

Dr. A.M.A. Azeez Memorial Oration 2018

# Sinhala Muslim Relations in Sri Lanka

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செனட்டர் டாக்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ. அசீஸ் நினைவுரை 2018

இலங்கையில் சிங்கள-முஸ்லிம் உறவு



Desamanya M.D.D. Pieris  
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தேசமான்ய எம்.டி.டி. பீரிஸ்



**Dr. A.M.A. Azeez**

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**Printed by :**

Viduravi Prints  
598A, Bangalawa Junction,  
Pitakotte, Kotte.  
Tel : 0112873304, 0777 305872  
Email : viduravi123@gmail.com

**Dr. A.M.A. Azeez Memorial Oration****Sinhala Muslim Relations in Sri Lanka**

**Desamanya M.D.D. Pieris**

May I, in the first instance thank the Senator Dr. A.M.A. Azeez Foundation for so kindly inviting me to deliver this 44th Senator Dr. A.M.A. Azeez Memorial Oration, to commemorate his 45th death anniversary. Among his many important and significant achievements, was to pass the stiff open competitive examination to enter the Ceylon Civil Service, a service to which I myself belonged. This is the fourth public oration I have been invited to deliver. It is interesting that one of the previous orations happened to be on Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, who among his dazzling achievements, also had the distinction of being the first Ceylonese Civil Servant.

Before we proceed further, we must spend some time reflecting on the multifaceted life of Senator A.M.A. Azeez. If one were to go deeply into his varied and abundant achievements in any detail, it would require not one Oration, but a series of Orations to do justice to his accomplishments. However, on an occasion such as this, we must pay tribute to him, by remembering at least a few of them.

He was educated at the prestigious Jaffna Hindu College, and later for a brief period at St. Joseph's College Colombo. He was a scholar of distinction and amidst other achievements became a master of the Tamil Language. His knowledge of Hinduism was extensive and he showed a deep interest in Hindu devotional songs. He passed out with Honours in History from the University of London,



and being awarded the Government Arts Scholarship, proceeded to St. Catherine's College Cambridge for his postgraduate studies. This he abandoned, because having sat the open competitive examination for placement in the Ceylon Civil Service, he passed out second in a batch of nine, which included distinguished personalities such as K. Kanagasundram; V.S.M. De Mel; M. Rajendra; D.G.L. Misso and C.P. de Silva. Mr. Azeez thus became the first Muslim Civil Servant. In 1948, he took premature retirement from the Civil Service, due to the intense persuasion of Mr. T.B. Jayah, and succeeded him as the Principal of Zahira College Colombo. In 1962, he became a Visiting Lecturer in History at the newly inaugurated Vidyodaya University.

Among his extensive public work, he founded the Ceylon Muslim Scholarship Fund; The All Ceylon Young Men's Muslim Association Conference; was a member of the Court, Council and Senate of the University of Ceylon, President of the All Ceylon Union of Teachers and the General Secretary of the Headmasters' Conference. Appointed as a Senator in 1952 and reappointed several times; and, a member of the then highly prestigious Public Service Commission. He was awarded the title of M.B.E; a stamp was issued in his name by the Philatelic Bureau; and he was honoured by his inclusion in the publication entitled "100 Great Muslim Leaders of the 20th Century" brought out by the Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi. He was the only Sri Lankan featured in this publication.

I have given you only a brief glimpse of this rich and varied personality. Perhaps, it is best captured by someone who described Senator Azeez in the following manner.

"He is a Muslim, he is from Jaffna, he looks like a Burgher and acts like a Sinhalese". He rose above narrow confines. He was truly a citizen of the world.

I wish to devote the rest of this oration to Sinhala Muslim relations and some of the wider issues that arise transcending a particular relationship.

Professor Lorna Dewaraja, a lady with whom I have worked from time to time, and whom I greatly respected brought out a book in 1994 entitled "The Muslims of Sri Lanka - One Thousand Years of Ethnic Harmony - 900 - 1915". The book was happily named because the wide research the author had undertaken in order to write the book justified the descriptive title she gave to it. In this book she states, "in the history of Sri Lanka few are aware of the harmonious relationship which had developed between the Sinhalese, its indigenous inhabitants and the Muslims who initially were foreigners, and that both have lived together peacefully for over a thousand years". Then she goes on to state "Perhaps because it was such a peaceful relationship, it has passed unnoticed by the historian". It is a matter of great significance that a distinguished academic, after extensive research could come to such a happy conclusion.

It would be of interest to refer to some details of the wide ranging nature of this relationship. She states, "The Muslims served as officials in the administration of the State, as well as of the Buddhist monasteries. It is noteworthy that the Muslims were functioning in the Temple of the Tooth and participated in the ritual of the Esala Maha Perahera, the greatest pageant in the Buddhist world". Then she goes on to add this most significant comment "This process of structural assimilation which took place without any erosion of the cultural distinctiveness of the Muslims is perhaps unique in minority - majority relations".

You would see therefore, that this relationship did not depend on some status determined by numbers. It seemed



a relationship based on a natural and seamless mutual acceptance and understanding, and to this happy result the Buddhist doctrine of tolerance and its total disinterest in any kind of conversion to one's faith, played a most important part.

Instances of this relaxedly tolerant attitude form part of the text of Professor Dewaraja's book. She refers to, "The magnanimous attitude adopted by the Sinhala Kings to the people of other faiths:". Then she cites examples of this magnanimity. "There are a number of mosques in the country built on land donated by the Kandyan Kings. For example, the KAATTU PALLIYA in Kandy and the Maddulbova and Kahatapitiya mosques. There were instances where the bhikkus had permitted mosques to be built on Buddhist monastic lands for the benefit of the Muslim villagers. For instance, the PAN GOLLAMADA mosque was built on land belonging to the DEGALDORUVA Vihara and the mosque at RAMBUKANDANA on land belonging to the *Ridi Vihara* at Kurunegala. Further, the bhikkus of the *Ridi Vihara* supported a Muslim priest to minister to the spiritual needs of the Muslim tenants living on monastic lands". Then she comes to the following most important conclusion: "In this manner as the Muslims became structurally integrated into the Socio-Economic system their religious individuality was not effaced but enhanced".

What a stupendous achievement for a society! Professor Dewaraja's valuable research brings out the seamless and harmonious relationship that prevailed between the Muslim and the Sinhala Buddhists, including the Maha Sangha for such a long period of time.

Then, what of Foreign relations? Here too, the evidence points to Muslims playing an important role. Professor

Dewaraja states, "Muslims played a significant role in the foreign relations of Sri Lanka. As early as the thirteenth century AI-HAJ-AL Uthuman was sent by the Sinhala King to the Mamluk Court of Egypt to negotiate direct trade relations between the two countries". She goes on to state further "It will be seen that Muslims were sent on important missions to South India right up to Kandyan times".

Of the research conducted to write her book the distinguished academic Professor Dewaraja records, "It was found necessary in the course of this inquiry to visit Muslim villages, mosques and Buddhist monasteries and hold interviews with descendants of old Muslim families, Muslim physicians, trustees of mosques, and several eminent bhikkus. Many old residents cherished memories of their ancestors who enjoyed cordial relations with the Sinhala Kings. Muslim physicians recollected their student days in Buddhist monasteries. Several elderly bhikkus including the Mahanayake of the Malwatta Vihara were aware of Muslims rendering service to the Viharas within living memory. It was observed that in remote areas which were less modernised, less commercial, and less politicized there still prevails a healthy spirit of cooperation between the Sinhala and Muslim peasants and also between the Muslims and the bhikkus". Please note the words "less modernised, less commercial and less politicized". Later, with these ingredients came greater competition and greater stresses. All these have undoubtedly impacted the evolving current relationship. The evolution demonstrates certain negative aspects that must not be permitted to grow. Since we are living in a globalized society, we get hit by global trends that we have to manage responsibly. These trends get enhanced by rapid technological change, and one such, massive change is the revolution in the speed and ubiquity and the ambiguity



of information and misinformation which can create instant stress, rouse feelings and reduce the time available to think and reflect.

Then, there is the other strong trend towards populism and identity politics. These too have to be carefully handled and carefully managed. It is a question of balance, a balance which groups and communities find increasingly difficult to achieve under the current bombardment of truths, half-truths and lies.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong in religious, ethnic and other communities identifying and celebrating their uniqueness and their special identity and taking pride in that identity. The central issue is how far can you go, and whether you can do so without jeopardizing your relationship with the larger community of which you are a part. Can the principle of unity in diversity be protected? If all communities and groups do not work towards this, the appearance of dangerous social and community stresses would be inevitable. To manage these trends, we also need a mature and responsible political leadership both at the national level and at the sub-national level as well as of communities and groups. Do we have this now? If not, is there not a responsibility on the part of the educated, intelligent and thinking sections to address this issue on a regular, consistent, and certainly on an urgent basis?

On all sides, if identity issues are not handled on the basis of an appreciation of the richness of diversity, as opposed to feelings of a threat and a perception of disturbance to others, such issues could degenerate into prejudice and hostility. If that were to happen, everyone loses, the country most of all.

Currently, while the issues that I have mentioned seem to affect most groups to varying extents, it would be ignoring reality to pretend that Muslims are not being perceived in a more negative light in many parts of the world, including in Sri Lanka. Particularly after the 9/11 attack on America and the rise of numerous extremist groups and the consequent strife and bloodshed, certain realities have emerged, which have inevitably led to a degree of prejudice and even hostility towards Muslims.

These feelings have been aggravated by distinctive dress codes and sartorial styles adopted by a significant number of Muslim women and men. While the reasons for all these are quite complex and cannot clearly be laid at the door of a particular group of people, it has been difficult to manage perceptions. Legitimate expression of identity gets interpreted sometimes by others in terms of being separate and alien.

The various interpretations of Islam indulged in by some of these groups have aggravated matters further.

In this context I wish to quote from a recent interview given by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia to the Television Channel CNN :-

**C.N.N.** : "You are the leader of a moderate, mostly Muslim nation and in 2003 you called on Islam to evolve. Has it?"

**Mahathir** : "Well, the Islam that you see today is not actually the Islam that is taught by the religion. It is the Islam interpreted by certain powerful people, leaders, scholars and all that. We find that it is quite different from the original teachings of Islam as found in the Quran. So, we feel that the Islam of the Quran is a very moderate Islam. It doesn't



preach war. It calls upon all Muslims to be brothers. It forbids killing. Well, we are doing all these things which is forbidden by Islam. So, it is the interpretation of the religion that has got us into the world stage".

**C.N.N.** : "So, in your opinion, it is these interpretations that are running your religion?"

**Mahathir** : "Yes. Somebody comes along, becomes a very popular leader and he interprets in his own way that you should fight, you should kill, you should be opposed to people of other religions. Even among yourselves, you don't accept people who have other interpretations. All these things have resulted in instability, even in conflicts and civil wars, and also wars within nations".

Whether one agrees or not with these comments, Mahathir is a highly respected world figure and his voice commands much respect.

Ladies and gentlemen, what I have endeavored to do in this oration is to bring to your attention the unity in diversity, which our communities have achieved in the past, as well as the comfort level and harmony that had existed for centuries between the Sinhala and Muslims communities. I have also endeavored to reflect on some stresses to which we are subject in modern times and to emphatically state that we must evolve permanent and stable mechanisms to manage these. I have also alluded to the complexity of handling diversity. I remember, many years ago, when I was Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, I happened to be seated next to the Minister of Education of Bahrain at a lunch in his honour. During the course of conversation with him I referred to Muslim education and Muslim schools in Sri Lanka. He listened courteously was silent for sometime and then to my surprise asked me "but Mr. Pieris why Muslim

schools?" His view was that it was unhealthy for communities to be segregated, a very enlightened and rational view. I had to then talk to him about certain historical developments and concentrations of populations etc. that have resulted in our present school system. So these are complex matters, and people hold different views.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to leave you with the thought that while issues of identity, respect and so on are most important, if these sensitive issues are not well managed, they could lead to conflict. Centuries of history have given the Sinhala and the Muslims communities a splendid framework within which to function. Persons at the individual level happily function, as in the past. Let me relate the importance of functioning in this manner from an actual example within my personal knowledge. I am on the Board of Trustees of the Vidyodya Pirivena at Maligakanda. Vidyodya is considered the foremost pirivena in Sri Lanka, and besides being a center of Buddhist and wider areas of learning, also played a central role in the revival of national culture as well as the movement for national Independence. The pirivena has a significant number of pupil monks and teachers in residence for whom dana has to be provided. Sometime ago the pirivena, due to various reasons faced a most difficult financial situation, and the issue of providing dana to the resident monks was becoming a serious problem. Just at this time, the, then third member for Colombo central, Mr. Halim Ishak who was passing the pirivena thought of dropping in. He met the highly respected Nayaka Thero who headed the pirivena, quickly grasped the serious difficulty and made immediate arrangements for an infusion of funds from his decentralized budget. A few months later, the Nayake Thero invited the M.P. to a large function at the pirivena which was graced by very Senior Monks from



various temples including Malwatta and Asgiriya. Mr. Halim Ishak was the only lay person accommodated on the Central stage. All the others were Senior Monks. Even the governing board of the pirivena was accommodated below. This arrangement elicited some inquiring looks and some subdued conversation. When the function started the Ven. Nayake Thero explained to the gathering who the person was that was seated on the stage, and why he was accommodated there. No distinguished Buddhist lay person was accommodated, only Mr. Halim Ishak. The spirit prevailing was that of what Professor Dewaraja has recorded in her well researched book.

This oration is a remembrance of and a tribute to Senator, Dr. A.M.A. Azeez, who worked within, and promoted and protected the great historical traditions of breadth of vision and harmonious relations between the Sinhalese Buddhists and the Muslims.

Therefore I considered it appropriate to conclude this oration with a quotation from a collection of his essays on numerous topics entitled "The West Reappraised". In his essay on the "Buddha Jayanthi", he states as follows:-

"The Buddhist Council is being inaugurated to commemorate in a fitting manner the Buddha Jayanthi. This great historic event is not only of intensely religious importance to the preponderant majority of the people of Ceylon but also of special national significance to all of us who proudly claim Sri Lanka as our Island Home. It behoves us, who live in this pleasant land to be alive to the heritage of our nation and to the history of our land which are so inextricably inter woven with the teachings of Lord Buddha.

The celebrations that are being planned will indeed help us, particularly those of us who do not belong to the Buddhist Faith, remember vividly that the art and architecture of Ceylon, her learning and literature, her status and stature in the comity of nations and her position of prestige and privilege in South and South East Asia cannot be disassociated from the Life and Teaching of Lord Buddha. These have also largely encouraged the inter-communal amity and harmony that prevails in our land which all of us should feel justly proud. The spirit of tolerance and kindness that characterizes the Teachings of Lord Buddha was truly responsible for the warm welcome that was accorded to the early Muslim settlers and for the freedom of worship which they enjoyed in Ceylon.

Because of the welcome and because of this freedom, they and their descendants were able to make substantial contributions to the wealth and welfare of Ceylon".

Today, more than ever we need such people of vision, learning, judgment and wisdom as Senator, Dr. A.M.A. Azeez. It was a great loss to the nation that he died so young at the age of 62.

The greatest tribute one can pay to him now is to actively network with other eminent Muslim organizations, as well as similar organizations representing other communities and religions to oppose prejudice and hostility, and to actively recreate that harmony that was an intrinsic part of the relationship for centuries. Inaction, is not an option. We must always keep in mind the wise observation, that, for evil to triumph, it is only necessary for the good to do nothing.

I thank you.



## About the Speaker

**Desamanya M.D.D. Pieris** is a graduate of the University of Ceylon (Peradeniya), Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, UK and has been conferred the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by the University of Colombo. Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by the University of Westminster (UK) and the title of Honorary Senior Fellow by the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine. He is also "A Distinguished Fellow" of the Institute of National Security Studies, Sri Lanka.

His career was in the then Ceylon Civil Service and later, on the abolition of that service, in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service.

He had a distinguished career in the public service and held several important posts, including that of the Secretary to the Prime Minister; Secretary, Ministry of public Administration Provincial Councils and Home Affairs; Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Cooperatives; Secretary, Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Chairman and Director General of Broadcasting.

He has also acted on several occasions in addition to his duties, in the posts of Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs and Secretary to the Ministry of Trade and Shipping.

He has at various times been the Chairman of the National Institute of Education; Chairman, Board of Management of the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration; Chairman of the Agrarian Research and Training Institute and

Chairman of the Public Sector Infrastructure Development Company.

He has also served on the Governing Councils or Boards of Management of several Universities and Post Graduate Institutes, including the Council of the University of Colombo; the Board of Management of the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine; the University of Colombo School of Computing; the Council of the Buddhist and Pali University; The Board of Management of the Arthur C. Clarke Centre of the University of Moratuwa; and the Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology of the University of Kelaniya.

He has been Director of the People's Bank, the People's Merchant Bank and a Member of the Rural Credit Advisory Committee of the Central bank.

He has served as a Member of the National Salaries Commission; a Member of the Presidential Commission on Finance and Banking and has chaired three Presidential Committees - one to examine and report on the proposed mechanized gem mining in the KALU GANGA; the other on the Functioning of the Survey Department, and the third on the Sri Lanka Foreign Service.

Currently, he is the Chairman of the Board of Management of the Institute of Information Technology and serves on the Board of Directors of L.O.L.C; the Governing Board of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies; on the Board of Management of the Institute of Indigenous Medicine of the University of Colombo; and on the Board of Management of the School of Computing of the University of Colombo. He is also a member of the Academic Affairs Board for Post Graduate Studies of the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (S.L.I.D.A); the Board of

Management of the SANASA Campus; a Director of the M.M.B.L / PATHFINDER Group and a member of the Board of Governors of VIDYODAYA PIRIVENA Maligakanda.

Desamanya Pieris also lectures from time to time on invitation, at S.L.I.D.A.; the Defence Services Command and Staff College at Sapugaskanda; the Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute and the Kotelawala Defence University.

He has delivered four convocation addresses, at the University of Colombo; Sri Jayawardenapura; Ruhuna and the Open University. He has, also on invitation delivered three Memorial Orations - the Lalith Athulathmudali Memorial Oration; the Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam Memorial Oration; and the Vidyajothi Professor V.K. Samaranayake Memorial oration. He has been conferred the high National Honor of DESAMANYA for "Distinguished Service of a highly meritorious nature to the Nation".

He has published his memoirs of his experience in the public service of Sri Lanka in a book entitled "IN THE PURSUIT OF GOVERNANCE".

## **Desamanya M.D.D. Pieris**

**by M.P. Muhammad Jaleel**

The Dr. A.M.A. Azzez Foundation invited the distinguished personality Desamanya M.D.D. Pieris to deliver the annual Memorial Oration honouring late Dr. A.M.A. Azzez, who was an eminent educationist, scholar, Civil Servant and author of numerous publications.

For me, personally, it is a privilege to know Mr. Pieris as a friend since 2003. I am delighted that we have the opportunity of having Mr. Pieris to deliver the Memorial Oration.

One of the greatest professional contributions of Mr. Pieris, who was the Secretary to the Prime Minister, was to spread awareness of the value and importance of the administration of the Ceylon Civil Service.

In addition to his professional qualities, Mr. Pieris is a wonderful human being. He is a thorough gentleman, a very gracious person, broad minded with a high intellect and openness. He is a person of exceptional poise, talent and character, a very inspiring orator, clever strategist and pragmatic administrator. It was appropriate that he spent seven years as Secretary to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

It was not surprising that a person of such stature made the culture of administration and professionalism as the mainstay of the Prime Minister's engagements with world leaders. A key attribute of that culture was its emphasis on its accomplishments and result orientation. His highly analytical skills carried a conviction carefully nurturing of talent and creative thinking and all combined to engender a constructive ambience within the administrative service and



its professionals becoming accomplished as well.

Mr. Pieris' many achievements speak volumes about him. His autobiography "In the Pursuit of Governance", published in 2002 is a memoir of over three decades of public service of Sri Lanka. Many accolades were received.

According to Late Dr. Gamini Corea, "This book is of exceptional value and should serve as one of the most important contributions to political history of post independent Sri Lanka"

Late Mr. Kamalasabesan, former Attorney General, has said that this book is extremely useful to members of the public service.

Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy has said that Mr. Pieris is the best example for a public servant.

Dr. Carlo Fonseka has said that Mr. Pieris became the Secretary to the Prime Minister at the age of thirty two. His book is a handbook of ethical conduct for public servants.

Former Vice Chancellor Prof. Savithri Goonasekera has said that this book is an inspiration on how to rediscover an almost lost tradition of public service.

Mr. Charitha P. De Silva, a leading professional and personality in business, has said that Mr. Pieris' dealings with his political bosses in a way that earned him the respect and affection of the leaders of both major political parties. His handling of trade unions and subordinates were exemplary and demonstrated his skillful communication. Mr. Pieris' whole life is based on values and principles imbued in him by his Parents, Justice and Fairplay were at the root of all his decisions. All these exemplary qualities were reinforced by an inexhaustible capacity for hard work.

Mr. Paul Collins, Journalist in London, has said that Mr. Pieris in the seventies as Secretary to the world's first woman Prime Minister brought him into contact with a galaxy of world leaders of the time. Yet the tone of his writing features as profound humanity based in a keen sense of values.

Former acting Prime Minister Mr. Maithripala Senanayake in his letter to Mr. Pieris has said, "Dharmasiri, you are the last of a very special breed of public servants and I am afraid that you belong to another era, another time, the calibre of public servants that you don't get now of loyalty, integrity, trustworthy and valuable asset to any Govt. Always to the correct advice and to the benefit of the Govt. I am well aware how fortunate Mrs. Bandaranaike was to have you as her Secretary when she was Prime Minister in the seventies.

Prof. Ameer Ali of Murdoch University, Western Australia has highly recommended Mr. Dharmasiri Pieris' book as an important source of reference to all his post graduate students who have come from developing countries.

Former Cabinet Secretary, Mr. M.S. Alif said, "Dharmasiri - a great administrator, a thorough gentleman who I was honoured to count as an intimate friend. A very sharp minded intellectual".

Finally, Mr. Pieris is a proud product of the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. He still loves his University as we all do. Peradeniya campus is a magnet to us. May God Almighty Bless and Shower His Blessings on him and his family.

## ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ සිංහල ~ මුස්ලිම් සබඳතා

දේශමානස, ආචාර්ය එම්.ඩී.ඩී. පීරිස්

මා මුලින්ම සෞඛ්‍ය සහ ආර්ථික අමාත්‍ය ඒ.එම්.ඒ. අසීස් පදනමට ස්තූතිවන්ත වෙනවා මෙම 45 වන සිහිකිරීමේදී 44 වන සෞඛ්‍ය සහ ආර්ථික අමාත්‍ය ඒ.එම්.ඒ. අසීස් ගුණානුස්මරණ දේශනය පැවැත්වීමට මා හට ආරාධනා කිරීම ගැන. ඔහු තම ජීවිතයේ ලන් විවිධ ජයග්‍රහණයන් අතර ඉහළින්ම සැලකිය හැක්කේ අතිශය දුෂ්කර වූ, විවෘත තරග විභාගයකට පෙනී සිට, මා ද ඇතුළත්ව සිටි, ශ්‍රී ලංකා සිවිල් සේවයට ඇතුළුවන්නට හැකිවීම යි. අද මා පවත්වන්නේ මාගේ සිවුවන ප්‍රසිද්ධ දේශනය යි. මින් පෙර පැවැත්වූ එක් දේශනයක් ශ්‍රීමත් පොන්නම්බලම් අරුණාභලම් අනුස්මරණය සඳහා ය. එතුමා ලැබූ වර්ණවත් ජයග්‍රහණ අතරින් ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨ වූයේත් ලංකාවේ සිවිල් සේවයට පත්කරගනු ලැබූ මුල් ම ලාංකිකයා වීමේ භාග්‍යය හිමිවීම යන්න විශේෂ සංසිද්ධියක් ලෙස මම දකිමි.

තවදුරටත් කථාකිරීමට පෙර සෞඛ්‍ය සහ ආර්ථික අමාත්‍ය ඒ.එම්.ඒ. අසීස් මැතිතුමාගේ ජීවිතයේ විවිධ පැතිකඩ ගැන අවධානය යොමුකළ යුතු යි. ඔහුගේ ජීවිතයේ විවිධ වූත් අතිමහත් වූත් ජයග්‍රහණයන් ගැඹුරින් හා සවිස්තරව සලකා බලන්නේ නම් සමරු දේශන එකකින් නොව ගණනාවකින් වුව ද ඊට සාධාරණය ඉටුකළ නොහැකි ය. කෙසේ වුවත් මෙවන් අවස්ථාවකදී එතුමාට ගෞරව කිරීමට නම් ඉන් කිපයක් ගැන හෝ මතක්කිරීම අවශ්‍ය ය.

ඔහු ඉගෙනුම ලැබුවේ සැවොම දන්නා යාපනය හිනූ විද්‍යාලයෙනි. පසුව ටික කලක් කොළඹ ශාන්ත ජෝසප් විද්‍යාලයේ

ද ඉගෙනුම ලබා ඇත. ඔහු අති දක්ෂ සිසුවෙක් වූ අතර අනිකුත් දක්ෂතා ඇතුළුව දම්ළ භාෂා විශාරදයෙක් ද විය. හිනූ ආගම ගැන ද හසල දැනුමක් තිබූ ඔහු හිනූ භක්ති ගීතවලට විශේෂ ඇල්මක් දැක්වීය. ලන්ඩන් විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයෙන් ඉතිහාසය විෂයට විශිෂ්ට සාමාර්ථයක් ලැබූ ඔහු රජයේ කලා ශිෂ්‍යායක් මත කේම්බ්‍රිජ් විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ ශාන්ත කැතරින් විද්‍යාලයට ඇතුළු වී පශ්චාත් උපාධි අධ්‍යයනයෙහි යෙදුනි. එනමුදු අතරමගදී එය අත්හරින්නට වූයේ ශ්‍රී ලංකා සිවිල් සේවයට බඳවා ගැනීමේ විවෘත තරග විභාගයට පෙනී සිටි නවදෙනාගෙන් දෙවැන්නා ලෙස සමත් වී අසීස් මැතිතුමා සිවිල් සේවයට බඳවාගනු ලැබූ හෙයිනි. කේ. කනගසුඤ්ඤ, ඩී.එස්.එම්. ද මෙල්, එම්. රාජේන්ද්‍ර, ඩී.ජී.එල්. මිසෝ, සී.පී. ද සිල්වා යන මහතුන් ද මෙම කණ්ඩායමට අයත් වූ විශිෂ්ටයන් වූහ. මේ අනුව අසීස් මහතා ශ්‍රී ලංකා සිවිල් සේවයට ඇතුළත් වූ මුල් ම මුස්ලිම් ජාතිකයා විය. 1948 දී සඟරා විද්‍යාලයේ විදුහල්පති ධුරය තමන්ගෙන් පසු භාරගන්නා ලෙස ටී.බී. ජයා මහත්මාගේ බලවත් පෙරැත්තය හේතුවෙන් ඔහු වැඩිකල් නොගොස් ශ්‍රී ලංකා සිවිල් සේවය ට ආයුබෝවන් කීවේය. 1962 වසරේ අළුතෙන් ආරම්භ කරන ලද විද්‍යාත්මක විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ ඉතිහාසය පිළිබඳ බාහිර කථිකාචාර්ය ධුරයෙන් ද ඔහු පිදුම් ලැබුවේය.

අසීස් මැතිතුමා අග්‍රගණ්‍යයේ පොදුජන සේවකයෙකි. ලංකා මුස්ලිම් ශිෂ්‍යාය අරමුදල හා සමස්ත ලංකා මුස්ලිම් තරුණ සමිති සම්මේලනයේ නිර්මාතෘවරයා වූයේ ය. ශ්‍රී ලංකා විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ සෞඛ්‍ය සහ ආර්ථික හා පාලකමණ්ඩල සහිත ධුර, සමස්ත ලංකා ගුරු සංගමයේ සභාපති හා විදුහල්පතිවරුන්ගේ සම්මේලනයේ ලේකම් පදවිය ද ඉසිලීය. 1952 වසරේ ලංකාවේ සෞඛ්‍ය සහ ආර්ථික සාමාජිකයෙක් ලෙස පත්වූ අසීස් මහතා එම ධුරයට කිහිපවිටක් නැවත පත්කරනු ලැබීය. සම්මානනීය රාජ්‍යසේවා කොමිෂන් සභාවේ ද සහිතයෙක් විය.

බ්‍රිතාන්‍ය රජයෙන් එම්.බී.ඊ. යන ගෞරව නාමයෙන් ද ඔහු පිදුම් ලැබීය. ශ්‍රී ලංකා මුද්දර කාර්යාංශය මගින් ඔහු වෙනුවෙන් සමරු මුද්දරයක් ද නිකුත්කර තිබුණි. නවදිල්ලියේ Institute of Objective Studies විසින් නිකුත් කරන ලද '20 වන සියවසේ



ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨ මුස්ලිම් නායකයින් 100' නම් ප්‍රකාශනයෙහි සම්මානයට පාත්‍රවන එකම ශ්‍රී ලාංකිකයා ද වනුයේ අසීස් මහතා ය.

මවිසින් ඉදිරිපත් කරන්නට යෙදුනේ මේ ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨ පුරුෂයාගේ චරිත ලක්ෂණ අල්පමාත්‍රයක් පමණි. නමුත් ඔහු කවුරුද යන්න පැහැදිලිව හඳුනාගතහැක්කේ එක් අයෙකු විසින් කරන ලද මෙම හැඳින්වීම තුළිනි: "හේ මුස්ලිම් හක්කියෙකි; යාපනයේ සිට එන්නෙකි; පෙනුමෙන් බර්ගර් ජාතිකයෙකි, ක්‍රියාවෙන් සිංහලයෙකි". ඔහු පටු චින්තනය අත්හළ සැබෑ යුගපුරුෂයෙකි.

මාගේ දේශනයේ ඉතිරි කොටසින් මා සාකච්ඡා කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙන්නේ සිංහල - මුස්ලිම් සම්බන්ධය හා එය හුදු සම්බන්ධතාවයකට පමණක් සීමා නොවී, ඉන් ඔබ්බට ගිය පුළුල් සන්දර්භයන් ගැන ය. මා හා විටින්විට වැඩ කරන්නට යෙදුනු, ඒ සමගම මා ඉතා ගරුකරන මහාචාර්ය ලෝ(ර්)නා දේවරාජා විසින් රචිත "ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ මුස්ලිම්වරු - වසර 1000ක ජනවාර්ගික සහජීවනය - 900 සිට 1915" නම් ග්‍රන්ථය 1994 දී එළි දැක්විණ. මෙම පොත ලිවීම සඳහා දරණ ලද දැඩි ප්‍රයත්නයන් පුළුල් ගවේෂණයන් හේතුවෙන් පොත එසේ නම් කිරීම සතුට දනවන්නකි. එතුමිය විසින් රචිත පරිදි "ශ්‍රී ලංකා ඉතිහාසයේ පාරම්පරික පුරවැසියන් වන සිංහල ජනතාවත්, මුල්කාලයේ විදේශිකයින් වූ මුස්ලිම් ජනයාත් අතර ගොඩනැගුණ සුහදනාවය හා ඔවුන් වසර දහසකට වඩා කාලයක් සුහදව විසූ බව දන්නේ ටික දෙනෙක් පමණි" එතුමිය වැඩිදුරටත් පවසන අන්දමට "මෙම සහජීවනය කෙතරම් සාමකාමීව තිබුණේදැ යි කිවහොත් එම යුගය ඉතිහාසඥයින්ගේ අවධානයට පවා හසුවී නොමැත". එතුමිය වැනි ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨ විද්වතෙක් පුළුල්වූ ගවේෂණාත්මක අධ්‍යයනයකින් පසුව එවන් සාධනීය නිගමනයකට එළඹීම අතිශයින් වැදගත් වේ. මෙම පුළුල් සහජීවනයේ වැදගත් අංග විස්තරාත්මකව පිරික්සීම සතුට දනවන කරුණකි. එතුමිය පවසා සිටින පරිදි "මුස්ලිම්වරුන් රජයේ පරිපාලන සේවයේ මෙන්ම බෞද්ධ සිද්ධස්ථානයන්හි නිලධාරීන් ලෙසද කටයුතු කරඇත. මුස්ලිම්වරුන් දළඳ මාලිගාවේ ක්‍රියාවන්ට ද සම්බන්ධ වෙමින් බෞද්ධයින්ගේ වැදගත්ම පූජනීය සංදර්ශනය වූ ඇසළ මහා පෙරහැරෙහි කටයුතුවලට ද සක්‍රීය දායකත්වය ලබාදුන්හ." වැඩිදුරටත් ලියාගෙන යන එතුමියගේ

අතිශය වැදගත් සඳහන වනුයේ "මෙම එකමුතුව ගොඩනැගීමේදී මුස්ලිම් සංස්කෘතික අනන්‍යතාවයට කිසිදු හානියක් නොවීම, බහුතර - සුළුතර සහජීවනයක අද්විතීය නිර්මාණයකි" යනුවෙනි.

මෙම සහජීවනය ජන සංඛ්‍යාත්මක ශක්තිය මත පදනම් ව ගොඩනැගුණක් නොවන බව ඔබට පෙනියනු ඇත. මුළුමනින්ම ස්වාභාවික වූත් අසීමිත අන්‍යෝන්‍ය අවබෝධය හා පිළිගැනීම මත පදනම් වූවකි. අසීමිත කරුණාව හා ඉවසීම පාදක කරගත් බෞද්ධ දර්ශනයේ දැක්වෙන පරිදි, අන් අය තම ඇදහීමට හරවාගැනීමේ කිසිදු අභිප්‍රායක් නොපැවතීම, මෙම යහපත් ප්‍රතිඵලයට බලපෑ වැදගත්ම සාධකය වේ.

එවක සමාජයේ හුරුපුරුදු නිවුනු, ඉවසිලිවන්ත ස්වභාවය හා ආකල්ප, මහාචාර්ය දේවරාජාගේ ග්‍රන්ථයෙන් පැහැදිලිව දැකිය හැකිය. අන්‍ය ලබ්ධිකයින් කෙරෙහි සිංහල රජවරුන් දැක්වූ අති උදාර සැලකිල්ල එහි දැක්වේ. උදාහරණ ලෙස දක්වමින්, උඩරට රජවරුන් විසින් පවරා දෙනලද ඉඩම්වල ඉදිකරනු ලැබූ මුස්ලිම් දේවස්ථාන වන මහනුවර කාට්ටුපල්ලිය, මද්දුල්බෝව හා කහටපිටිය පල්ලිය එහි සඳහන් වේ. මුස්ලිම් ග්‍රාමවාසීන්ගේ සුබසිද්ධිය සඳහා පල්ලි ඉදිකිරීමට බෞද්ධ පන්සල් සතු ඉඩම් වෙන්කර දුන් අවස්ථා ගැන ද සඳහන් වේ. පංගොල්ලමඩ පල්ලිය ඉදිවී ඇත්තේ දෙගල්දොරුව විහාරභූමියේ ය. රඹුකඳන පල්ලිය කුරුණෑගල රිදීවිහාරයට අයත් ඉඩමක ය. රිදීවිහාර වාසී භික්ෂූන්, විහාර ඉඩකඩම් හි විසූ මුස්ලිම් කුලීනිවැසියන්ගේ ආධ්‍යාත්මික අවශ්‍යතාවයන්හි දී උපකාරවීමට මුස්ලිම් පූජකයින්ට අවස්ථාව සලසා දුන්හ. අනතුරුව එතුමිය එළඹී වැදගත්ම නිගමනය වනුයේ "මේ අයුරින් මුස්ලිම්වරු සමාජ - ආර්ථික ව්‍යුහයට අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය වූයේ ඔවුන්ගේ ආගමික අනන්‍යතාවය නැති කරනොගෙන පමණක් නොව එහි උද්දීපනයක් ද පවා ඇතිකරමිනි" යන්නය. එය සමාජයකට ලැබිය හැකි අතිවිශිෂ්ට ජයග්‍රහණයක් නොවන්නේද? මුස්ලිම්වරුන් හා මහා සංඝයා ඇතුළු සිංහල බෞද්ධ ජනතාව අතර දිගු කළක් තිස්සේ පැවැති සුහදනාවය මහාචාර්ය දේවරාජාගේ ගවේෂණ තුළින් මනාව දිස්වෙයි.

විදේශ රටවල් හා සහසම්බන්ධය කෙසේද? මෙහිදී වුවද



මුස්ලිම්වරුන් වැදගත් කාර්යයක් ඉටුකළ බවට සාක්ෂි තිබේ. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ විදේශ සබඳතා ක්ෂේත්‍රයෙහිද මුස්ලිම්වරුන් වැදගත් කාර්යභාරයක් ඉටුකළහ. 13වන සියවස තරම් අතීත දී පවා සිංහල රජවරුන් වෙළඳ සබඳතා පිළිබඳව ගිවිසුම් ඇති කරගැනීම් වස් ඊජිප්තුවේ 'මැම්ලුක්' සභාවට අල්හජ් අල් උදුමාන් යවා තිබුණි. මහනුවර යුගය තෙක් වැදගත් කර්තව්‍යයන් ඉටුකිරීමට මුස්ලිම්වරුන් නියෝජිතයන් සේ දකුණු ඉන්දියාවට පවා යවා ඇති බව හෙළි වෙයි.

ග්‍රන්ථය ලිවීමේදී විද්වත් මහාචාර්යතුමිය පවසන පරිදි "මාගේ පර්යේෂණය අතරතුර මුස්ලිම් ගම්මාන, පල්ලි හා බෞද්ධ ආරාමයන් නැරඹීමටත්, එහි භාරකාර මණ්ඩල, හා ප්‍රසිද්ධ භික්ෂූන් වහන්සේලා හමුවීමටත් අවශ්‍ය විය. පැරණි ගම්මාන සිත් තම මුතුන්මිත්තන් සිංහල රජවරුන් හා පැවැති සමීප ඇසුර ගැන සංවේදීව සිහිපත් කළහ. මුස්ලිම් වෙදවරුන් බෞද්ධ පිරිවෙන් ඇසුරේ ගෙවී ගිය තම ශිෂ්‍ය ජීවිතය ගැන සිහිපත් කළහ. එවක සිටි මල්වතු මහානාහිමියන් ඇතුළු වයෝවෘද්ධ භික්ෂූන්වහන්සේලා තමන්ට මතක තිබෙන අත කාලයේදීත් මුස්ලිම්වරුන් බෞද්ධ විහාරස්ථානවලට කළ සේවය සිහිපත් කළහ. එතරම් නවීකරණයට, එතරම් වාණිජකරණයට හා එතරම් දේශපාලනීකරණයට භාජනය නොවූ අත දුර බැහැර ප්‍රදේශවල සිංහල ගැමියන් හා මුස්ලිම් ගැමියන් අතරේ පමණක් නොව බෞද්ධ භික්ෂූන්වහන්සේලා හා මුස්ලිම් ජනයා අතර සුහද සබඳතාවයක් තවමත් දැකිය හැකිය".

"එතරම් නවීකරණයට, එතරම් වාණිජකරණයට හා එතරම් දේශපාලනීකරණයට භාජනය නොවූ" යන වදන්වල අරුත් අතිශයින් වැදගත්ය. පසු කාලයේ මෙම කළමනා ත්‍රිත්වයෙහි ආගමනයන් සමග තරගකාරිත්වය හා අසහනය ආදිය එදිනෙදා ජනජීවිතයට ඇතුළු විය. හැඩගැසීගෙන එන්නාවූ වත්මන් සහජීවනයට මේවා නිසැකවම බලපෑම් ඇතිකර තිබේ. මේ සිදුවී ඇති පරිණාමය ඇතැම් සංඛ්‍යාත්මක ආකල්පයන් ජනිත කරන අතර මේවා වර්ධනය වීමට ඉඩ නොතැබිය යුතු යි. අද අප ගෝලීය සමාජයක ජීවත්වන හෙයින් ගෝලීය සන්දර්භයන්ද අප පෙළනු ඇත. එවැනි දෑ වගකීමෙන් යුතුව මනාව කළමනාකරණය

කරගැනීමට අප සමත්විය යුතු යි. අද අප අත්දකින වේගවත් තාක්ෂණික දියුණුව මෙම ප්‍රවණතාවයන් තවදුරටත් උද්දීපනය කරනු ඇත. සුලබව ලබාගතහැකි, පහසුවෙන් පිවිසිය හැකි තාක්ෂණික මෙවලම්, අධිවේගීව ගලා එන ප්‍රවාහිනි - ඇතැම්විට එහි අපැහැදිලි හෝ ව්‍යාජ ස්වභාවය හේතුකොට මතුවන ක්ෂණික අසහනය හා උද්වේගකාරී හැඟීම් නිසා හොඳින් සිතා බලා, ගතයුතු පියවර හා දැක්විය යුතු ප්‍රතිචාරයන් කුමක් ද යන්න තෝරා බේරාගැනීමට අවශ්‍යයෙන්ම වැයකළයුතු වූ කාලය ද නොලැබී යනු ඇත.

ඊළගට, ජනප්‍රියත්වය පසුපස හඹායම හා දේශපාලනයේ කැපී පෙනීසිටීමට ප්‍රබල පෙළඹවීමක්, ප්‍රවණතාවයක්, පෙනෙන්නට තිබේ. මේවාත් කල්පනාකාරීව කළමනාකරණය කරගත යුතු ව තිබේ. මේවායේ යම් මධ්‍යස්ථ භාවයක්, සමබරතාවයක් ඇතිකර ගතයුතු යි. වේගයෙන් ගලා එන සත්‍ය, අර්ධ සත්‍ය හා අසත්‍ය ප්‍රවාහිනි හමුවේ සමබර - මධ්‍යස්ථ භාවය ස්ථාපිත කරගැනීමට විවිධ ජනවර්ග හා ජනකොටස්වලට එන්න එන්න ම අසීරු කාර්යයක් වේ.

ආගමික හෝ වාර්ගික හෝ වෙනත් කණ්ඩායම් තම අනන්‍යතාවය විදහාපාමින් අදාළ උත්සව පවත්වමින් තම අභිමානය විදහාපෑමේ හා භුක්තිවිඳීමේ කිසිදු වරදක් නැත. එහෙත් ගැටළුව වන්නේ තමන් සමාජයේ එක්කොටසක් පමණක් වන අතර සමාජයේ බහුතරය වන අනිකුත් අය හා පවතින සහසම්බන්ධයට, සාමකාමී සහජීවනයට, හානියක් නොකෙරෙන අයුරින් තම උත්සවයන් කළමනාකරණය කරගත හැකි ද යන්න යි. විවිධත්වය තුළ ඒකීයත්වය යන සංකල්පය රැකගත හැකි ද? සෑම ජන වර්ගයක් හෝ ජන කොට්ඨාසයක් මෙම උතුම් සංකල්ප නොතකා ක්‍රියාකරයි නම් සමාජය තුළ භයානක වාර්ගික ගැටළු හා අසහනයන් ඇතිවීම වැළැක්විය නොහැකිය. මෙම ප්‍රවණතාවයන් පාලනයකර කළමනාකරණය කරගැනීමට නම්, ජාතික මට්ටමින්, අනිකුත් ආයතන තුළත්, ජනවර්ග තුළ හා අනිකුත් කාණ්ඩ තුළත්, පරිණත දේශපාලන නායකත්වයක් තිබීම අවශ්‍ය යි. අද අපට මෙවැන්නක් තිබේද? එවැනි සාධනීය තත්ත්වයක් නොමැතිනම්, මෙම ප්‍රශ්නයට අවධානය යොමුකොට



ක්‍රමවත්ව, අධිෂ්ඨාන ශක්තියෙන් යුක්තව අවශ්‍ය පිළියම් යෙදීම ඉතා හදිසි කරුණක් සේ සලකා ක්‍රියාකිරීමේ යුතුකමක් මෙන්ම වගකීමක්, උගත්, බුද්ධිමත්, පොදුජන යහපත ගැන හැඟීමක් ඇත්තවුන් හට නොතිබේද?

විවිධත්වයේ අසිරිමත්බව යන මූලධර්මයට අනුකූලව අනන්‍යතා පිළිබඳ කාරණා කළමනාකරණය කළයුතු ය. එසේ නොමැතිව අන්‍යයන්ට තර්ජනයක් හෝ ඔවුන්ගේ සිත් සතන් සසල කෙරේ නම් ඒවා පක්‍ෂග්‍රාහීතව සහ ප්‍රවණ්ඩත්වය ඇතිකරන මට්ටමකට ඇදවැටෙන්නට හැකිය. මෙහි ප්‍රතිඵලය වනුයේ සියල්ලන්ම පරාජයට පත්වීම යි; විශේෂයෙන් අප රටට එය දරාගත නොහැකිවනු ඇත.

දැනට මා ඉහතින් සඳහන් කළ කාරණා බොහෝ කාණ්ඩවලට, විවිධ මට්ටම්වලට බලපෑවද, අප රටේ පමණක් නොව ලෝකයේ බොහෝ පෙදෙස්වල මුස්ලිම්වරුන් කෙරෙහි සෘණාත්මක ආකල්පයක් ගොඩනැගෙමින් ඇතිබව නොපිළිගන්නේ නම් එය යථාර්ථය බැහැර කිරීමකි. විශේෂයෙන් 2001 සැප්තැම්බර් මාසයේ 11 ඇමෙරිකාවට එල්ලවූ ප්‍රහාරයත්, ඉන් පසුව වර්ධනයවූ අන්තවාදී කණ්ඩායම් තුළින් ඇතිවූ ආරවුල් හා ලේ වැගිරීම් හේතුවෙන් නිර්මාණය වූ තත්ත්වය නිසා මුස්ලිම්වරුන් කොන්කිරීමක් හා ඔවුන් පීඩාවට පත්වන තත්ත්වයක් ද උද්ගතව ඇත.

මෙම හැඟීම් උත්සන්න වීමට තවත් එක් හේතුවක් වී ඇත්තේ මුස්ලිම් කාන්තාවන් හා පිරිමින් සෑහෙන සංඛ්‍යාවක් විසින් අනුගමනය කරනු ලබන්නාවූ ඇඳුම් පැළඳුම් විලාසිතාව යි. ඊට හේතු හා එහි වගකීම, කිසියම් එක් කණ්ඩායමකට පමණක් බැරකළ නොහැකි වූ ත් සංකීර්ණ වූ ත් එකකි; එනමුදු ඒ ආශ්‍රිත විවිධ මතයන් හා හැඟීම් කළමනාකරණය කරගැනීම උගතට ය. වාරිත්‍රානුකූල වුව ද, නීතියානුකූල වුව ද, එවන් අනන්‍යතා ප්‍රදර්ශනය කිරීම තුළින් එම කණ්ඩායම් තුළ තමන් අන්‍ය වූත්, දේශීය උතුරුව නොඉවසන කණ්ඩායමක් සේ විසීමෙන් කැමැත්තක් ඇතිබව, අනිකුත් රටවැසියන් හට හැඟී යන්නට පිළිවෙත. ඇතැම් කණ්ඩායම් විසින් ඉස්ලාම් ධර්මයට විවිධ වූ අර්ථකථනයන් දෙනු ලැබීම, ප්‍රශ්නය තවදුරටත් ව්‍යාකූල කරයි.

මේ සම්බන්ධයෙන් මලයාසියාවේ අග්‍රාමාත්‍ය මහතිර් මොහමද් මැතකදී රූපවාහිනී CNN ප්‍රවෘත්ති සේවය හා පැවැත්වූ සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවක් උපුටා දැක්වීමට කැමැත්තෙමි.

**CNN:** ඔබ මධ්‍යස්ථ මතධාරී, මුස්ලිම් බහුතරයක් වෙසෙන රටක නායකයෙකි. 2003 දී ඔබ ඉස්ලාම් බැතිමතුන් අමතා "කාලානුරූපීව අවශ්‍යලෙස යළි හැඩගැසෙන්න" යි ඉල්ලීමක් කළේය. එය ඉටුවී ද?

**මහතිර්:** අද ඔබ දකින ඉස්ලාම් ක්‍රියාකාරකම්, මුල් ආගම් විසින් උගන්වනු ලැබූ අයුරු නොවේ. යම් යම් බලවතුන්, නායකයින් හා විද්වතුන් ආදීන් විසින් දෙනලද අර්ථකථනයන් අනුව වෙනස්වූ, ඉස්ලාම් ක්‍රියාකාරකම් ය. කුරානයේ එන මුල් ඉගැන්වීම් වලින් බැහැර වූවකි, අද පවතින්නේ. අපට හැඟෙන පරිදි කුරානයේ හැඳින්වෙන ඉස්ලාම් ධර්මය සෞම්‍ය වූත්, මධ්‍යස්ථ වූත්, එකකි. එහි යුද්ධ කරන්න කියා නැත. සෑම මුස්ලිම් ජාතිකයින් සහෝදරයින් ලෙස ජීවත්විය යුතු බැව් පැවසේ. ප්‍රාණඝාතය තහනම්කර ඇත. මුල් ඉස්ලාම් ඉගැන්වීම් මගින් තහනම් කළ දේ අද කෙරෙමින් පවතිනවා. එබැවින් මුල් ආගමික ඉගැන්වීමට දෙන විවිධ අර්ථකථනයන් තමා අද ලෝක ප්‍රජාව වර්තමාන තත්වයට ඇද දමල තිබෙන්නේ.

**CNN:** ඒ අනුව ඔබ කියන්නේ විවිධ පුද්ගල අර්ථකථනයන් අනුව තමයි ඔබගේ ආගම මෙහෙයවෙන්නේ.

**මහතිර්:** ඔව්; කෙනෙක් එනවා, ඔහු ජනප්‍රිය නායකයෙක් වෙනවා. ඔහු තමන්ගේ අර්ථකථනය දී කියනවා යුද්ධ කළ යුතු යි, මනුෂ්‍ය ඝාතන කළ යුතු යි, අන්‍ය ආගම් අදහන්නන් ට එරෙහි විය යුතු යි. තමුන් අතරේ වුවද අන්‍ය මතයන් දරණ අය පවා ප්‍රතික්ෂේප වෙනවා. මෙහි ප්‍රතිඵලය වනුයේ අස්ථාවරත්වය, එදිරිවාදකම්, සිවිල් යුද්ධ හා ජාතීන් තුළ යුද තත්ත්වයන් නිර්මාණය වීම යි.

මෙහි සඳහන් කරුණු සම්බන්ධයෙන් එකඟ වූවා හෝ නොවූවා හෝ, මහතිර් යනු ගෞරවයට පාත්‍රවූ ලෝක නායකයෙකි. ඔහුගේ හඬට සවන්දෙන්නන් බොහෝ ය.



නෝනාවරුනි, මහත්වරුනි, මෙම දේශනය මගින් මාගේ ප්‍රයත්නය වූයේ අප සමාජය සාර්ථකව ස්ථාපිත කළ විවිධත්වය තුළින් එකමුතුකම, සහ සිංහලයින් හා මුස්ලිම්වරුන් අතර සියවස් ගණනාවක් තුළ ගොඩනගා පවත්වාගෙන ආ අන්‍යෝන්‍ය සුහදතාවය, සාමකාමී සහජීවනය හා සංහිඳියාව කෙරෙහි ඔබගේ අවධානය යොමුකිරීමට යි. වර්තමානයේ අප මුහුණපාන අයහපත් වූත්, අසහනකාරී වූත්, ප්‍රචණ්ඩත්වයන් හා එම තත්වයන් පාලනය කරගැනීමට අවශ්‍ය වැඩපිළිවෙල නිර්මාණය කරගත යුතුව තිබෙන බව අවධාරණය කිරීමටත් මෙමගින් උත්සාහ කළෙමි. විවිධත්වය පාලනය කරගැනීමේ බැරැරුමකම ගැනත් අවධානය යොමු කළෙමි. මා එක් කලක අධ්‍යාපන හා උසස් අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශ ලේකම්ව සිටියදී බහරේන්හි අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යවරයා වෙනුවෙන් පැවති දිවාභෝජන සංග්‍රහයකදී මම එතුමාට ආසන්නව අසුන්ගෙන සිටියෙමි. අපගේ සතුටු සාම්ප්‍රදායික දී ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ මුස්ලිම් අධ්‍යාපනය හා මුස්ලිම් පාසල් ගැන කතාබහක යෙදුනෙමි. දැඩි අවධානයෙන් යුතුව මට සවන් දුන් ඔහු මා මව්නයට පත්කළ පැනයක් නැගුවේය.

"ඇයි පිරිස් මහත්මාණෙනි මුස්ලිම් පාසල් ය යි කියන්නේ?" ඔහුගේ මතය වී තිබුණේ විවිධ ජන කණ්ඩායම් වෙන් වෙන්ව විසීම හානිකර බවය. ඉතාමත් බුද්ධිමත් හා තාත්වික මතයකි. අපගේ වර්තමාන පාසල් ව්‍යුහයට බලපෑ ඇතැම් ඓතිහාසික සංසිද්ධීන් හා ජනකොටස් එක්රොක්වීමෙන් කේන්ද්‍රගතවීමෙන් ප්‍රචණ්ඩත්වය ආදීන් මම ඔහුට පෙන්වා දුනිමි. එබැවින් මේවා ඉතාමත් සංකීර්ණය; විවිධ අය විවිධ වූ මත දරති. අනන්‍යතාව, අන්‍යෝන්‍ය ගෞරවය ආශ්‍රිත කරුණු අතිශයින් වැදගත් වේ. මෙවැනි සංවේදී කරුණු නිසිලෙස කළමනාකරණය නොකෙරේනම් සමාජයේ ගැටුම්කාරී තත්වයන් නිර්මාණය වියහැකි ය. සිංහල හා මුස්ලිම් ජනයාට එක්ව ක්‍රියාකිරීමට, සියවස් ගණනක ඉතිහාසය විසින් ගෞරවාන්විත රාමුවක් සාදා දී ඇත.

අතීතයේ මෙන්, ජන ජීවිතයේ සංහිඳියාව, පුද්ගල මට්ටමේ නොහොත් එකිනෙකා අතර සතුටුදායක තත්වයේ පවතී. මෙවන් දිවියක වැදගත්කම විදහාපෑමට මා පෞද්ගලිකවම දන්නා සිද්ධියක්

ගෙනහැර පෑමට කැමැත්තමි. මම කොළඹ මාලිගාකඤ්ඤ විද්‍යාදාය පිරිවෙන් භාරකාර මණ්ඩලයේ සාමාජිකයෙක් මි. විද්‍යාදාය යනු ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ප්‍රමුඛතම පිරිවෙනකි. එය බෞද්ධ අධ්‍යාපනයේ කේන්ද්‍රස්ථානයක් වූවා පමණක්නොව දේශීය සංස්කෘතියේ පුනර්ජීවයක් ඇතිකළ, ජාතික නිදහස් ව්‍යාපාරයට ද විශාල වශයෙන් දායක වූ ආයතනයකි. ශිෂ්‍ය භික්ෂූන්වහන්සේලා හා ගුරු ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේලා ද එහි නේවාසිකව සිටියහ. මොවුන්ට දානය සැපයිය යුතුව තිබුණි. එක් වකවානුවකදී පිරිවෙන් භාරකාරත්වයට බැරැරුම් ආර්ථික අභේණයකට මුහුණපාන්නට වූයෙන් නේවාසික භික්ෂූන්වහන්සේලාට දානය සපයා දීම බරපතල ගැටළුවක් විය. මේ අවදියේ මැද කොළඹ ආසනයේ තෙවෙනි මන්ත්‍රී හළිමි ඉෂාක් මැතිතුමා එම ස්ථානය පසුකර යනගමන් පිරිවෙනට ගොඩවැදී යාමට අදහසක් පහළ වී එතැනට සැපත් විය. එහිදී පිරිවෙනේ නායක ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේ බැහැදුටු එතුමා පිරිවෙන මුහුණ පා සිටි තත්වය ක්ෂණිකව වටහාගෙන තම විමධ්‍යගත අරමුදලින් සෑහෙන මුදල් ප්‍රමාණයක් පිරිවෙනට ලැබෙන්නට කටයුතු යෙදුවේය. ඉන් මාස කීපයකට පසු පිරිවෙනේ තිබූ එක් උත්සවයකට නායක ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේ මන්ත්‍රීතුමන්ට ත් ඇරයුම්කර තිබුණි. මෙම ගාමිහීර අවස්ථාවට මල්වතු හා අස්ගිරි අනුනායක ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේලා කීපනමක් ඇතුළුව දිවයිනේ නන් දෙසින් ප්‍රසිද්ධ ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේලා ඇරයුම් ලැබ පැමිණ සිටියහ. උත්සව ශාලාවේ ප්‍රධාන වේදිකාවේ අසුන් ගත්තවුන් අතර සිටි එකම ගිහියා වූයේ හළිමි ඉෂාක් මන්ත්‍රීතුමා ය. අනික් අය වයෝවෘද්ධ තපෝවෘද්ධ ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේලා ය. පිරිවෙන් පාලකමණ්ඩලයට පවා අසුන් පනවා තිබුණේ ප්‍රධාන වේදිකාවට පහළිනි. ප්‍රධාන වේදිකාවේ අසුන් පනවා තිබූ ආකාරය පිළිබඳව යම් කසුකුසුවක් ඇතිව තිබුණි. උත්සවය ආරම්භවීමත් සමඟ නායක ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේ පැමිණ පිරිස අමතමින් වේදිකාවේ අසුන්ගෙන සිටින ගිහි භවතා හඳුන්වාදෙමින් එතුමාට වේදිකාවේ විශේෂ අසුනක් පනවන්නට හේතුව පහදා දුන්හ. වේදිකාව මත කිසිදු බෞද්ධ සම්භාවනීය ගිහිකෙනෙක් නොසිටිමුත්, වේදිකාවෙහි අසුන්ගත් එකම ගිහියා හළිමි ඉෂාක් මන්ත්‍රීතුමන් පමණකි. එදින තිබූ හැඟීම් හා වාතාවරණය මහාචාර්ය ලෝ(ර්)නා දේවරාජා විසින් මැනවින් පර්යේෂණයකොට රචිත ග්‍රන්ථයෙහි විස්තර වේ.



මෙම සමරු දේශනය සෙනට්සහික ආචාර්ය ඒ.එම්.ඒ. අසීස් ශ්‍රීමතාණන් අනුස්මරණයක් සේම එතුමන් වෙත පිදෙන උපහාරයකි. එතුමා සිංහල බෞද්ධයින් හා මුස්ලිම්වරුන් අතර පැවැති ඓතිහාසික සම්ප්‍රදාය, පුළුල් දැක්ම හා අන්‍යෝන්‍ය සුහදතාවය, පෝෂණය කරමින් ආරක්‍ෂාකර ගැනීම සඳහා මුළු හදවතින්ම වෙහෙසුනු වර්තයකි. එමනිසා එතුමාගේ ලිපි එකතුවක් සේ ප්‍රකාශිත **"The West Reappraised"** ග්‍රන්ථයෙන් උපුටනයක් සමගින් මෙම සමරු දේශනය අවසන් කිරීමට කැමැත්තෙමි. එහි, එතුමා ලියූ **"බුද්ධ ජයන්තිය"** යන ලිපියේ මෙසේ සඳහන් වී තිබේ.

"බුද්ධ ජයන්තිය උචිත අයුරින් ගෞරව්‍යාන්විතව සැමරීම සඳහා බෞද්ධ උසස් විද්වත් මණ්ඩලයක් ස්ථාපිත කෙරේ. මෙම ඓතිහාසික අවස්ථාව ලංකාවේ වෙසෙන අතිමහත් බහුතරයට දැඩි ආගමික වැදගත්කමක් තිබෙනවා පමණක් නොව මේ සුඤ්ඤ දිවයින අපගේ දේශය බවට උද්දාමයෙන් හිමිකම් කියාපාන අප සියල්ලටම, දේශීය වශයෙන් අතිශයින් වැදගත්ය. මෙම සුඤ්ඤ දිවයින නිජබිම කරගත් අප, බුදුරජාණන් වහන්සේගේ ඉගැන්වීම්වලින් වෙන්කළ නොහැකි ලෙස බද්ධවී ඇති දේශීය උරුමයන් හා ප්‍රෞඩ ඉතිහාසය කෙරහි අප හැඟීමෙන් හා අවදියෙන් විසිය යුතු ය.

බෞද්ධ දර්ශනයෙන් වෙන්කළ නොහැකි සේ ගෙනුණු දේශීය කලාව, ගෘහනිර්මාණ ශිල්පය, ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රම, සාහිත්‍යය ආදිය, ඉදිරියේ පැවැත්වීමට නියමිත සමරු උත්සව තුළින්, විශේෂයෙන් බෞද්ධ නොවන අපට, සිහිපත්කර දෙයි. අප දේශය, අනිකුත් දේශයන් අතර විරාජමානව, අග්නිදිග ආසියාවේ විශිෂ්ට තැනක් අත්පත් කරගෙන තිබීම බුදුරජාණන් වහන්සේගේ ජීවිතය හා දර්ශනයෙන් වෙන්කළ නොහැක. මේ තුළින් ජාතීන් අතර සාමය, සංහිඳියාව හා සහජීවනයට අප එකච්ඡේ ම පොළඹවන බව අභිමානයෙන් යුක්තව සිහිපත් කළ යුතු යි. මුල්ම මුස්ලිම් ජනාවාසිකයන් සේ දිවයිනට පැමිණි අයට හෘදයාගම පිළිගැනීමක් ලැබුණේත්, ලංකාවේ අප භුක්ති විඳින ආගම ඇදහීමේ නිදහස හා වරප්‍රසාද ලැබුණේත්, එදින විසූ සිංහලයින් තුළ තිබූ, බුද්ධ

ධර්මයේ ඉගැන්වෙන ඉවසීම හා කරුණාව විසින් පෝෂණය වූ ගුණවත්කම නිසාය. මුල්ම මුස්ලිම් ජානපදිකයින් හා ඔවුන්ගෙන් පැවතෙන්නන් ලද පිළිගැනීම, සුහදත්වය හා නිදහස හේතුවෙන්, ලංකාවේ සම්පත් වර්ධනය හා සුබසිද්ධිය සඳහා ද සැලකිය යුතු මෙහෙයක් කිරීමට මුස්ලිම් ජනතාවට හැකිවිය"

සෙනට්සහික ආචාර්ය ඒ.එම්.ඒ. අසීස් වැනි පැහැදිලි දර්ශනයක් තිබෙන්නා වූ, උගත්, විවක්‍ෂණ බුද්ධියෙන් ආභූෂ වූවන් පෙරටත් වඩා අද දවසට අවශ්‍යය. ඔහු අවුරුදු 62ක් වත් තරුණ වියකදී මෙලොව හැර යන්නට වීම අප මුළුමහත් ජාතියේම අභාග්‍යයකි.

ඔහුට පිදිය හැකි ශ්‍රේෂ්ඨම උපහාරය වනුයේ අනිකුත් සම්මානනීය මුස්ලිම් සංවිධාන හා එක් වී, එසේම අනිකුත් ජාතීන් හා ආගම් නියෝජනය කරන එවැනි සංවිධාන සමග එකමුතුවී, සැකය, අසාධාරණය හා ප්‍රචණ්ඩත්වයට එරෙහි වී ශතවර්ෂ ගණනාවක් තිස්සේ අප සමාජයේ විශිෂ්ට ගුණාංග සේ අප්තර සුරක්‍ෂිතව රැඳී සුහදත්වය, සංහිඳියාව හා සහජීවනය යළි ගොඩනැගීමට අධිෂ්ඨානශීලීව පෙරමුණට ඒමයි. කිසිවක් නොකර හිඳීම විකල්පයක් නොවේ. 'ක්‍රෑරත්වය හා අශිෂ්ටකම ව්‍යාප්ත වීමට අවශ්‍යවනුයේ ගුණවත් මිනිසුන්ගේ නිහැඬියාව පමණ යි' යන පඬිවදන සැමවිටම සිහි තබාගතයුතුයි.

ඔබ සැමට ස්තූතියි.

දේශමාන්‍ය ආචාර්ය එම්.ඩී.ඩී. පීරිස් මහත්මා පේරාදෙණිය විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයේ උපාධ්‍යාරියෙකි. කොළඹ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය හා එක්සත් රාජධානියේ වෙස්ට්මින්ස්ටර් විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය ඔහු වෙත ආචාර්ය උපාධි පිරිනමා ඇත. ශ්‍රී ලංකා සිවිල් සේවයේ නියැලුණු ඔහු එම සේවය අහෝසි වීමෙන් බිහිවූ ශ්‍රී ලංකා පරිපාලන සේවයේ ද කටයුතු කළේය.

අග්‍රාමාත්‍ය ලේකම්, රාජ්‍ය පරිපාලන, පළාත් සභා හා ස්වදේශ කටයුතු අමාත්‍යාංශ ලේකම්, කෘෂිකර්ම, ආහාර හා සමූපකාර අමාත්‍යාංශ ලේකම්, අධ්‍යාපන හා උසස් අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශ ලේකම් හා ගුවන් විදුලි සේවයේ අධ්‍යක්ෂ ජනරාල් ධුරය, ඔහු දැරූ විවිධ නිලයන් සමහරකි.



## செனட்டர் டாக்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ. அசீஸ் நினைவுரை

இலங்கையில் சிங்கள-முஸ்லிம் உறவு  
தேசமான்ய எம்.டி.டி. பீரிஸ்

இந் 44வது செனட்டர் டாக்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ.அசீஸ் நினைவுரையை அவருடைய 45வது மறைவு நினைவுகூர்தலில் நிகழ்த்த என்னை அழைத்தமைக்கு முதற்கண் செனட்டர் டாக்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ. அசீஸ் மன்றத்திற்கு என் நன்றியைத் தெரிவிக்கிறேன். அவர் தன் வாழ்வில் ஈட்டிய வெற்றிகளில் முதலில் நோக்கவேண்டியது, அவர், நானும் இணைந்திருந்ததான, இலங்கை சிவில் சேவையில் இணைதற்கான மிகக் கடினமான திறந்த பரீட்சைக்குத் தோற்றித் தேறிய மையாகும். இது என் நான்காம் பகிரங்கப் பேருரை. இதற்கு முந்தியதொரு பேருரை, தன் வியத்தகு சாதனைகளிடை இலங்கையின் சிவில் சேவைக்கு நியமனம் பெற்ற முதல் இலங்கையரெனும் சிறப்பையும் பெற்ற சேர் பொன்னம்பலம் அருணாசலம் அவர்களைப் பற்றியதென்பது சுவாரசியமானது.

மேலுந் தொடருமுன், செனட்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ. அசீஸ் அவர்களின் பன்முக வாழ்க்கை பற்றிச் சிந்திக்கச் சில நேரம் செலவிடத் தகும். அவரது பன்முகப்பட்ட பெருந்தொகையான வெற்றிகளுள் விவரமாக ஆழப் புகுவதெனின், அவருடைய சாதனைகட்கு ஈடு செய்ய ஒரு பேருரையன்றிப் பல பேருரைகள் வேண்டும். எனினும், இத்தகையதொரு தருணத்தில், அவற்றிற் சிலதையேனும் நினைவுகூர்ந்து அவரைக் கௌரவிக்க வேண்டும்.

பெயர்பெற்ற யாழ்ப்பாண இந்துக் கல்லூரியிலும் பின்னர் குறுகிய காலம் கொழும்பு புனித சூசையப்பர்

கல்லூரியிலும் அவர் கல்வி பயின்றார். அவர் சிறப்பான படிப்பாளி என்பதோடு, பிற சாதனைகளிடையே தமிழ் மொழியில் ஆளுமை உடையவருமானார். இந்து மதம் பற்றி அவருடைய விரிவான அறிவு ஒருபுறமிருக்க, இந்துப் பக்திப் பாடல்களிலும் அவர் ஆழ்ந்த அக்கறை காட்டினார். இலண்டன் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் வரலாற்றுத் துறையிற் கௌரவ சித்தி பெற்று, அரசாங்கக் கலைத் துறைப் புலமைப்பரிசில் பெற்றுத், தன் பட்டப்பின் படிப்பிற்குக் கேம் பிரிட்ஜ் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் புனித கத்தரின் கல்லூரிக்குச் சென்ற பின், அவர் அதைக் கைவிட்டார். ஏனெனின், இலங்கை சிவில் சேவையில் இணைதற்கான திறந்த பரீட்சைக்குத் தோற்றிய அவர், அதிற் தேறிய கே. கனகசுந்தரம், வி.எஸ்.எம். டி மெல், எம். ராஜேந்திரா, டி.ஜி. எல். மிசோ, சி.பி. டி சில்வா ஆகியோர் உட்பட்ட ஒன்பது பேரில் இரண்டாமவராக வந்திருந்தார். அவ்வாறு, அசீஸ் அவர்கள் இலங்கையின் முதல் முஸ்லிம் சிவில் சேவையாளரானார். T.B. ஐயா அவர்களின் வற்புறுத்தலால் சிவில் சேவையிலிருந்து காலம் முந்தி விலகி, ஐயா அவர்கட்கு அடுத்த சாஹிரா கல்லூரி அதிபரானார். 1962ம் ஆண்டு, புதிதாக ஆரம்பித்த வித்தியோதய பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் வரலாறு பாடத்திற்கு வெளிவாரி விரிவுரையாளரானார்.

அசீஸ் அவர்கள் சிரேஷ்ட மக்கள் சேவகனாவார். இலங்கை முஸ்லிம் புலமைப்பரிசில் நிதியத்தையும் அகில இலங்கை முஸ்லிம் இளைஞர் சங்கத்தையும் நிறுவியமை, இலங்கைப் பல்கலைக்கழக மன்றிலும் பேரவையிலும் முதவையிலும் உறுப்பினராயும் அகில இலங்கை ஆசிரியர் சங்கத் தலைவராயும் பாடசாலை அதிபர்கள் சங்கப் பொதுச் செயலாளராயும் பதவி வகித்தமை, 1952ம் ஆண்டில் இலங்கைப் பாராளுமன்ற முதவை உறுப்பினராக நியமனம் பெற்று முதவைக்கு மீளமீள நியமிக்கப்பட்டமை, அன்று மதிப்பு மிக்கதான பொது சேவை ஆணைக் குழு உறுப்பினராயிருந்தமை ஆகியன அவருடைய விரிவான பொதுச் சேவையில் உள்ளடங்குவன. பிரித்தானிய அரசு



அவருக்கு MBE கௌரவ பட்டம் வழங்கியது. இலங்கை முத்திரைப் பணியகம் அவரது பெயரில் தபால் தலை வெளியிட்டது. புது டில்லி Institute of Objective Studies, "20ம் நூற்றாண்டின் 100 சிரேஷ்ட முஸ்லிம் தலைவர்கள்" எனும் தனது பிரசுரத்தில் அவரை உள்ளடக்கிக் கௌரவித்தது. இப் பிரசுரம் குறிப்பிட்ட ஒரே இலங்கையர் அசீஸ் அவர்களே.

இவ் வளமிக்க பன்முக ஆளுமையின் சுருக்கமான தொரு தோற்றத்தை மட்டுமே நான் தந்தேன். ஒரு வேளை செனெட்டர் அசீஸைப் பின்வருமாறு வருணித்த ஒருவர் அதை அதி திறமையாக முன்வைத்திருக்கலாம்: “அவர் ஒரு முஸ்லிம், யாழ்ப்பாணத்திலிருந்து வருபவர், தோற்றத்திற் பறங்கியர், நடத்தையிற் சிங்களவர்”. குறுகிய மனப்பான்மையை மீறி உயர்ந்த அவர், உண்மையிலேயே ஒரு உலகக் குடிகளாவார்.

எனது உரையின் மிகுதியைச் சிங்கள-முஸ்லிம் உறவையும் குறிப்பான ஒரு உறவை மேலி எழுந்த விரிவான பிரச்சனைகள் சிலதையும் பேச ஒதுக்குகிறேன்.

என்னுடன் அவ்வப்போது சேர்ந்து பணியாற்றியவரும் நான் மிக மதிப்பவருமான பேராசிரியர் திருமதி லோர்னா தேவராஜா “இலங்கை முஸ்லிம்கள் — ஆயிரம் ஆண்டு இனத்துவ நல்லிணக்கம் — 900 முதல் 1915 வரை” என்னும் நூலை 1994ம் ஆண்டு வெளியிட்டார். நூலை எழுத மேற்கொண்ட பாரிய முயற்சியும் செய்த விரிவான ஆய்வுங் காரணமாக, அவர் அதற்குச் சூட்டிய விவரணமான தலைப்பு நியாயமானதும் மகிழ்வானதுமாகும். நூலில் அவர் கூறுவது: “இலங்கை வரலாற்றில் அதன் தொல்குடிகளான சிங்களவருக்கும் தொடக்கத்தில் அந்நியராயிருந்த முஸ்லிம்கட்குமிடையே உருவான சுமுக உறவையும் ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகட்கு மேல் இரு சாராரும் ஒன்றாக அமைதியாக வாழ்ந்தமையையுஞ் சிலரே அறிவர்”. அவர் மேலுங் கூறுவது: “அவ்வுறவு அத்துணை அமைதியாய் இருந்ததாலேயே, ஒருவேளை, அது வரலாற்றாசிரியனின் கவனத்திற் தவறியிருக்கலாம்”. புகழ்பெற்ற ஒரு கல்விமான்,

விரிவான ஒரு ஆய்வின் பின் இத்தகைய மகிழ்வான முடிவை அடைந்தமை பெருமுகியமுடையது.

இவ்வுறவின் பரந்துபட்ட இயல்பின் சில விவரங்களைக் குறிப்பிடல் அக்கறைக்குரியது. அவர் கூறியது: “முஸ்லிம்கள் அரசினதும் பௌத்த மடங்களதும் நிருவாகத்தில் அலுவலர்களாகப் பணிபுரிந்துள்ளனர். முஸ்லிம்கள் தலதா மாளிகையிற் செயற்பட்டதோடு பௌத்த உலகின் மிகப்பெரும் திருவிழாவான எசல மஹா பெரஹர சடங்கிலும் பங்குபற்றியமை குறிக்கத்தக்கது”. அவர் மேலுங் கூறும் ஒரு முக்கிய விடயம்: “முஸ்லிம் பண்பாட்டுத் தனித்துவத்திற்குக் குறைவின்றி அமைந்த இக் கட்டமைப்பு ஒருங்கிணைவுச் செயன்முறை, ஒருவேளை, பெரும்பான்மை-சிறுபான்மை உறவுகளிற் தனித்துவமானது”.

எனவே, இவ்வுறவு, தொகைகளின் அடிப்படையில் முடிவாகும் ஒரு தராதரத்திற் தங்கியிருந்ததல்ல எனக் காணலாம். அது இயல்பான, தடையற்ற, பரஸ்பர ஏற்றலினதும் புரிந்துணர்வினதும் அடிப்படையில் அமைந்த உறவெனத் தெரிகிறது. பௌத்தத்தின் சகிப்புக் கோட்பாடும் எவரையும் தன் மத நம்பிக்கைக்கு மாற்றலில் அதன் மொத்த அக்கறையின்மையும் இம் மகிழ்வான விளைவிற்கு ஒரு முக்கிய பங்களித்துள்ளன.

இந்த நெகிழ்வான சகிப்புள்ள மனப்பாங்கின் சான்றுகள் பேராசிரியர் தேவராஜாவின் பனுவலின் பகுதிகளாவன. அவர் கூறுவது: “பிற மதத்தோரிடம் சிங்கள மன்னர்கள் பேணிய பெருந்தன்மையான அணுகுமுறை”. இப் பெருந்தன்மைக்கு அவர் சான்றுகள் தருகிறார்: “கண்டிய மன்னர்கள் நன்கொடையாக வழங்கிய காணிகளிற் கட்டிய பல பள்ளிவாசல்கள் நாட்டிலுள்ளன. சான்றாகக், கண்டிகாட்டுப்பள்ளியும் மத்துல்போவ, கஹட்டபிட்டிய பள்ளி வாசல்களும். முஸ்லிம் கிராமத்தவர்களின் நலன் கருதிப் பள்ளிவாசல் நிருமாணிக்கப் பௌத்த மடங்கட்குரிய காணிகளிற் பள்ளிவாசல்களைக் கட்ட பிக்குமார் அனுமதித்த நிகழ்வுகளுள்ளன. சான்றாகப், பன்கொல்லாமட பள்ளிவாசல்



தெகல்தொருவ விகாரைக்குரிய காணியிற் கட்டப்பட்டது. ரம்புக்கந்தான பள்ளிவாசல் குருணாகலில் ரிதி விகாரைக்குரிய காணியிற் கட்டப்பட்டது. மேலும், ரிதி விகாரை பிக்குமார், துறவி மடத்துக்குரிய காணிகளில் வாழ்ந்த முஸ்லிம் குடியிருப்பாளர்களின் ஆன்மீகத் தேவைக்காக அவர்கட்குப் போதிக்க ஒரு முஸ்லிம் மௌலவியாரை ஆதரித்தனர்”. அடுத்து அவர் பின்வரும் அதிமுக்கிய முடிவுக்கு வருகிறார்: “இவ்வாறு முஸ்லிம்கள் சமூக-பொருளாதார முறைமையுள் அமைப்புமுறையாக ஒருங்கிணைந்த போது, அவர்களின் மதத்தனித்துவம் அழியவில்லை, மாறாக மேம்பாடு கண்டது”.

இது ஒரு சமூகத்தின் வியத்தகு வெற்றியல்லவா! பேராசிரியர் தேவராஜாவின் பெறுமதிமிக்க ஆய்வு முஸ்லிம் கட்கும் மகாசங்கத்தினர் உட்பட்ட சிங்களப் பெளத்த மக்களுக்கும் மிகுமையே அத்துணை நீண்டகாலமாக நிலவிய தடையற்ற சமூக உறவைப் புலப்படுத்துகிறது.

இனி, அயல் உறவுகள் எத்தகையன? இங்கும் முஸ்லிம்கள் முக்கிய பங்கு வகித்ததைச் சான்றுகள் சுட்டுகின்றன: “இலங்கை அயல் உறவுகளில் முஸ்லிம்கள் கூறத்தக்க பங்காற்றியுள்ளனர். 13ம் நூற்றாண்டளவிற்கு சிங்கள அரசர் இரு நாடுகளிடையிலும் நேரடி வர்த்தக உறவு பற்றிக் கலந்து பேச அல்-ஹஜ்-அல் உதுமான் அவர்களை எகிப்தின் “மம்லுக்” சபைக்கு அனுப்பினார்”. அவர் மேலுங் கூறுவது: “கண்டி சகாப்தம் வரை முக்கிய பணிகட்காக முஸ்லிம்களைத் தென்னிந்தியாவிற்கு அனுப்பியமையைக் காணலாம்”.

தன் நூலை எழுத மேற்கொண்ட ஆய்வு பற்றி மதிப்பிற்குரிய கல்விமானான பேராசிரியர் தேவராஜா கூறுவது: “இவ் விசாரணையின் போது முஸ்லிம் கிராமங்கட்கும் பள்ளிவாசல்கட்கும் பெளத்த மடங்கட்கும் போகவும் அங்கு பழைய முஸ்லிம் குடும்பங்களின் பரம்பரையினரையும் முஸ்லிம் மருத்துவர்களையும் பள்ளிவாசல் அறங்காவலர்களையும் பிரசித்த பிக்குமார் பலரையும் செவ்விகாணல் அவசியமா

யிருந்தது. பழைய கிராமவாசிகள் தம் முன்னோர் சிங்கள அரசர்களுடன் கொண்டிருந்த நெருக்கமானதொரு உறவின் நினைவுகளைப் போற்றி நினைவுகூர்ந்தனர். முஸ்லிம் மருத்துவர்கள் பெளத்த மடங்களிற் தம் மாணவப் பருவத்தை நினைவுமீட்டனர். மல்வத்த மகாநாயக்கர் உட்பட மூத்த பிக்குமார் பலர் பெளத்த விகாரைகட்கு முஸ்லிம்கள் செய்த சேவைகளைத் தம் வாழ்கால நினைவில் அறிந்திருந்தனர். நவீனப்படலும் வணிகமும் அரசியற்படுதலுங் குறைந்த தொலைவிலிருந்த பகுதிகளின் சிங்கள, முஸ்லிம் விவசாயிகளிடையே மட்டுமன்றி பெளத்த பிக்குகட்கும் முஸ்லிம்கட்கும் இடையேயும் ஆரோக்கியமான ஒத்துழைப்பு உணர்வு இன்னமும் இருப்பதைக் காணமுடிந்தது”.

“நவீனப்படலும் வணிகமும் அரசியற்படுதலுங் குறைந்தது” எனுஞ் சொற்றொடரைக் கவனியுங்கள். பின்னர், இச் சேர்வையுறுப்புக்களின் வரவுடன் அதிக போட்டியும் அதிக அழுத்தங்களும் வந்தன. ஐயத்துக்கிடமின்றி இவை இன்றைய உறவின் பரிணாமத்திற் தாக்கஞ் செலுத்தின. இப் பரிணாமம், வளர அனுமதிக்கத் தகாத சில எதிர்மறை அம்சங்களையும் பலப்படுத்தியது. பூகோளமயமானதொரு சமூகத்தில் நாம் வாழ்வதால், நாம் பொறுப்புணர்வுடன் கையாள வேண்டிய உலகப் போக்குக்கள் நம்மைத் தாக்குகின்றன. துரித தொழில்நுட்ப மாற்றம் இப் போக்குக்களை வலுப்படுத்துகிறது. உடனடித் தகைப்பை ஏற்படுத்தி, உணர்ச்சிகளைக் கிளறிச், சிந்திக்கவும் மீளாயவும் உள்ள அவகாசத்தைச் சுருக்குமாறு பரவலின் வேகத்திலும் சர்வவியாபகமாதலிலும் நிகழ்ந்த புரட்சியும் தகவலுக்கும் பொய்த் தகவலுக்கும் உள்ள குழப்பமும் பாரிய மாற்றங்களுள் அடங்கும்.

அடுத்தது, ஜனரஞ்சகவாதத்தையும் அடையாள அரசியலையும் நோக்கிய வலுவான நகர்வாகும். இவை கவனமாகக் கையாளவும் முகாமை செய்யவும் வேண்டுவன. இது ஒரு சமநிலைப் பிரச்சனை— உண்மைகளதும் அரை உண்மைகளதும் பொய்களதும் சமகாலப் பொழிவின்



கீழ் குழுக்களும் சமூகங்களும் அடைய மேலும் மேலும் சிரமப்படும் ஒரு சமநிலையின் பிரச்சனை.

மத, இன, மற்றும் பிற சமூகங்கள் தமது தனித்துவத்தையும் சிறப்பான அடையாளத்தையும் இனங்கண்டு கொண்டு டாடுவதிலும் அவ்வடையாளத்திற் பெருமை கொள்வதிலும் உள்ளாரப் பிழையெதுமில்லை. மையமான பிரச்சனை எது எனில், இவ்வாறு எவரும் எவ்வளவு தூரம் போக இயலுமென்பதும் தாம் ஒரு பகுதியாகவுள்ள ஒரு விரிந்த சமூகத்துடன் அவர்களின் உறவுக்குக் கேடின்றி அதைச் செய்ய இயலுமா என்பதுமாகும். “பன்மையுள் ஒருமை” எனும் நெறியைக் காக்கவியலுமா? அனைத்துச் சமூகங்களும் குழுக்களும் அதை நோக்கிக் செயற்படாவிடின், ஆபத்தான சமூக, சமுதாய அழுத்தங்களின் தோற்றம் தவிர்க்க இயலாததாகும். இப் போக்குகளைக் கட்டுப்படுத்தத் தேசிய மட்டத்திலும் துணைத் தேசிய மட்டத்திலும் சமூகங்களுள்ளும் குழுக்களுள்ளும் முதிர்ந்த பொறுப்புள்ளதான ஒரு அரசியற் தலைமை நமக்குத் தேவை. அது இன்று எமக்கு உண்டா? இல்லாவிடின், இப் பிரச்சனையை ஒழுங்காகத், தடுமாறாது, நிச்சயம் அவசரமாகக் கவனிக்கும் பொறுப்பு, படித்த, புத்தியுள்ள, சிந்திக்கும் சமூகப் பிரிவினருக்கு இல்லையா?

அடையாளப் பிரச்சனைகளை ஒரு மிரட்டல் எனும் உணர்வுடனும் பிறருக்குத் தொந்தரவு எனும் பார்வையிலும் நோக்காது “பன்முகத்தன்மையின் செழிப்பை மதித்தல்” எனும் அடிப்படையிற் கையாளத் தவறின், அவை முன்முடிவுகளாயும் பகையாயும் சீரழியலாம். இவ்வாறு நிகழுமெனின் அனைவரும், அனைத்தினும் அதிகமாக நாடும், தோற்க நேரும்.

தற்போது, நான் கூறிய பிரச்சனைகள் பெரும்பாலான குழுக்களை வெவ்வேறு அளவுகட்குப் பாதிப்பதாகத் தெரியினும், இலங்கை உட்பட, உலகின் பல்வேறு பகுதிகளில் வாழும் முஸ்லிம்கள் மேலும் பாதகமான ஒளியில் நோக்குண்ணவில்லை எனப் பாசாங்கு செய்தல் யதார்த்தத்தைப் புறக்கணிப்பதாகும். குறிப்

பாக, அமெரிக்கா மீதான 9/11 (செப்டெம்பர் 11 2001) தாக்குலையும் பல்வேறு தீவிரவாதக் குழுக்களின் தோற்றத்தையும் அவற்றையடுத்த சச்சரவுகளையும் குருதி சிந்தலையும் அடுத்துத், தவிர்க்கவியலாது, முஸ்லிம்கள் பற்றிய முற்சாய்வுகட்கும் அவர்கள் மீது பகைக்கும் இட்டுச்சென்ற சூழ்நிலைகள் சில தோன்றின.

குறிப்பிடத்தக்க தொகையில் முஸ்லிம் பெண்களும் ஆண்களும் பின்பற்றும் தனித்துவமான ஆடைகளும் தையற் பாணியும் முற்கூறிய உணர்வுகளை மோசமாக் கின. அவற்றின் காரணங்கள் குறிப்பிடத்தக்களவு சிக்கலான வையும் தெளிவாக எந்த மக்கள் குழு மீதும் சுமத்த இயலாதனவுமாயினும், அவை பற்றிய பார்வைகளைக் கையாளல் கடினமாகவே இருந்துள்ளது. ஒரு அடையாளத்தின் முறையான வெளிப்படுத்தலைப் பிறர் சிலவேளை வேறு பட்டதும் அந்நியமானதும் என விளக்கலாம்.

இஸ்லாம் மார்க்கத்திற்கு முற்கூறிய சில குழுக்கள் தரும் பலவாறான வியாக்கியானங்கள் காரியங்களை மேலும் கடுமையாக்குகின்றன.

இத் தொடர்பில், மலேசியப் பிரதமர் மஹதீர் மொஹமட் CNN தொலைக்காட்சிச் சேவைக்கு அண்மையில் வழங்கிய செவ்வியலிருந்து சில மேற்கோள்களைத் தருகிறேன்.

CNN: “நீங்கள் முஸ்லிம்கள் பெரும்பான்மையாக வாழும் ஒரு மிதவாத நாட்டின் தலைவர். 2003ம் ஆண்டு நீங்கள் இஸ்லாம் பரிணாம வளர்ச்சி பெற வேண்டினீர்கள். அவ்வாறு நடந்ததா?”

மஹதீர்: “ஆ, நீங்கள் இன்று காணும் இஸ்லாம், உண்மையில் அம் மதம் போதித்த இஸ்லாமல்ல. அதிகாரமுள்ள சிலரும் தலைவர்கள் சிலரும் கற்றோர் சிலரும் பிறரும் வியாக்கியானஞ் செய்தவாறான ஒரு இஸ்லாம். குர்ஆனின் காணும் மூலப் போதனைகளினின்று அது வேறுபட்டது என எமக்குத் தெரிகிறது. குர்ஆனின் இஸ்லாம் வெகு மிதவாத இஸ்லாம் என நாம் உணருகி



றோம். அது போரைப் போதிக்கவில்லை. முஸ்லிம்கள் யாவரையும் சகோதரர்களாக வாழுமாறு அது வேண்டுகிறது. அது கொலைக்குத் தடை விதிக்கிறது. ஆ, நாம் இஸ்லாம் தடைசெய்யும் இக் காரியங்களை எல்லாம் செய்கிறோம். ஆக, மதத்தின் வியாக்கியானமே நம்மை உலக மேடைக்குட் கொண்டுவந்துள்ளது.”

CNN: “அப்போ, உங்கள் கருத்தில் இவ் வியாக்கியானங்களே உங்கள் சமயத்தை வழிநடத்துகின்றன?”

மஹதீர்: “ஓம். ஒருவர் வருகிறார்; பிரபல தலைவராகிறார்; தன் செந்த வழியில் நீங்கள் போரிட வேண்டுமெனவும் கொல்ல வேண்டுமெனவும் பிற மதத்தோரை எதிர்க்க வேண்டுமெனவும் வியாக்கியானஞ் செய்கிறார். உங்களிடையிலும், நீங்கள் பிற வியாக்கியானகாரரை ஏற்பதில்லையே. இவை யாவும் உறுதியின்மையையும், ஏன் மோதல்களையும் உள்நாட்டுப் போர்களையும், நாடுகளிடையே போர்களையும் விளைத்துள்ளன.”

இக் கூற்றுக்களை ஒருவர் ஏற்பினும் ஏற்காவிடினும், மஹதீர் மிக மதிக்கப்படும் உலகப் பிரமுகர். அவருடைய சொற்கட்கு மிக மரியாதையுண்டு.

அம்மணிமீர், ஐயன்மீர், இவ்வுரை மூலம் நான் செய்ய முயன்றது ஏதெனில், எமது சமூகங்கள் கடந்த காலத்திற் சாதித்த பன்மையுள் ஒருமை மீதும் சிங்கள, முஸ்லிம் சமூகங்களிடையே நூற்றாண்டுக் கணக்காக நிலவிய சுக நிலை மீதும் நல்லிணக்கத்தின் மீதும் உங்களது கவனத்தை ஈர்ப்பதாகும். நவீன காலங்களில் நாம் ஆட்பட்டுச் சில மன அழுத்தங்கள் பற்றிச் சிந்திக்கவும் அவற்றைக் கையாள நிரந்தரமான, நிலையான பொறிமுறைகளை உருவாக்கவும் வேண்டும் என அழுத்திக் கூற முயன்றுள்ளேன். பல ஆண்டுகள் முன் நான் கல்வி, உயர் கல்வி அமைச்சின் செயலாளராக இருந்தபோது பஹ்ரேன் நாட்டின் கல்வி அமைச்சரைக் கௌரவிக்குமுகமான ஒரு பகற் போசனத்தின் போது அவருக்கு அருக-

ாக அமர நேர்ந்தமை நினைவிலுள்ளது. பேச்சுவாக்கில் அவரிடம் இலங்கையில் முஸ்லிம் கல்வியும் முஸ்லிம் பாடசாலைகளும் பற்றிச் சொன்னேன். பண்பாக அதைச் செவிமடுத்த அவர் சிறிது நேர மௌனத்தின் பின் என்னிடம் “எனினும், பீரிஸ் அவர்களே, ஏன் முஸ்லிம் பாடசாலைகள்?” எனக் கேட்டார். சமூகங்கள் பிரிக்கப்படுவது ஆரோக்கியமற்றது என்ற அவரது கருத்து ஞானமிக்கதும் தாக்கரீதியானதும் ஆகும். எவ்வாறு எமது இன்றைய பாடசாலை முறைமை, குறித்த வரலாற்று விருத்திகளாலும் சனச் செறிவு வேறுபாடு களாலும் பிற காரணிகளாலும் உருவானதென அவரிடம் கூற வேண்டியிருந்தது. எனவே இவை சிக்கலான அலுவல்கள். பலரும் பல கருத்துக்களைக் கொண்டிருப்பர்.

ஈற்றாக, அம்மணிமீர், ஐயன்மீர், அடையாளம், மரியாதை போன்ற விடயங்கள் மிக முக்கியமாயினும் இத்தகைய நுண்ணுணர்வான விடயங்களைச் செம்மையாகக் கையாளத் தவறின், அவை மோதலுக்கு வழிகோலக் கூடும். சிங்கள, முஸ்லிம் சமூகங்கள் இயங்குதற்கு ஒரு அற்புதமான கட்டமைப்பைப் பல நூற்றாண்டுக் கால வரலாறு அவர்கட்குத் தந்துள்ளது. மனிதர் தனி மனித மட்டத்தில் முற்காலத்திற் போல் மகிழ்வாகச் செயற்படுகின்றனர். இவ்வாறு செயற்படலின் முக்கியத்தை என் சொந்த அறிவுக்குட்பட்ட ஒரு நிசமான சான்றினின்று சொல்கிறேன். நான் கொழும்பு மாளிகாகந்த வித்தியோதய பிரிவெனவின் அறங்காவலர் சபையில் உள்ளேன். வித்தியோதய பிரிவென இலங்கையின் அதிமுக்கிய பிரிவெனவாகக் கருதப்படுவது. அதைவிட, அது பெளத்த மற்றும் பரந்துபட்ட கல்வித் துறைகளின் கற்கை கல்வி கேந்திர நிலையமாயிருந்ததோடு, தேசியப் பண்பாட்டின் புத்துயிர்ப்பிலும் தேசிய சுதந்திர இயக்கத்திலும் மையமான பங்காற்றியது. பிரிவெனவில் வதிந்திருந்த கணிசமான தொகையான பிக்கு மாணவர்கட்கும் ஆசிரிய பிக்குமாருக்கும் தானம் வழங்கும் தேவையிருந்தது. சிலகாலம் முன்பு, பல்வேறு காரணங்களாற் பிரிவென மிகக் கடும் நிதி நிலை



மையை எதிர்நோக்கியது. அங்கு வதியும் பிக்குமாருக்குத் தானம் வழங்கல் ஒரு பாரிய பிரச்சினையாகலானது. அவ்வேளை அவ்வழியாற் சென்ற அப்போதைய கொழும்பு மத்தி மூன்றாவது பாராளுமன்ற உறுப்பினரான ஹலிம் இஷாக் அவர்கள் பிரிவேனவை எட்டிப்பார்க்க நினைத்தார். பிரிவேனவின் தலைவரான பெருமதிப்புக்குரிய நாயக்க தேரரைச் சந்தித்த அவர் அதன் பாரிய இடர்ப்பாட்டைத் துரிதமாக விளங்கித் தனது பரவலாக்கிய வரவு செலவுக் கணக்கினின்று நிதி வழங்க உடனடி ஏற்பாடு செய்தார். சில மாதங்களின் பின் மல்வத்த, அஸ்கிரிய உட்படப் பல்வேறு கோவில்களினின்று மூத்த துறவியர் வந்தருளிய பிரிவேன நிகழ்வொன்றுக்கு நாயக்க தேரர் பாராளுமன்ற உறுப்பினரை அழைத்திருந்தார். பிரதான மேடையில் அமர்ந்த ஒரே சாதாரண மனிதர் ஹலிம் இஷாக் மட்டுமே. பிற யாவரும் மூத்த துறவியராவர். பிரிவேனவின் ஆட்சிக்குழுவினரும் கீழேயே அமர்த்தப்பட்டனர். இந்த ஏற்பாடு சில விசாரிக்கும் பார்வைகளையும் குசுகுசுப்புப் பேச்சுக்களையும் தூண்டியது. நிகழ்ச்சி தொடங்கியதும் வணக்கத்துக்குரிய நாயக்க தேரர் மேடையில் அமர்ந்திருந்தவர் யாரெனவும் அவரை அங்கு அமர்த்தியமை என்னெனவும் அவையோரிடம் விளக்கினார். மேன்மைதங்கிய எந்த பௌத்தச் சாதாரண மனிதரும் அமராத மேடையில் அமர்ந்த சாதாரண மனிதர் ஹலிம் இஷாக் மட்டுமே. அவ்வேளை, பேராசிரியர் தேவராஜா தன் நன்கு ஆராய்ந்த நூலிற் பதிந்த உணர்வே நிலவியது.

இப் பேருரை, உள்ளே இயங்கிச், சிங்கள பௌத்தர்கட்கும் முஸ்லிம்கட்குமிடையே நிலவிய பரந்த நோக்கின் மாபெரும் வரலாற்று மரபுகளையும் சுமுக உறவையும் ஊக்குவித்துப் பாதுகாத்த செனட்டர் டாக்டர் ஏ.எம்.ஏ. அசீஸ் அவர்களை நினைவுகூரவும் கௌரவிக்கவுமானது.

எனவே, இப் பேருரையைப் பல்வேறு விடயங்கள் சார்ந்த அவருடைய கட்டுரைகளின் தொகுப்பான 'The West Reappraised' எனும் நூலிலிருந்து ஒரு மேற்கோளுடன்

முடிப்பது பொருந்துமென எண்ணுகிறேன். “புத்த ஐயந்தி” எனுங் கட்டுரையில் அவர் பின்வருமாறு கூறுகிறார்:

“புத்த ஐயந்தியை உசிதமானவாறு நினைவுகூர, பௌத்த சபை தொடக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. இப் பெரும் வரலாற்று நிகழ்வு, இலங்கையின் ஏகப் பெரும்பான்மையான மக்களுக்கு ஆழ்ந்த சமய முக்கியத்துவம் உடையதென்பதோடு, இலங்கையை நமது தீவு இல்லமெனப் பெருமையுடன் உரிமைகோரும் நம் அனைவர்க்கும் சிறப்பான தேசிய முக்கியம் வாய்ந்ததாகும். புத்த பிரானின் போதனைகளுடன் பிரிக்கவியவாது பின்னிப் பிணைந்த நமது நாட்டின் பாரம்பரியமும் வரலாறும் பற்றி உணர்வோடிருத்தல் இவ்வினிய மண்ணில் வாழும் நம்மனைவரதும் பொறுப்பாகும்.

“இலங்கையின் ஓவியக் கலையையும் கட்டிடக் கலையையும், கல்வியையும் இலக்கியத்தையும், தேசங்களின் சமூகத்தில் இலங்கையின் அந்தஸ்தையும் ஆகிருதியையும், தென்னாசியாவிலும் தென்கிழக்காசியாவிலும் இலங்கையின் கௌரவத்தையும் புத்த பிரானின் வாழ்வின்னும் போதனைகளின்னும் விலக்கவியலாதெனத் தெளிவாக வே நினைவிலிருத்தத், திட்டமிட்டுள்ள கொண்டாட்டங்கள் நமக்குக், குறிப்பாக நம்மிடையே பௌத்த மார்க்கத்தைச் சாராதோர்க்கு, மெய்யாகவே உதவும். இவை நாமனைவரும் நியாயமாகவே பெருமைப்பட வேண்டுமாறு நமது நாட்டில் இனங்கட்கிடையே நிலவும் நட்பையும் நல்லிணக்கத்தையும் பெருமளவு ஊக்குவித்துள்ளன. புத்த பிரானின் போதனைகளை அடையாளப்படுத்தும் சகிப்பும் இரக்கமும் இணைந்த உணர்வே தொடக்ககால முஸ்லிம் வந்தேறுகுடிக்குக் கிடைத்த நல்வரவேற்புக்கும் அவர்கள் இலங்கையில் அனுபவித்த வழிபாட்டுச் சுதந்திரத்திற்கும் மெய்யான காரணமாயின.

“அவ் வரவேற்பாலும் இச் சுதந்திரத்தாலுமே அவர்களும் அவர்களின் வழித்தோன்றல்களும் இலங்கையின் செல்வத் திற்கும் நலனுக்கும் கணிசமாகப் பங்களிக்க இயன்றது.”

செனட்டர் டாக்டர் அசீஸ் போலத் தூர நோக்கும் கல்வியும் மதிநுட்பமும் விவேகமுமுள்ள மாந்தர் முன்னெப்போதினும் அதிகமாக இன்று நமக்கு வேண்டுகின்றனர். அவர் குறை வயதான தன் 62வது வயதில் இறந்தமை முழு நாட்டிற்கும் பேரிழப்பாகும்.

இவ்வேளை நாம் அவருக்குச் செலுத்தக்கூடிய அதியுயர் கௌரவம் ஏதெனின், முற்சாய்வையும் பகைமையை எதிர்க்கவும் பல நூற்றாண்டுகளாக இந் நாட்டின் உறவுகளின் உள்ளார்ந்த ஒரு பகுதியான நல்லிணக்கத்தை ஊக்கத்துடன் மீளுருவாக்கவும் சிறப்புமிகு பிற முஸ்லிம் அமைப்புகளுடனும் அவற்றையொத்த பிற இனங்களையும் மதங்களையும் பிரதிநிதித்துவப்படுத்தும் அமைப்புகளுடனும் செயலூக்கமாக ஒன்றிணைந்து இயங்குவதாகும். செயலின்மை ஒரு தெரிவல்ல. “தீமை வெல்ல நல்லோரின் செயலின்மை மட்டுமே போதும்” எனும் விவேகமான கூற்றை நாம் எப்போதும் மனதிலிருத்த வேண்டும்.

உங்கள் அனைவருக்கும் நன்றி

தேசமான்ய எம்.டி.டி. பீரிஸ் அவர்கள் பேராதனைப் பல்கலைக்கழகப் பட்டதாரியாவார். கொழும்பு பல்கலைக் கழகமும் ஐக்கிய இராச்சிய வெஸ்ட்மின்ஸ்டர் பல்கலைக் கழகமும் அவர்களுக்குக் கௌரவ டாக்டர் பட்டம் வழங்கின. இலங்கை சிவில் சேவையில் பணியாற்றிய அவர் அச் சேவை நின்றபின் தாபித்த இலங்கை நிருவாக சேவையிற் கடமையாற்றினார்.

பிரதம அமைச்சரின் செயலாளராயும் அரச நிருவாக, மாகாண சபை, சுதேச விவகார அமைச்சின் செயலாளராயும் விவசாய, உணவு, கூட்டுறவு அமைச்சின் செயலாளராயும் கல்வி, உயர் கல்வி அமைச்சின் செயலாளராயும் ஒலிபரப்புச் சேவைத் தலைவராயும் பணிப்பாளர் நாயகமாயும் அவர் பதவிவகித்தார்.



**Desamanya Dr. M.D.D. Pieris**



....“in the history of Sri Lanka few are aware of the harmonious relationship which had developed between the Sinhalese, its indigenous inhabitants and the Muslims who initially were foreigners, and that both have lived together peacefully for over a thousand years”

“Perhaps because it was such a peaceful relationship, it has passed unnoticed by the historian”

*The Muslims of Sri Lanka - One Thousand Years of Ethnic Harmony - 900 to 1915 (1994), Prof. Lorna Devaraja*

“இ டுஂ஡ா ஓவியா஡தே லாரதீபரீத பூரவீதீதத் வத திஂ஡தூ ஸத஡ாவத், துதீ ஡ா஡தே வீதீதீதீதீதீத் து துதீதீதீ ஸத஡த் துதர ஂ஡ாவதஂதூ ஡ூததூதாவிய ஡ா திதூத் வதர தூதததர வதா ஡ா஡தத் ஡ூததவ வீதூ திவ துததே வீத துததத”

“ததத தததீவதத தததரதீ தததததீவ திதூதீதீதீ தி திவததத் தத துதத ஓவியா஡ததீதீதீதீத் துததாவததர ஸதா ததூவீ துததத”

தீ ஡ுததரதீ துதீதீதீதீதீதீ - துதத 1000த ததததீதீதீதீ தததீவதத - 900 தித 1915 துததா (1994), துதததீதீதீ துதீதீதீதீதீதீதீதீதீதீ

“இலங்கை வரலாற்றில் அதன் தொல்பொருட்களான சிங்களவருக்கும் தொடக்கத்தில் அந்நியராயிருந்த முஸ்லிம் கட்டுமிடையே உருவான கமுக உறவையும் ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகட்கு மேலாக இரு சாராரும் ஒன்றாக அமைதியாக வாழ்ந்தமையையும் சிலரே அறிவர்”

“அவ்வறவு அத்துணை அமைதியாய் இருந்ததாலேயே அது, ஒரு வேளை, வரலாற் றாசிரியனின் கவனத்திற் தவறியிருக்கலாம்”

இலங்கை முஸ்லிம்கள் - ஆயிரம் ஆண்டு இனத்துவ நல்லிணக்கம் - 900 முதல் 1915 வரை (1994), பேராசிரியர் திருமதி லோர்னா தேவராஜா

Do not keep – Read and pass on!

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தவததீதூத தீததததத - தாசீதததத, துதததததத



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