

THE HIJRA CALENDAR

SYMBOL OF ISLAMIC CULTURE

*Dr.M.Tahir Mallick

There seems to be no doubt that the use of Hijre Calendar by the Muslims had already begun during the life-time of the Prophet ﷺ by his command.¹ Al-Suyuti says: he saw a document of pledge granted to the Christians of Najran, which was written by Ali' at the behest of the Prophet. ﷺ This document, according to al-Suyuti was dated 5th Hijra.²

In the beginning the method was so that a year was referred to around an important incidence e.g. سنة الاذن بالرحيل the year in which Allah's command for migration from Mecca to Medina was received. The second year was known as سنة الامر بالقتال the year in which Jihad was made obligatory. The third year was known as سنة التمحص the year of affliction and so on.³

The system of reckoning a year after its important event, however did not last longer and was abandoned,⁴ perhaps due to the occurrence of many events of importance in successive order. Instead, therefore, another method became in use; under this method Hijra, on account of its being the sole reason for all later events of great importance in the history of Islam, was regarded as the starting point for mentioning all happenings, and they used to say that such and such took place so many month(s) after the Hijra, for example about the fasting in the month of Ramadan they stated that it was made obligatory eighteen months after Hijra.⁵

Construction of history around the happening of an important event was not uncommon among the Arabs before Islam. Pre-Islamic Arabi'a is well known for maintaining its history by using an important event as the starting point of their history narration. One such important event once adopted by them remained in use till such time another event of importance, according to them, took place.⁶ Death of Ka'ab⁷ was an important event for the Arabs, who, therefore used his year of death as the starting point for recounting their history. This remained in use for a long time. Later on the attack of Abraha⁸ on the Ka'ba with a fully equipped force having a contingent of elephant was considered as an important event which they called عام الفيل the year of elephant. Hence they started recounting their history by referring to it and would call e.g. this happened so many months or year before or after سنة الفيل This use, seems to be substituted by سنة حرب الفجار⁹ the year in which war of Fijar took place.¹⁰

The Hijra of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina is not only one of the most significant events but also the first in order of occurrence in the

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FACULTY OF ISLAMIC STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI

DEAN

Prof. Dr. Abdul Rashid

Prelude

This is the second issue of the research journal of the Faculty of Islamic Studies. It should have appeared in July 2000 but has been delayed till September. It is regrettable that we are not punctual. In order to ensure punctuality, the Faculty members met on September 21, 2000 to discuss, among other things, the matters concerning this delay and made changes. Some of these changes are reflected in this journal. It is hoped that henceforth this journal shall be published every year on January 1 and July 15, the days on which semesters begin.

We have tried to published original research works in this journal. It is a matter of great satisfaction to us that learned contribution, from not only the Faculty of Islamic Studies but also from the other faculties as well as outside have been published. This is a proof of acceptance of this journal. I am grateful to the contributors and hope for their patronage. We have plans to publish special numbers of Revelation of Qur'an, Seerah, Human Rights, World Peace and Pakistan. I am confident that my colleagues shall make these plans successful.

In spite of our continuous efforts to improve the standard, there is always room for improvement. Your opinions and views in this regard shall be welcomed and help us to further improve the journal.

I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad of the University of Brunei and Prof. Dr. M. Tahir Mallick - our two former Deans - for their patronage Prof. Dr. Mallick has been Practically helpful and has taken great interest in the journal.

With the help of these two senior teachers and our present faculty members, we shall, Insha'Allah make the Faculty more dynamic in teaching and research in national and international matters and thus make this Faculty an exemplary one. We are optimistic also because of the encouragement given by Prof. Dr. Zafar H. Zaidi, our Vice-Chancellor and patronage of His Excellency Mohammedian Soomro, our Chancellor and Governor Sindh, I express my gratitude to both on behalf of my faculty and my students.

(ABDUL RASHID)

Professor & Dean/

Editor In Chief

September 30, 2000

Vice-Chancellor



*University of Karachi,
Karachi.*

9th August 2000

MESSAGE

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that our Faculty of Islamic Studies is continuing the publication of its research journal and the second issue is being published. Research and its dissemination are compulsory in today's world; without this no university can justify its existence.

The performance of the Faculty of Islamic Studies in this respect is very encouraging. They have achieved much in a short time, thus setting an example for other faculties.

I congratulate the Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and his learned colleagues on the publication of the second issue of their research journal and hope that under the guidance of the Dean, the teachers and the students of the Faculty shall contribute to its development.

Prof. Dr. Zafar H. Zaidi



GOVERNOR SINDH

MOHAMMEDMIAN SOOMRO

MESSAGE

It is a matter of great pleasure to learn that the Faculty of Islamic Studies of University of Karachi, which published its first ever research journal in 35 years in December 1999, is publishing its second issue and that this activity shall continue.

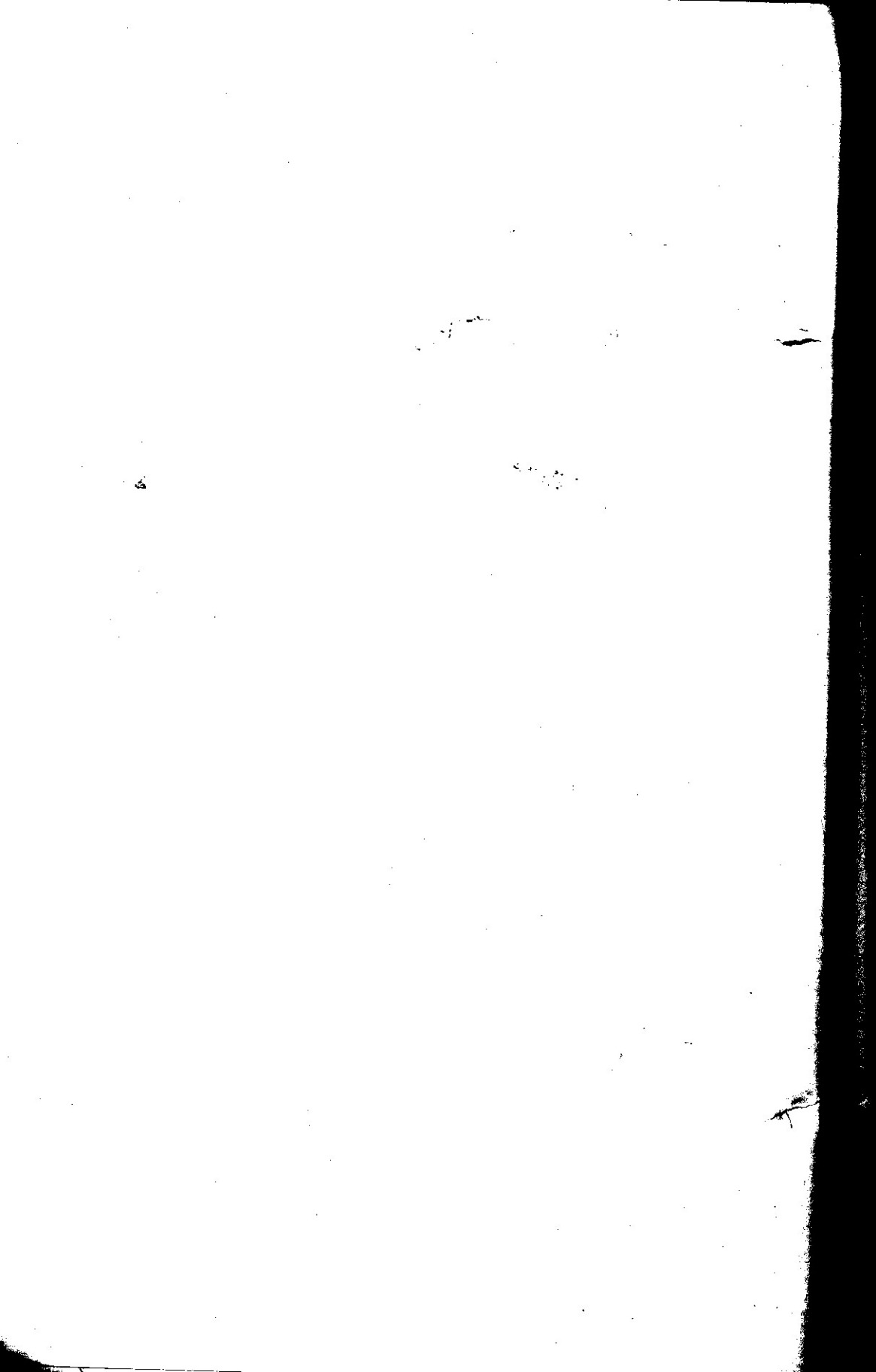
Universities' main functions are teaching and research, encompassing all fields of knowledge. Pakistan, being an Islamic country, it is necessary for institutions imparting Islamic Studies to propagate and also generate knowledge through teaching and research in order to inculcate in the people of sublime ideals of Islam, particularly in their ethical-moral aspect with special regard for tolerance, which is the need of the day and *sine qua non* of democracy.

The Faculty of Islamic Studies of the University of Karachi has achieved much success through its teaching and research programmes. For this, they and the Vice Chancellor deserve commendation.

I am sure that other Faculties of the University of Karachi shall emulate the Faculty of Islamic Studies and bring pride of performance to their institution.

(Mohammedmian Soomro)
Governor Sindh

Karachi, dated the 10th August 2000



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