

**World Islamic Mission Canada & Masjid Noor-UL-Haram  
pay tribute to Allamah Dr Shahid Raza Naeemi, OBE** (Rahimullah Alaih)



1950 -2022

**“Education, compassion, humility and understanding of each other’s views are the beacon of lights that will bring peace and happiness in the world”** Allamah Shahid Raza Naeemi

September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – 8<sup>th</sup> Safar 1444, the world received the sad news of the passing of Maulana Shahid Raza Naeemi – a veteran scholar with an amazing personality that will remain in our hearts for generations to come. His contribution and services to humanity will be cited as exemplary by many.

He has returned to the creator. We pray that Allah, the Almighty is pleased with him and raises his rank in Jannah and blesses him with the best place in Jannatul Firdous (Heaven).

### **Birth & Education**

Maulana Shahid Raza was born in 1950 in India from a spiritual and scholarly family.

He was a very laborious student, he completed his undergrad degree in Biology and Chemistry from the university of Agra, India in 1969. Despite being a graduate in the field of sciences, his heart was more inclined to service the community, hence he set on to pursue his higher studies in Islam. He was enrolled in the university of Meerut to complete his Islamic studies (Darse Nizami). Still thirsty for knowledge, he joined Jamia Na’imia, Moradabad, one of the prestigious Islamic universities in India, to complete his advanced learning in Islam. Maulana was taught by many learned scholars of the time.

He started his career as a teacher of Arabic and Islamic sciences, at Jamia Naimia, Moradabad in 1976. While being a teacher, Maulana Shahid Raza continued to gain more specialized knowledge in the field of Islamic jurisprudence. He used his scholarly acumen to come up with reasonable fatwas (Islamic legal decisions) for brazen issues affecting the community. He was heavily involved with the fatwa about organ donation in the UK.

### **Spiritual Development & Association**

Maulana Shahid Raza was already swimming in the ocean of spiritual love that led him to adhere to a stable spiritual life. He embraced the path of his elders, as they were strong supporters and defenders of the creed of

Ahle Sunnah. He was initiated in the Ashrafi and Chisti Sufi orders. His spiritual guide, Syed Mohammad Mukhtar Ashraf Ashrafi Jilani, saw the spiritual qualities into the young Shahid Raza and guided him further to become one of his khalifas (spiritual caliph) in the spiritual chain of Ashrafia. His sincere devotion in the path of Allah and deep love of our Beloved Prophet peace be upon him elevated his spirituality.

He traveled throughout Europe and other part of the world with that sacred inspiration and mission: to revive humanity and bring peace to everyone's heart. He was not only a scholar, but also a highly endowed spiritual individual conveying the message of Ahle Sunnah. He brought spiritual illumination to many. People around him felt the sweetness of his presence. Many were attracted by his sincerity, others by his friendly and compassionate attitude. He gained a high esteem in everybody's heart and will continue to be remembered by so many as a great Scholar.

In the early 80's, Allamah Shahid Raza met with one of his mentors, Qaid-E-Ahle Sunnah Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani Rehmatullah Alaih and they both worked together to spread the teachings of Ahle Sunnah in Europe and other part of the world, under the banner of World Islamic Mission. Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani Siddiqui Rehmatullah Alaih used to refer to him as a friend, a brother, and a scholar with ilm and amal (knowledge and spirituality). He was trusted the position of President for World Islamic Mission, Europe.

Allamah Shahid Raza was also a trusted friend of Maulana Qamaruzamman Azmi. They both worked together on several projects for the betterment of Islam in Europe. The respect between these two scholars was indeed a model for the new generation. For Maulana Azmi, he is losing not only a brother but a good, supportive, and trusted friend.

## **Lecturer and Author**

Allamah Shahid Raza had the burning desire to share his knowledge to the world. In 1978, he came to Leicester to serve as the imam of the Central Mosque.

His flawless command of both the English and Urdu languages earned him the respect for being an eloquent speaker. He was invited to several conferences to deal with major issues threatening the wellbeing of humanity. His focus was mostly how to better the situation of the ummah and he did so by bringing his audience to reflect on the greatness of our Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him.

In the midst of the challenges that gravitated in the 21st Century regarding Islam being portrayed negatively in the media; Maulana Shahid Raza never shied away from defending Islam. He successfully, over the years, taught world leaders that Islam is the religion of peace.

His intelligence and vision caught the attention of many around the world and he travelled to many countries to deliver his messages. By the grace of Allah Almighty, he successfully turned the people back to faith to overcome tribulations.

Allamah Shahid Raza authored and co-authored number of books together with Dr Ather Hussain Al-Azhari which have been printed and are available in English. One of his books "Islam and Muslims in Britain" received many accolades among the readerships.

## **Ambassador for Islam**

Maulana Shahid Raza had such a loving personality, he was loved and respected by all. His message was always one of mutual respect and tolerance.

Allamah Shahid Raza understood at an early stage of his career that being an Imam is not only to lead the daily prayers or teach within the circle of the mosque (madrassah). While working as an Imam in the UK, he challenged himself by furthering his education, and master the English language to be able to communicate and promote his teachings. He was very involved within the interfaith groups, the general publics, government authorities, and social workers. He partnered with Dr Waqar Azmi, who was then the Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister of UK, to ensure that the Muslim voices are heard within the government via the interfaith network of UK.

During an audience with the Pope, he was praised for being “a very calm and attentive Muslim cleric”

## **First Imam as OBE**

Allah has shown him his mercy, when his contributions were recognized at the highest level in Britain in 2008. He was bestowed with the Order of the British Empire (OBE) award by the Queen of England, her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

This resonated with pride within the Islamic world as he was the first Imam to be cloaked with such an honor.

## **Masha Allah (Praise to God)**

Maulana Shahid Raza shone very well by the grace of Allah Almighty. He was blessed with several paramount qualities that contributed largely to his achievement and garnered everybody's respect.

His mentor, Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani Siddiqui Rehmatullah Alaih mentioned that “despite being involved with so many public figures, different religious leaders, he always remained on top to bring his faith forward, he would not compromise when it comes for haqq (truth)”.

His dear friend, Allamah Qamarazzuman Azmi said “It is always a pleasure to hear the speeches of Allamah Shahid Raza, he thinks and weighs very carefully every single word.”

His student, Dr Waqar Azmi who worked very closely with him stated that “Dr Raza is an exemplary leader that will be missed, and he contributed tremendously to Islam and for the British Muslims”.

His daughter, Dr Sharifa Raza outpouring her heart said “even though Abu (father) did not expect his last days to be spent as such, he is still very grateful of the blessings of the Almighty and mostly to his wife and children”

Indeed, everyone who has been blessed to know him personally echoes the same sentiments that Allamah Shahid Raza is among the chosen ones that Allah has bestowed with multitude of qualities to serve the world.

## **His Last Wish**

Despite his failing health, he was very eager to perform umrah together with his family. Alhamdollillah, his prayers were accepted, few days before his demise, Maulana Shahid Raza travelled to Saudi Arabia to perform his last

tawaf (circumambulation) of the holy Kaaba and be present in Madinah to convey his salaam to our Beloved Prophet peace be upon him. He was very grateful to Allah Almighty.

Maulana's son in law, Barrister Moin Azmi, who performed Umrah together with him, recalled "before going for umrah, Maulana Shahid Raza was very anxious. However, after the completion of his umrah, there was a sign of relief and satisfaction on his face"

May Allah Almighty accept his umrah (Ameen).

## **Thank You**

Allamah Shahid Raza played an instrumental role in the establishment and growth of World Islamic Mission Canada. He was introduced and appointed to extend his experiences and genius advice to solidify the organization in Canada, to which he did justice by his service, and we are all very grateful.

When the new design of Masjid Noor-UL-Haram was presented to him, he got emotional and he said "I wish the Masjid will be built soon, my heart is yearning to pray in this blessed Masjid"

Dear Maulana Sahab, rest assured, even though you won't be able to pray in the new masjid, those ones present will always remember you in our prayers.

Rest in peace, in the company of the righteous, in Janatul Firdous (Ameen).

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