 'deeni' veneer.

It should be understood that the target of our criticism is not *Raf'us saut bith Thikr (audible thikrullaah)*. That is an entirely different topic which we have explained in detail in our book, *Thikrullaah In The Mirror Of The Sunnah*. However, for total lack of Shar'i evidence to substantiate their *bid'aat* and *khuraafaat*, the khaanqah miscreants seek to pull wool over the eyes of the ignorant and unwary with the audible thikr red herring. Since there is some scope for bolstering the argument in this regard, they create the erroneous idea of us propagating the view of the total prohibition of audible thikr, and of the thikr practices of the genuine Auliya of former times. But this idea is baseless.

The thrust of our criticism is directed to the forms of merrymaking, bid'ah programmes which these lifeless khaanqahs bereft of *roohaaniyat (spirituality)* are advertising in the same way as the modernist, deviant zanaadaqah

are advertising their many baatil and haraam functions of fisq, fujoor, bid'ah and kufr, using the media for such haraam promotion. The life of a khaanqah is one of seclusion and privacy in which the spirit and ethos of *Ghaar-e-Hira* should be diffused. We advise the sheikhs of these modern 'khaanqaahs' to study the kutub of the Auliya, e.g. Qasaul Auliya, Tadhkaratul Auliya, etc. Insha-Allah, they will gain considerable Islaahi advice and direction from such *Mutaala-ah*.

Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) was of the Shaafi' Math-hab. Among the Shaafis there is some inclination to group forms of thikr. Thus, such thikr pertaining to Takbeer Tashreeq (The Eid Takbeers) is valid whereas it is bid'ah for the Ahnaaf, hence not permissible. Whereas this type of Thikr is valid for Shaafis and Hambalis even in the roads and in the bazaars on the occasion of Eid, it is not permissible for Hanafis. It is therefore, unbecoming and improper for the akhtari khaanqah to present the view of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh). *Daleel* should be presented from the Sahaabah and the Fuqaha of the Ahnaaf.

For Hanafi consumption, it is not permissible to proffer the view of the Shaafi Fuqaha for congregational and loud Thikr inside the Musjid pertaining to the Takbeer on the Day of Eid. The muqallid will be acting perfidiously if he resorts to this line of baseless argument in his abortive attempt to substantiate a practice which according to our Math-hab is bid'ah.

Furthermore, the congregational forms of Thikr of the Shaafis and Hambalis are not a basis for the merrymaking programmes which these miscreant khaanqahs organize. In the thikr majaalis of the Shaafis, the haraam activities of luring women from their homes, the feasting and merrymaking do not feature. Also, the audible thikr practice of the Auliya of our Chishti Silsilah pertain to individual thikr, not thikr in group form. Thus the *Rafu'us Saut* permitted by the genuine Khaanqahs of our Silsilah, has absolutely no resemblance to the group bid'ah which these wayward khaanqahs of today are practising. These are two widely different practices.

For direction in Ibaadat, it is not permissible to search for guidance in practices which even the Auliya had introduced ages and centuries after Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Collective/congregational forms of thikr as practiced by the deviated khaanqaahs did not constitute part of the Ibaadat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah. Is the example of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) inadequate for us? By the implication of the innovations the khaanqaahs of today, the Sunnah is indeed insufficient and needs to be 'adorned' and 'improved', and this is precisely the meaning of *bid'ah dhalaalah* (deviant innovation) which leads to the Fire. We again stress that the objection is not against Thikrullah. Objection against Thikrullah is kufr. The objection is against the bid'ah forms of thikr.

Describing the reprehensibility of the bid'ah kind of congregational forms of thikr in the Musajid, *Tafseer Ruhul Ma'aani* states:

*"You will see numerous from the people of your age screaming in dua, specially in the Jawaami' (public Musjids where the masses at large*



*attend). So much so that there prevails much noise and the ears are deafened. However, they do not know that they have combined two bid'ahs – raising the voice in dua and doing that in the Masjid.”*

Regarding the khaanqah type collective forms of loud thikr which have degenerated into Bid'ah, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (Rahmatullah alayh) offers the following advice: “In their letters, even men who have a high degree of sincerity mention their constancy in Thikr (i.e. the prescribed forms of Thikr). They request for dua. It seems that to them islaah of the nafs is insignificant. They regard Thikr (khaanqah-type Thikr) and shaghl to be the actual aim (maqsood) to be pursued. On the contrary, Islaah is the true objective. Thikr facilitates the achievement of Islaah of the Nafs.  
– *Malfoothaat*

Criticizing the degeneration of the khaanqaahs of this era, Hakimul Ummat states: “Our Haji Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) said: ‘A principle of the Mashaaiikh of former times was the impartation of ta’leem to persons in accordance with their ability. For some, they devised

domestic work, and on others they imposed some different type of activity. (It is not always these specific forms of Thikr). Now it has become the norm to instruct everyone with the Thikr of *Ism-e-Zaat* (Allaahu) 24,000 times, whether the poor soul survives or perishes. In fact, they do not even confine themselves to this form of Thikr. They dole out whatever comes to mind.”

“Even with regard to *Dalaail-e-Khairaat*, I draw the attention of my friends to the considerable time required to recite a lengthy *manzil* (chapter). Instead of this, the same amount of time should be spent rather reciting the Durood Shareef which the entire Ummah recites in Salaat. Furthermore, this Durood was prescribed by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).” – *Malfoothaat*

On the issue of the lifeless, innovated forms of congregational and loud thikr programmes of the miscreant khaanqahs of the age, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Sometimes when one suffers from spiritual ailments, e.g. *ujub*, *takabbur*, *riya*, etc., then

abundance of *athkaar and auraad* (the type of non-Masnoon Thikr practices of the khaanqaahs) worsens the diseases. The need is for *mujahadah* (struggling against the nafs) so that one does not become the victim of show and pride after having rendered a good deed. Islaah (reformation) has priority over *athkaar* and *auraad*.

The Mutaqaddimeen Sufiya paid particular heed to moral reformation. However, nowadays people are not concerned with this essential requisite. Despite staying in the company of Mashaikh and devoting time to Thikr and shaghl, moral reformation is not achieved. The spiritual diseases remain uncured. The mureed on seeing some dreams considers himself to be a wali. It should be well understood that the habit of sinning cannot coexist with wilaayat (sainthood).

In every *halqah* (group) when customs become overwhelming, *haqaiq* (truths and realities) are overshadowed. The *Maqsood* of Sulook (Tasawwuf) is not *auraad* and *ashghaal*. Although these acts facilitate the obtainal of the *Maqsad*, the objective is self-reformation. As long as moral reformation has not been

achieved, the full efficacy of *auraad* and *ashghaal* will not be attained. In fact, sometimes, on account of *ujub* and *kibr*, these (khaanqah) *auraad* and *ashghaal* constitute dangers.” – *Malfoothaat*

“*Alas! Nowadays people (i.e. the mashaaiikh) are unaware of the Maqsood. Khilaafat (appointing a khalifah) no longer has a standard. What service (i.e. of guiding mureeds) can they render? In fact, they (these unqualified dumb khalifahs) come within the scope of the Hadith: “They are astray and they lead others astray.” On account of their fossilized minds, they lack discernment.*”

“*When Tasawwuf becomes corrupt, it is transformed into either insanity or hereticism (zindaqah). When a delicate object decomposes, its stench is intense.*”

“The Mashaaiikh generally instruct their mureeds to engage more in (certain forms of) Thikr than in tilaawat of the Qur’aan Majeed although tilaawat is superior. The reason for this is that in the initial stage the emphasis is on cultivating concentration. This is the special effect of Thikr.

The prescription of Thikr is in fact the preliminary step of tilaawat. When the ability of concentration has been acquired, the mureed will be able to recite the Qur'aan Majeed with perfection. The ultimate aim of Thikr is tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef. Once the necessary concentration has been developed, the mureed will engage more in tilaawat. What the unqualified spiritual guides do and teach, is beyond the scope of this discussion.” – *Malfoothaat*

“The Mashaikh of former times paid great attention to reformation of moral character. They underwent intense struggles and hardships to achieve this goal. Some worked for years in bathrooms; some spent years in the wilderness. During those times they did not pay much attention to (khaanqah-type) Thikr and shaghl. Their courage and resolve were great. They could bear the severest hardship. The *Baarah Tasbeeh* Thikr (the 12 prescribed tasbeehs – non-Sunnah) was considered to be very advanced while nowadays this is the elementary instruction issued to mureeds.”

The following is an extract from a lengthy Fatwa of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Rahmatullah alayh) regarding the bid'ah *hait* (form) fabricated by the deviant so-called 'sufis; who have no understanding of Tasawwuf and its objectives:

It is mentioned in Aalamgheeriyah (Fataawa Hindiyyah): *'The practice which is done after Salaat is Makrooh because the juhhaal (ignoramus) will believe it to be Sunnat or even Waajib. Every Mubah (permissible practice) which leads to this is Makrooh. So is it reported in Az-Zaahidi.'*

Thus, it is bid'at to make Thikr in this manner despite Thikr *per se* of Kalimah Tayyibah with *jahr* being permissible. However, at this occasion this *hai't* is not proven from *Quroon-e-Thalaathah*. On the contrary, this is an occasion of *Ikhfa'*, hence it is bid'at. Furthermore, in this practice there is the danger of corrupting the Aqeedah (belief) of the masses. And Allah knows best." – *End of Hadhrat Gangohi's dissertation.* (Tazkiratur Rasheed)

The actual purpose of these bid'ah thikr gatherings in the Musaaajid nowadays, is roping

in the ignoramuses to become mureeds. This is a contemptible disease of the khaanqah sheikhs of our era.

The corruption is intense among the sheikhs and their khalifahs in our day. Loud collective Thikr programmes are promoted. The sheikh goes on tours campaigning for collective Thikr performances in the Musaaqid, and canvassing for mureeds. Indeed they are astray and mislead others as the Hadith says. Commenting on the despicable campaigning of the 'sufis' of this age, Hakimul Ummat said:

*“In this age there exists the disease of canvassing for mureeds. A mureed strives to rope in others to become the disciples of his sheikh.”*

Commenting on the bid'ah forms of thikr gatherings in the Musaaqid, Hadhrat Maulana Mahmudul Hasan Gangohi (Rahmatullah alayh), whom the wayward, unqualified sheikhs of the mock khaanqahs love to quote, says in response to a question:

**Question:** There is a practice of reciting Durood Shareef *jahran* after Jumuah Namaaz and also in other neighbourhoods this practice is observed.

Durood Shareef, Tasbeeh, Tahleel and Takbeer are recited in *Ijtimaai* (congregational) form, *jahran* (audibly). One Faadhil (Aalim) of Deoband explained to me that according to Shaami this practice is not bid'at. This person (the Deobandi Molvi) said by way of objection (i.e. objecting to the claim that it is bid'ah) that the Thikr which Naazim Saahib makes in Mazaahirul Uloom after Asr is a form and a time which he has himself fixed. Why is that not bid'ah? He also says that it has been the practice of the buzrugs of the recent past and now of their khulafa to gather their mureedeen in the Musjid to make *Thikr-e-jali* (audible Thikr). They instruct and exhort their mureedeen to do this. How is this?

*(N.B This is exactly the methodology of the venerable Mufti Radhaaul Haq Sahib's argumentation. He has argued in similar style in support of loud collective Thikr in the Musajjid.)*

Answering this question, Hadhrat Mufti Mahmudul Hasan Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) states in his Fataawa:



“Durood Shareef in both ways – sirran and jahran – is permissible and a medium of spiritual progress and divine proximity. Reciting it (Durood Shareef) on Friday is specifically emphasised. But, to recite it *jahran in Ijtimaai*’ form (loud collective form) is not substantiated by the Hadith and Fiqh. The Sahaabah Kiraam would congregate five times a day in the Musjid. Besides the Salaat times, they found abundant opportunities to congregate in both *safar* (journey) and *hadhr* (i.e. not on a journey). But, nowhere is it proven that it was their *ma'mool* (practice) to recite *ijtimaa-an jahran* (collectively and loudly).

Even if one recites *infiraadan* (alone), then too when reciting audibly, it is necessary to refrain from disturbing anyone. For example, someone may be engaging in performing Salaat or he may be sleeping. Furthermore, there should be no (worldly or nafsaani) motive for reciting audibly. The motive should also not be riya and aggrandizement. The greatest ibaadat is unacceptable if the niyyat is corrupt.....

If in some place there is a practice to recite a fixed number at specific times, then that will be the *amal of the Mashaaiikh*. It will not be *Hujjat-*

*e-Shar'iyyah* (Proof of the Shariah). Following it is not incumbent. However, since the Mashaaiikh were followers of the Shariah, their practice should be appropriately interpreted to avoid it being in conflict with the Shariah and within the confines of bid'ah. The interpretation for this is:

.....

A doctor prescribes a fixed amount of medicine to be taken at fixed times by a patient. This is not a command or *ibaadat*. It is a remedy based on the experience of the practitioner. Anyone who does not follow this, is not sinful by Allah Ta'ala. If he follows the guidance of the practitioner, he will, Insha'Allah, be cured. The special form of *Thikr* in which there is a fixed amount and a specific form of *dharb* (striking head movements) is of this category. With changing conditions (of *mureedeen*), the form of this *Thikr* too changes. Sometimes, this *jahr* and *dharb* are completely abandoned. The condition of specific forms of *khatam* is the same." (Fataawa Mahmudiyah, Vol.15)

There is no difference of opinion among our Akaabireen on the issue of specific forms of *thikr* innovated in the *Musaajid* being *Bid'ah*.

The crank sheikhs of these khaanqahs have made their bid'ah forms of congregational thikr the *Maqsood* of Tasawwuf. Their understanding in this regard is absolutely corrupt and portrays their incompetence for operating khaanqahs. All of them are *person'a non grata* according to the Shariah. They are themselves astray and mislead others.

These khaanqah programmes advertised so ostensibly are a disingenuous scheme for promoting nafsaaniyat and worldly objectives – “for gaining the *dunya* with the *amal* of the *Aakhirat*” as predicted by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Before ending this *Naseehat*, we urge all sincere seekers of the Haqq to study with an open mind and a heart desirous of gaining Allah's Proximity, our book, *THIKRULLAH IN THE MIRROR OF THE SUNNAH*. This subject has been explained in detailed from every angle and all aspects have been elaborately presented.

## ***THE RED HERRING***

The presentation of Allaamah Sha'raani's statement as the basis for the bid'ah and baatil structure which the akhtari khaanqah has attempted to raise, is actually a red herring to divert attention from the *Dalaa-il* of the Shariah. Since the khaanqah personnel lack in entirety in valid Shar'i *Daleel*, they seek refuge in a saying of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Shaafi' Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh).

Even minus the many other Shar'i arguments which we have presented in this brief treatise, it will suffice to scale the issue of the khaanqah bid'ah on the view, statements and action of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu). This very senior Sahaabi was so close to Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that the senior Sahaabi, Hadhrat Musa Ash'ari (Radhiyallahu anhu) and others thought that he (Ibn Mas'ood) was a member of Nabi's household. It was his beloved task to carry the sandals and the wudhu jug of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). On the night when Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) visited the abode of the Jinn to deliver the Deen to them, Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood

(Radhiyallahu anhu) had been with our Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

About Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu), Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

\* *“If I had to appoint a Khalifah without consulting anyone, I would certainly appoint over them (the people) Abdallah Ibn Mas'ood.”*

\* *“Acquire the Qur'aan from four (Sahaabah): Ibn Umm Abd (i.e. Abdallah Ibn Mas'ood. Of the four, the first one mentioned is Ibn Mas'ood).....”*

\* *“Whatever Ibn Mas'ood narrates to you, acknowledge it (as the truth).”*

\* *“I am pleased for my Ummah with that with which Ibn Umm Abd is pleased.”*

While the khaanqah, bereft of valid Shar'i evidence for their innovated practices, have presented the red herring of Allaamah Sha'raani's statement, we proffer, among the array of our *Dalaa-il*, Hadhrat Abdallah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) who strides the

loftiest stations of Ilm, Taqwa and Divine Proximity heavens above Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh). Whereas khaanqah akhtari has flaccidly cited the 10<sup>th</sup> Century statement which is not a Shar'i *daleel*, we present the Fatwa of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) who had practically implemented it by expelling the halqah thikr bid'atis from the Musjid.

It should also be understood that Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) had expelled the group of halqah thikr bid'atis, not because they were engaging in Thikrullah. They were branded Bid'atis and expelled on account of the innovated form (*hait*) which they had fabricated and for which there was neither origin nor sanction in the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah.

As for Thikrullah, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) said: “*The Majaalis of Thikr are the Revivers of Ilm and for creating humility in the heart.*”

Now, whatever he meant by '*Majaalis of Thikr*', it never refers to halqah thikr in the Musjid which has no origin in the Sunnah. It is quite obvious his branding those who had engaged in halqah thikr in the Musjid as 'bid'atis', and had them expelled, negates any suggestion of permissibility for akhtari khaanqah-type bid'ah thikr in the Musjid.

Some molvis bent on promoting their bid'ah even venture the extremely corrupt notion of the Hadith of Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) being decrepit, weak and unfit for daleel. These molvis are in fact influenced by shaitaan to disgorge such *ghutha*. The illustrious Fuqaha of Islam have accorded the Hadith authenticity and have utilized it as their *mustadal* for prohibiting bid'ah forms of thikr.

We have published a complete booklet on the issue of the authenticity of this Hadith. Those interested, may write for copies. It is also available on our website: HADHRAT ABDULLAH IBN MASOOD AND THIKR

## HADHRAT FUDHAIL'S NASEEHAT

Once Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (Rahmatullah alayh) sought *naseehat* from Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh). He offered the following naseehat:

ایک دن سفیان ثوری رحمۃ اللہ تعالیٰ فضیل بن عیاض کے پاس گئے اور کہنے لگے اے بوعلی! مجھے کچھ نصیحت کیجئے۔ فضیل نے کہا اے علماء کے گروہ! میں تمہیں کیا نصیحت کروں، تم لوگ چراغ بختے اور شہروں میں تمہاری روشنی تھی مگر اب تم سرسراہ تاریکی ہو گئے ہو۔ پہلے تم ستارے تھے لوگ ظلمات جہل میں تمہارے ذریعے راستہ پاتے تھے مگر اب تم خود سرگشتہ ہو گئے ہو، تم حکام کے دروازوں پر جاتے ہو، ان کے فرشتوں پر بیٹھتے ہو، ان کے کھانے کھاتے ہو اور ان سے تحفے لیتے ہو۔ پھر مسجد میں آ بیٹھتے ہو اور کہتے ہو کہ فلاں ابن فلاں نے رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے فلاں فلاں روایت نقل کی ہے۔ بسنداً علم ان باتوں کے لیے حاصل نہیں کیا جاتا۔ مروی ہے کہ سفیان ثوریؒ یہ سن کر اتنے روئے کہ سچی بندھ گئی۔ پھر اٹھ کر چلے گئے۔

### Translation

“O Assembly of Ulama! What advice should I give you? Once you were Lanterns for the



people and the cities dazzled with your Light. But now you have become complete darkness. Before, you were Stars (of Guidance). By means of you (Ulama), people would find the Path (leading them out of the) darkness of ignorance. But now you yourselves have become lost in confusion.

You go to the doors of the rulers. You sit on their carpets. You consume their food, and you accept gifts from them. Then you sit in the Musjid narrating Ahaadith from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). By Allah! Ilm is not acquired for these acts.”

Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), commenting on the above Naseehat, said: *“It is narrated that on hearing this naseehat, Sufyaan Thauri lapsed into convulsive sobbing.”*

We trust that the khaanqah molvis will ponder and derive lesson from this advice. It is of imperative importance for the khaanqah molvis to engage in an in-depth study of the kutub of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) and of Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi

(Rahmatullah alayh) to gain a true understanding of Tasawwuf and its *Maqaasid*. These two Walis were Mujaddids in the sphere of Tasawwuf. The knowledge acquired from their kutub, if pursued with *Ikhlaas*, will enable the khalifahs to operate true khaanqahs for the *Islaah* of people.

Presently, the khaanqah molvis are all astray and in conflict with both the *Zaahiri* and *Baatini* dimensions of the Shariah. Since they are vastly lacking in the understanding of Tasawwuf, they seek to remain in the khaanqah business with ostentatious bid'ah practices such as halqah thikr, public thikr, khatm-e-khwaajgaan, congregational recitation of Durood, congregational recitation of Yaaseen, jalsahs, mass i'tikaaf, feasting and merrymaking in general. These practices have no affinity with the Sunnah. Wird / thikr practices introduced by the Auliya are spiritual remedies to be restricted to the privacy of the khaanqah, and not advertised and promoted as Sunnah or part of the Shariah or among the Objectives of Tasawwuf.

If they fail to set their houses in order, they will degenerate further and end up in the gutter and sewer rot as all the other bogus 'sufi tariqas' found today in West Africa, North Africa, India and the U.S. Men and women indulge in so-called dervish dancing and singing. The bid'ah, kufr and shirk are the fundamentals of these shaitaani 'sufi' tariqas. Understand well that any brand of tasawwuf which is in conflict with the *Zaahiri* Shariah is satanism.

The khaanqaqs in South Africa are slipping into the same cesspool of evil as the other bid'ati, shaitaani tariqas. So while they will be dubbing themselves as 'akhtari', 'thanvi', 'chisti', naqshabandi', etc., they will in reality be Shaitaani.

## **IJMA' ON SILENT THIKR**

*Raf'us Saut (raising the voice)* is the fundamental and incumbent basis of all public thikr gatherings and programmes in the Musaaqid innovated by the crank sheikhs of the mock khaanqaqs. This fundamental requisite is in stark conflict with the *Ijma'* (*Consensus*) of the Ummah. From the age of the Sahaabah there

has always existed *Ijma'* on the superiority of *Thikr-e-Ikhfa*, and on the Bid'ah of loud thikr. The confusion in this regard has developed centuries after the era of *Khairul Quroon*.

The following evidences will confirm the veracity of our claim and show that Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alath) despite his extremely lofty status, has erred in claiming consensus of the *Salf* and *Khalf* on thikr majaalis in the Musaajid. The only valid interpretation to sustain the claim of Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) is that by '*thikr majaalis*' he was not referring to the heaving, swooning and deceptive displays of ecstasy of innovated thikr sessions of the sufis. He simply meant Muslims gathering in the Musaajid, sitting in Nafl I'tikaaf and individually engaging in their own thikr practices silently. Everyone recites silently on his own whether it be Tilaawat, Tahleel, Tasbeeh, Istighfaar, Dua, Nafl Salaat, etc. The Musaajid are the best abodes on earth, hence the imperative importance of *Thikr Majaalis* in the Musjid. But by *Thikr Majaalis* is never meant bid'ah practices which are in violation of the Shariah.

If it is argued that he did in fact refer to group form of audible thikr, then it will incumbently be set aside as an error. It is haraam to use the error of a senior even if he is the greatest authority of the age, to violate the Ijma' of the Ummah. The view of the Aalim shall be set aside, not the established Law of the Shariah. Confirming this fact, Allaamah Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

*“Whoever adopts the obscure rarities of the Ulama, verily he has made his exit from Islam.”*

The following is a summary of the Ijma' on this issue – Ijma' on the superiority of silent thikr, and Ijma' on the bid'ah of loud thikr – the loudness which characterizes the ostentatious majaalis programmes of these deviated khaanqahs.

(1) “It is Makrooh to make dua during the month of Ramadhaan when making Khatam of the Qur'aan, as well as when a group makes khatam of the Qur'aan (i.e. at any other time). Faqeeh Abul Qaasim As-Sifaar (rahmatullah alayh) said: “If it was not for the fear that the people of this

city would say: '*He prevents us from dua*', then most assuredly, I would have prevented them from it."

(Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

*The reference is to congregational dua after khatam of the Qur'aan Majeed has been made.*

*Al-Muheetul Burhaani* is a voluminous kitaab (25 Volumes) occupying a very lofty pedestal in Hanafi Fiqh. It was compiled by the fifth century Imaam Burhaanuddeen Abil Ma-aali Mahmood (rahmatullah alayh). It is an elevated compilation consisting of the Masaa-il and their Dalaa-il of the Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen such as Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Abu Yusuf, Imaam Muhammad (rahmatullah alayhim) and others.

While the Compiler is of the fifth Islamic century, the Masaa-il are those of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen and Fuqaha-e-Mutaqaddimeen of the first Islamic century. Nothing can supersede the Rulings of these Ulama belonging to the highest echelon of Fuqaha after the Sahaabah.

(2) "If the *Muthakkir* (the lecturer) on the mimbar recites *Ma'thoor* (*Masnoon*) duas,

(audibly) and the people follow him in reciting these (Masnoon) duas, then if the purpose is to teach them (how to recite the duas), there is nothing wrong. However, if the purpose is not for the ta'leem of the people, then it is Makrooh, for verily, doing so is bid'ah.” (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

*The khutbah here does not refer to the Jumuah Khutbah. It refers to a lecture/bayaan.*

(3) “Imaam Muhammad (rahmatullah alayh) narrated in *As-Siyarul Kabeer* from Imaam Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) abhorred (regarded as Makrooh) raising the voice at the time of reciting the Qur'aan and at the time of the Janaazah.

Qais Ibn Ubaadah narrates that Ubaadah said: ‘Verily, the Ashaab of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) detested (regarded as Makrooh) raising the voice by the Janaa-iz and at the time of Thikr.’ In the Hadith of Hasan, instead of Thikr, the word, qiraa't of the Qur'aan is used. There is no conflict between the two because, verily, the term *Thikr* includes dua,

tasbeeh, tahleel, wa'z and qiraa't of the Qur'aan. In fact, qiraa't of the Qur'aan is the noblest of Athkaar. Allah Ta'ala says: 'And, the Thikr of Allah is the Greatest.' ”

(Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(4) “Verily, the Sunnah in duas is *Ikhfa'* ”. (Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(5) “If the meaning of raising the voice at the time of Thikr means dua, then most certainly is Makrooh, for verily, the *Asal* in duas is *Ikhfa'*, and also because in it (audibility) is *riya* (show/ostentation). Precisely for this is it Makrooh to raise the voice with tasbeeh and tahleel.”

And, if the meaning of the word *Thikr* (in this context) is *wa'z* (lecture), then it does not mean the raising of the voice of the waa-iz (lecturer). It will mean the raising of voices by the audience with tahleel, tasbeeh and durood when the lecturer mentions the name of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Verily, it has been authentically narrated that it was reported to Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that a group of people had gathered in the Musjid, and they



were reciting tahleel and durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) while raising their voices. Then Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) went up to them and said: "*We did not practise this during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I deem you to be mubtadieen (innovators).*" He continued repeating this until he expelled them from the Musjid."

And if the meaning of the word, *Thikr* (in this context) is reciting the Qur'aan, then verily, it is Makrooh to raise the voice with qiraa't."

(Al-Muheetul Burhaani)

(6) "*Jahr* with Takbeer is known by (the Nass of) the Shariah which is in conflict with the primary principle viz. '*Verily, the Asal in athkaar and ad-iyyah (duas) is Ikhfa*'.

(7) "It is narrated from Ash-Shaikh Imaam Faqeeh Abi Ja'far (rahmatullah alayh): 'I heard that verily our (i.e. the Ahnaaf) Mashaaiikh regarded Takbeer Tashreeq (i.e. its recitation audibly) in the market-places bid'ah. And Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'ala knows best."

(Al-Burhaanul Muheet)

(8) Allaamah Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) records in his *Badaaius Sanaai'*: "According to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), raising the voice with takbeer is bid'ah, for verily it is a Thikr, and the primary principle in athkaar is Ikhfa' by virtue of Allah's qaul: "*Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence*", and by virtue of the qaul of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "*The best dua is the silent dua.*"

Allaamah Alaauddeen Abu Bakr bin Mas'ood Kaasaani (rahmatullah alayh) was a Faqeeh of the fifth Islamic century.

(9) "Verily, *jahr* with takbeer is bid'ah."  
(Hidaayah)

(10) "Ibn Humaam said: 'The *Asal* in Athkaar is *Ikhfa'* and *jahr* is bid'ah.'" (Fathul Qadeer)

(11) "Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) said: '*Raising the voice with Thikr is bid'ah because it is in conflict with the qaul of Allah Ta'ala, viz., 'Make the Thikr of your Rabb in your heart with humility and silence, and with a voice less than jahr.*'"

(Al-Khulaasah)

(12) “The takbeer shall not be recited audibly. The reason for this being: “*Verily, the Asal in Thikr is Ikhfa.*’, on the basis of the qaul of Allah Ta’ala, viz., ‘*Call unto your Rabb with humility and in silence*’, and because of the qaul of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): ‘*The best Thikr is Thikr-e-Khafi.*’.....*Verily jahr is in conflict with the Asal (Principle of Imaam Abu Hanifah).*” (Ghaayatul Bayaan)

(13) “Raising the voice with Thikr is haraam. Verily, it has been authentically reported that Ibn Mas’ood (radhiyallahu anhu) heard that a group of people had gathered in the Musjid..... *(the same narration of innovators and their expulsion).*”

(Fataawa Qaadhi Khaan)

(14) “*Jahr* with takbeer is bid’ah at all times except on occasions of exceptions (made by the Shariah). And Qaadhi Khaan has categorically declared *jahr* with takbeer to be Makrooh, and the Author of Al-Musaffa has concurred (with him).” (Al-Bahrur Raai-q)

(15) “Tabari said: ‘In it (the Hadith) is the Karaahat of raising the voice with Thikr and dua. And this is what the generality of the Sahaabah and Taabieen say.’ ”

(Irshaadus Saari of Qustulaani)

(16) “And according to what has been reported by As-Suyuti, Ibn Majah and Nisai’ have also narrated this. This Hadith indicates that it is Makrooh to raise the voice with Thikr. Now even if it is not haraam, then at least it will not be less than Makrooh.” (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(17) “Imaam Maalik and his Ashaab said that all these acts (of jahr and congregation in the Musjid) are Makrooh because the Salaf (Sahaabah and Taabieen) did not practise these acts. (These practices are also Makrooh) so that the avenue and means for bid’ah remains closed to ensure that there be no excess in the Deen, and abandonment of the clear Haqq. Verily, that which Imaam Maalik and his companions had feared has assumed reality in our time.”

(Sabaahatul Fikr)

(18) “In this Hadith is the indication for the permissibility of *jahr without doubt although Ikhfa' is afdhal.*” – Shaikh Dahlawi in Sharhul Mishkaat. (Sabaahatul Fikr)

(19) “There is no doubt in the fact that *Sirr* (silence) is superior (afdhal) to *jahr*.....’ The Mustahab according to us (the Ahnaaf) is silence in Athkaar.” – An-Nihaayah  
(Sabaahatul Fikr)

(20) “The Hadith: “*The best Thikr is Khafi (silent Thikr)*”, indicates the afdhaliyyat of silent Thikr, and there is no dispute in this fact.”  
(Sabaahatul Fikr)

(21) “When the people recite takbeer (audibly) after Salaat, verily, it is Makrooh and bid'ah. When they recite takbeer (audibly) in the Musaaqid of the Ribaat when there is no fear (of the enemy), then it is Makrooh.”  
(Fataawa Hindiyyah)

(22) Qur'aanic recitation is Mustahab only if one person recites after another person has recited, not collectively as the Egyptians and Syrians

have innovated. (One person should recite while the others should listen. Then another person should recite, and the others should listen.). Verily, Ibnudh Dhiyaa' from our Ulama has explicitly said that raising the voice in the Musjid even with Thikr is haraam.” (Irshaadus Saari – Manaasik Mulla Ali Qaari)

(23) The aayat of the Qur'aan (in Surah A'raaf) is Nass for Ikhfa' being Mustahab. (Jaami' Li Ahkaamil Qur'aan of Qurtibi)

(24) Silent Dua is afdhal. Thikr-e-Khafi is afdhal. (Ma-aariful Qur'aan)

(25) Thikr jahr is permissible, but Thikr Khafi is Aula. (Kifaayatul Mufti)

(26) Ikhfa' in Dua is preferable (Mustahab).  
(Al-Mabsoot)

(27) “It has been deducted on the basis of this aayat that Ikhfa' in Thikr is afdhal. The Hadith narrated by Imaam Ahmad supports this. (Ruhul Ma-aani)

## THE IMAGINARY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

The plethora of differences which has created a quagmire in which many Ulama flounder, unable to arrive at a conclusion, exist among the Ulama who came many centuries after the age of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. The unequivocal and unanimous view of *hurmat* (prohibition) has cast the later Ulama into a quandary. In the endeavour to be extricated from the quagmire, a variety of interpretations has been produced. Most, if not all, of these interpretations only serve to complicate the quagmire.

Most of the interpretations are untenable, both rationally and irrationally (*Aqlan wa Naqlan*). Some interpretations, e.g. the assertion that Imaam Abu Hanifah's principle refers to *jahr-e-mufrit*, are absolute drivel irrespective of who fabricated it.

There exists an incontrovertible consensus (*Ijma'*) on the *afdhaliiyyat* (superiority) of *Thikr-e-Khafi*. Whoever has ventured a contrary opinion has failed to crack or dent the Consensus. The contrary opinion of the

stragglers is pure opinion devoid of Shar'i substance.

All the Sufi Mashaaikh of the Four Silsilahs, despite their remedial and perculiar practices of *jahr* in their khaanqahs, are unanimous in upholding the *afdhaliyyat of Jahr-e-Khafi*.

## THE BID'AH OF CONGREGATIONAL THIKR

It will be appropriate and very salubrious to apprise the khaanqahs of the view and fatwa of the Chief of all the Khaanqas of our Akaabir Chishti Mashaaikh. The following question was posed to Qutubul Aalam Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh):

**Question:** “In Ramadhaan Shareef, in the Musjid during Taraaweeh Namaaz after performing four raka'ts, if all the musallis collectively recite Tasbeeh and make Dua, and with the niyyat of proclaiming the glory, grandeur and glitter of Islam, they recite the Kalimah '*Laa ilaha illallaah*' with *jahr* (loudly), will this be permissible or not?”



**Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi responded:**

“To make Thikr in this manner after the jalsah (sitting) during the Taraaweeh has not been narrated from the Sahaabah and Taabieen. Therefore, this *ha'it (specific form)* is *bid'at*. It is mentioned in *Al-Waaqiaat*: ‘*Reciting Surah Faatihah after the Fardh Salaat on occasions of events of upheaval (such as calamity, fear and disaster, etc.) is Makrooh (Tahrimi) because it is Bid'at in view of the fact that it has not been narrated from the Sahaabah and Taabieen.*’

It is also stated in Bahrur Raa-iq that it has been narrated from Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) that he heard a group of people had gathered in the Musjid and were reciting *Lailaha illal laah* and Durood on Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) audibly (*jahran*). Then he went to them and said: “*During the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) we did not practise in this manner. I do not consider you except as muttadien (innovators).*’ He continued saying so until he expelled them.”

On the basis of these two evidences, even though Thikr is *mutlaqan jaa-iz*, but to change a special form which had prevailed during

*Quroon-e-Thalaathah* (the three noble eras of Islam) is bid'at. Hence, despite Kalimah Tayyibah being permissible *jahran* on its occasions of permissibility, but during the sitting of Taraaweeh this practice is not proven, hence to do so is bid'at. In addition the masses will think that this practice is Sunnat. A mubah (permissible practice) which the masses believe to be Sunnat is bid'at.

It is mentioned in Aalamgheeriyah (Fataawa Hindiyyah): *'The practice which is done after Salaat is Makrooh because the juhhaal (ignoramus) will believe it to be Sunnat or even Waajib. Every Mubah (permissible practice) which leads to this is Makrooh. So is it reported in Az-Zaahidi.'*

Thus, it is bid'at to make Thikr in this manner despite Thikr *per se* of Kalimah Tayyibah with *jahr* being permissible. However, at this occasion this *hai't* is not proven from *Quroon-e-Thalaathah*. On the contrary, this is an occasion of *Ikhfa'*, hence it is bid'at. Furthermore, in this practice there is the danger of corrupting the Aqeedah (belief) of the masses. And Allah knows best." – *End of Hadhrat Gangohi's dissertation.* (Tazkiratur Rasheed)

The Qur'aan Majeed says: “*And, none takes lesson except the People of Intelligence.*” From the aforementioned *fageehaanah* (juridical and wise) exposition of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), every unbiased, intelligent seeker of the Haqq will observe the following salient aspects which clinches the whole dispute in which the venerable Mufti Sahib has become mired:

(a) Despite Hadhrat Gangohi being a Khaanqah Shaikh, who engaged in *khafeef* (very light) *Thikr bil Jahr*, he unequivocally branded the specific form of collective loud Thikr as being bid'at.

(b) The collective loud Thikr is bid'at because this practice did not exist in the initial three noble eras of Islam.

(c) The validity of the Abstention argument is confirmed by Hadhrat Gangohi, namely, this practice did not exist in the Sunnah, hence it is bid'ah.

(d) The authenticity of the narration of Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) is

vindicated. Hadhrat Gangohi did not argue away the act of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu) with any of the defective interpretations which the votaries of bid'ah attribute to the said narration. On the contrary, he cited it from an authentic Kitaab of Fiqh, *Bahrur Raa-iq*, as evidence in refutation of bid'ah. Despite being a Chishti Shaikh practising *Thikr bil Jahr* in his Khaanqah, he upheld the Hadith of Ibn Mas'ood (radhiyallahu anhu), and did not lamely argue it away in order to justify and vindicate the practices of the khaanqah. He was a Man of Ilm and Taqwa. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) along with being an *Aashiq* and an *Aarif Billaah*, was a *Faqeeh* whose primary function was to guard the Shariah and the beliefs of the masses.

(e) When the masses see Ulama and Sulaha engaging in Thikr practices, they will naturally infer that such acts are Sunnat, and when they see the *iltizaam* with which these practices are observed by the Ulama, then they naturally and justifiably begin to believe that these acts of 'ibaadat' are Waajib.

(f) The principle of existence and non-existence of an ibaadat practice during *Khairul Quroon* is an important and a necessary determinant and criterion for all practices of Thikr which are executed in the full view of the masses.

(g) Khaanqah practices should not be cited as a basis for justifying acts of Thikr which have no basis in the Sunnah.

(h) There is a stark difference in *Thikr bil jahr* conducted in the privacy of the khaanqah and in *Thikr bil jahr collectively* executed in public Musaaajid frequented by the masses. While the former does not corrupt the beliefs of the masses nor develop into bid'ah in which the masses become entrapped, the latter undoubtedly corrupts the Aqeedah of the masses and develops into bid'ah.

**(i) It is imperative that collective loud Thikr practices which were not in vogue during the era of the Noble Ages, not be advertised in public Musaaajid. Any khaanqah practice should be confined to the four walls of the**

**khaanqah or to private homes of the muredeen who engage in such practices.**

## **CONCLUSION**

### ***HADHRAT MAULANA ASHARAF ALI THANVI'S ADVICE***

“After every Namaaz or after Fajr and Asr, all the Namaazis collectively and *jahran* (audibly) recite *Lailaha illallaah*. They furthermore, observe this practice with regularity whereas the Buzrugs did not order this practice for all and sundry. It is designed for only special persons. However, the juhala (ignoramuses) have made this practice universal (*aam*) and incumbent. It is for this reason that the Ulama have proclaimed this practice bid'ah. Now they accuse the Ulama of branding Thikrullah as bid'ah.

Although no one may be pleased with the Ulama (on account of their Amr Bil Ma'roof), the Muhaqqiq Sufiya are pleased with them. They appreciate the Ulama. Allaamah Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh) who was a very great Muhaqqiq Sufi, said that the acts of the Sufiyah are extremely subtle (*Daqeeq*) which are beyond the comprehension of the masses. Hence, it is

incumbent for the masses not to follow the Sufiyah in *Uloom*.

On the contrary, they should follow the Jamhooir Ulama because they (the Ulama) are the supervisors and administrators of the Shariah. In fact, the universe can remain in an orderly state only by following the Ulama.....These Ulama (of the Haqq) are the Guards who protect the Imaan of the masses. If they abandon their office, then the Sufi Sahib will have to abandon his cloister and execute this duty. Then all his tasawwuf, states and ecstasies will be forgotten.

The duty of *Islaah-e-Khalq* is *Fardh Kifaayah*. If the Molvies abandon this duty, then it will devolve on the Sufis. Therefore, O Sufi! You and your cloister will remain safe as long as this Guarding Jamaa't (of Ulama-e-Haqq) subsists on earth. You sleep in comfort during the night. When your eyes open, you engage in namaaz and Thikr while the Ulama.....”  
*End of Hadhrat Thaanvi's exposition.*

We hope and we make dua that this Naseehat of Hakeemul Ummat strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of those who are in search of the Truth

DEVIANCE OF THE BID'AH 'KHAANQAHS'

– those who seek to emerge from the dark tunnel of confusion which the miscreant sheikhs of today's commercial khaanqahs have created with their bid'ah thikr gatherings, feasting and merrymaking programmes.

*“Upon us is to only deliver the Message”  
(Qur'aan)*