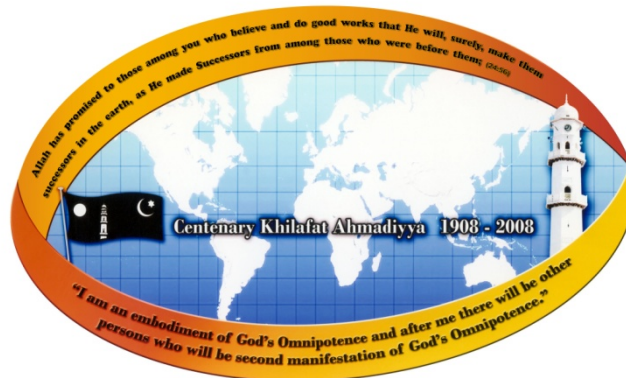


THE KHILAFAT CENTENARY TOUR OF WEST AFRICA



APRIL 15 2008 – MAY 6 2008



GHANA



NIGERIA



BENIN

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FOREWORD

On 15 April 2008, Hadhrat Ameer-ul-Mumineen, Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} embarked on a three week tour to West Africa commemorating the Khilafat Centenary being celebrated by Ahmadis around the world. During the historic tour, Hazur travelled to Ghana, Nigeria and Benin.

Accompanying Hazur throughout the tour was Hadhrat Begum Sahiba.

The following persons were also fortunate enough to be part of Hazur's Kaafila (entourage):

Munir Ahmad Javed	-	Private Secretary
Abdul Majid Tahir	-	Add Wakil-ul-Tabshir
Bashir Ahmed	-	Assistant to Private Secretary
Mohammad Ahmad Nasir	-	Naib In Charge Hifazat-e-Khaas
Nasir Ahmad Saeed	-	Hifazat-e-Khaas
Mahmood Ahmad	-	Hifazat-e-Khaas
Naseer-ud-Din Humayun	-	Hifazat-e-Khaas
Abid Waheed Ahmad Khan	-	Press Secretary
Mirza Hafeez Ahmad	-	Amir Sahib UK's Office
Munir Odeh	-	MTA International
Khalid Karamat	-	MTA International
Masroor Ahmed	-	MTA International
Muhammad Afzal Qureshi	-	MTA International
Muhammad Abdullah		
Chaudhury Naseem Ahmad		

Also part of the Kaafila during the tours of Nigeria and Benin was Kalim Ahmad Bhatti who was representing Alislam.org.

During the entire tour reports in English were written with respect all public functions attended by Hadhrat Ameer-ul-Mumineen^{atba}. This document includes all such reports made from the start of the tour to Hazur's safe return to London on May 6, 2008.

Abid Khan

Press Secretary

Jama'at Ahmadiyya

15 April 2008

HADHRAT MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD ARRIVES IN GHANA

Thousands of Ghanaians welcome Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba}

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} tonight arrived in Ghana at 8.05pm. Hazur was received by Amir Jama'at Ghana, Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam, Alhaj Malik Al-Hassan Yakubu the 2nd Deputy Speaker of Parliament & Vice President of the African Parliament and the Tahir Hammond, the Deputy Minister for the Interior. Also present were thousands of local Ahmadis who had come to greet their spiritual master. There was a great outpouring of love from all present as they expressed their happiness by raising 'Naaray' (Islamic slogans of joy) and waving flags.

A Press Conference was immediately convened with members of the Ghanaian Press where Hazur extended his best wishes to the people of Ghana and said that even though people called his trip to Ghana in 2004 a homecoming, he felt that this too was another homecoming.

Hazur mentioned how this was the Centenary Year of the system of spiritual succession known as 'Khilafat' that begun upon the passing of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be upon him) in 1908. The year therefore was extremely important for Ahmadis throughout the world. Hazur said he felt it was Allah's Design that the first Convention he attended in this Centenary year was to be in Ghana where he had lived for a number of years.

In response to another question Hazur spoke of his heartfelt belief that the Islamic teachings of love and compassion would Insha'Allah win the hearts and minds of peoples of all faiths from all around the world. Finally, Hazur praised the Ghanaian people for their peaceful co-existence and said that he hoped that this peaceful spirit would ever increase as this would lead to the betterment and prosperity of the people of Ghana.

Upon arrival at the ... Mosque, His Hazur was welcomed by a team of Ahmadi Youths who saluted their leader as he walked amongst them. Slogans depicting the truth of Ahmadiyyat were raised by the thousands of Ahmadis overtaken by the joy of seeing their spiritual master. The words of 'Bait' were repeated by the emotional crowd before Karate and wrestling exhibitions took place.

The scenes witnessed upon Hazur's arrival in Ghana will live forever in the memory of those who were present. The outpouring of love and total loyalty and devotion to the institution of Khilafat was there for all to see. Hazur himself seemed extremely delighted to have arrived back in Ghana. As he watched the many Ahmadis greet him from the balcony of the Ahmadiyya Mission House his blessed face was filled with a joyous smile, Alhamdolillah.

16 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} AND THE PRESIDENT OF GHANA MEET AT CASTLE OSSU

President Kufuor welcomes Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad to Ghana

On 16 April 2008 the Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} met with His Excellency, the President of Ghana, Mr John Agyekum Kufuor at Castle Ossu in Accra.

The two leaders spoke about a number of issues such as the Education and Agricultural systems within Ghana. Further, His Excellency, the President spoke of the outstanding contribution made by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Ghana.

During the meeting President Kufuor spoke of how Ghana was, through the Grace of God, developing in all fields. The President acknowledged that this development was a direct result of Hazur's prayers. Citing one example, President Kufuor recalled how upon their previous meeting in 2004, Hazur had expressed a belief that oil would be found in Ghana. President Kufuor said that these prayers had been accepted as in 2007 oil of a very high standard had been discovered in the country. Hearing this news, Hazur commented that he hoped that Ghana could utilise this oil in good ways so that it would continue to develop as a country for the betterment of its people.

President Kufuor made comment of how the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Ghana had made such a vast contribution to the ongoing development of Ghana. He said that apart from the collective effort of the Jama'at, on an individual level the Jama'at had produced many number of outstanding individuals who had contributed to all aspects of Ghanaian society. Continuing upon this theme the President said how recently the Government had granted some school buses to the Jama'at but he said this was not out of any favour but was the due right of the Jama'at due to its long history of serving mankind in Ghana.

The President commented how despite his busy schedule he would be attending the Opening Session of the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa on 17th April 2008. Before the meeting concluded Hazur observed that Ghana had developed a great deal since his previous visit in 2004 and he hoped that this development would continue.

The meeting closed as Hazur presented the President of Ghana with a gift marking the Khilafat Centenary. The President duly appreciated this gift and commented that he would take it home with him.

17 April 2008

‘NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN’ SCENES AT KHILAFAT CENTENARY JALSA INSPECTION

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad inspects Jalsa Salana site amid emotionally charged crowd

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today inspected the site where the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at Ghana is to hold its Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana (Annual Convention) which begins later today. The site, which belongs to the Jama’at, is spread over 400 acres and is based around 60km from Accra. It has been named ‘Bagh-e-Ahmad’ by Hazur.

The President of the Amir Jama’at Ghana, Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam escorted Hazur around the site both on foot and by car. Following the inspection of a farm based on the site, Hazur was escorted to the area allotted to the accommodation of guests. Upon the surprise visit of their spiritual leader hundreds of Ahmadis, both male and female, began to raise slogans of joy welcoming him. People were running side by side for the chance to get a glimpse of their beloved leader. Tears flowed from the eyes of many guests as they realised that the Khalifa was amongst them. Hazur waved kindly to all those whom he passed whilst continually being briefed about arrangements for the Jalsa Salana.

The Press Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Abid Khan said:

“What we saw this morning were scenes that will never be forgotten. The

love that emanated from the hearts of the Ahmadis upon the arrival of Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} illustrated, once again, the attachment and devotion that Ahmadis feel towards the institution of Khilafat.

The people of Africa and Ghana in particular, are most fortunate that today marks the beginning of the first Jalsa Salana of this very special year. The year that we have entered marks the hundredth anniversary of the system of Khilafat (spiritual succession) and the scenes witnessed this morning show how this blessed institution continues to attract ever greater blessings from Allah the Almighty.”

The inspection ended after His Holiness individually met Ahmadi youths from Burkina Faso who had travelled over 1000km on bicycle to take part at this year's Jalsa. Their efforts showed just how deep the spirit of love for the Jama'at is ingrained in the hearts of Ahmadi Muslims. They had to travel for days, over difficult and dangerous terrain in extreme heat. Yet none of the cyclists displayed any form of tiredness but instead their faces were decorated with smiles and love.

17 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} DECLARES GHANA AN EXAMPLE TO THE WORLD

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad inaugurates the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana 2008 in Ghana

The first Jalsa of the Khilafat Centenary was today inaugurated by Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} at Bagh-e-Ahmad (Garden of Ahmad) in Ghana. The opening session was attended also by His Excellency, President J.A. Kufuor, Head of State of the Republic of Ghana. The event was telecast live via satellite link throughout the world on MTA. Thus millions of people around the world took part in this historic event.

In his welcome address, the Amir Jama'at Ghana, Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam Sahib spoke of the great honour he felt as this occasion was being graced with the presence of both Hazur and His Excellency.

Amir Sahib went on to comment upon how the people of Ghana were indeed blessed because in other countries religion was often the reason for division, yet in Ghana differing faiths and religions brought a sense of unity and cohesion. This was exemplified by the attendance of various representatives of different faiths including the Senior Member of the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana, Cardinal Peter Appiah Turkson who said that the Ahmadiyya creed of '*Love for All, Hatred for None*' was practised as well as preached by Ahmadis

and he urged people of all backgrounds to come together and accept this universal teaching.

Following an introduction by Chairperson, Al-Haj Al-Hassan bin Salih, Hazur took to the stage at 12 noon and addressed the audience for around forty minutes. Hazur began by thanking the Almighty God for granting him the opportunity to partake in this year's Jalsa Salana.

Throughout his address, Hazur spoke of his special love and bond with the Ghanaian Jama'at, which was a result of the eight years he had spent living in the country, some years prior to being appointed Khalifa-tul Masih. Hazur said:

"I have great expectations of Ghana. It is my prayer, that may you always march forward. Perhaps these aspirations are because I spent part of my life here."

Speaking of his time in Ghana, Hazur observed that at the time Ghana itself was facing many difficulties yet this did not deter him, in fact he made a conscious effort of trying to solve some of the problems faced by the country and be part of its future prosperity.

Hazur spoke also of the development of the Ghanaian Jama'at. He said that nearly 90 years ago members of the Community from India were sent to Ghana and acted as pioneers as they preached the true message of Ahmadiyyat to the people. At first people joined in their ones and twos, yet those people were of such nobility and piety that through them more and more people joined the Jama'at. Hazur said that the Ghanaian Jama'at must never forget those

pioneers and indeed their services must be fully documented so that the future generations are not left without the knowledge of the sacrifices made by their forefathers.

Hazur commented on the devotion of the Ghanaian Jama'at towards the institution of Khilafat. He said that in this respect they certainly were an example to Ahmadis in other parts of the world. Hazur congratulated the Jama'at for having fulfilled their pledge of allegiance to Khilafat. However he counselled against complacency by urging members of the Jama'at to continue to bow down before Almighty God in prayer.

In the latter part of his address, His Holiness instructed that every Ahmadi must try and improve himself and that it was necessary for each person to develop the qualities of absolute truth and forbearance. If these two principles were inculcated it would lead to the progression of society as a whole and to a situation of entrenched peace. These two principles, if obeyed, could rid the world of many of the ills that it faces today. Hazur then concluded his speech by wishing the country of Ghana continued prosperity and expressing his belief that the continued development of Ghana was dependent upon the hard work of its Government and citizens alike.

Following Hazur's address, His Excellency President Kufuor took to the stage whereupon he congratulated the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at on its Centenary celebrations and expressed his delight that the first Jalsa of the Centenary was taking place in Ghana. Referring to Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba}, His Excellency said that Hazur was no stranger to Ghana as he had lived there for a number of years and thus had assumed the multiple roles of brother, friend

and teacher to the people of Ghana.

The morning session was duly completed by silent prayer which was observed by the tens of thousands of people, men, women and children who had come from all over the world to attend this auspicious event and simultaneously by Ahmadi Muslims throughout the world viewing the event on television.

18 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} URGES AHMADI MUSLIMS TO WIN HEARTS AND MINDS

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad refutes allegation that Islam was spread by the sword

During his Friday Sermon on the occasion of the 2nd Day of the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana in Ghana, Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} instructed Ahmadis throughout the world to prioritise prayer and the spirit of sacrifice above all else. If his instructions were heeded, then God's blessings would rain down upon the Ahmadiyya Jama'at. Hazur said that the greatest example of prayer and sacrifice in the history of mankind was the blessed life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and it was through the acceptance of his prayers that Islam spread far and wide.

For the benefit of the majority African audience the Hazur's address was translated live into French and the local language of Tui. As the sun bore down on the event the tens of thousands of people in attendance sat silently listening intently to Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih^{atba}.

Hazur spoke of the paramount importance of the worship of God Almighty and thereupon instructed that the best form of worship was the five daily prayers that are fundamental to the life of every Muslim. Praising those attending the Jalsa, Hazur said:

“In these days of Jalsa I see that great care has been taken in observing the five prayers that are offered in congregation. Men, women and children are seen at the prayers in vast numbers. However, it should not be that when you return home you forget this habit of regular prayer. When involved in your worldly affairs do not forget this fundamental obligation.”

The vast task faced by members of the Ahmadiyya Community was outlined by Hazur. He explained that it was this Jama'at alone that had understood the true teachings of the Holy Qur'an and so those teachings had to be promulgated to every country, to every city and to every town. The Jama'at, he said, did not have any great worldly power, but that did not matter because this was a spiritual organisation which was blessed with the Help of the Creator and Master of the Universe, God Almighty.

To bring forth a revolutionary change in mankind, first each individual Ahmadi had to purify his own heart and the fundamental way to do that was through prayer. Hazur said that there were many people who alleged that Islam had been spread by the sword. But this allegation was wholly without any foundation. Islam's teaching was of love for all and hatred for none. Hazur said that whilst land could be conquered by virtue of violence it could never win hearts and minds. Thus the victory of Ahmadiyyat was dependant upon each Ahmadi becoming a beacon of virtue and thereby spreading the message of love which is the true guiding principle of Islam. This could only be achieved if Ahmadi the world over were regular in their prayers and ever willing to make financial sacrifices for the sake of God Almighty.

Thereupon Hazur spoke about the Khilafat Centenary. He said that the conventions and celebrations that were being held throughout 2008 were only a small part of what this year was about. He said the true purpose of the Centenary could only be achieved when each and every Ahmadi Muslim made an oath to be regular in his worship of God Almighty.

Upon the conclusion of the Friday Sermon, Hazur returned to his residence by car. Along the way, his vehicle was flanked from both sides by thousands of Ahmadis who were there just to try and get a glimpse of their blessed leader. Men, women and children sang songs praising God Almighty and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Most certainly the emotional attachment of the African people to the institution of Khilafat is an example to the entire world of what true devotion and true love really is.

18 April 2008

THOUSANDS OF AHMADIS MEET THEIR SPIRITUAL LEADER

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad meets with over 4000 Ahmadis

Over four thousand Ahmadi Muslims from a number of different African countries today met personally with Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} at Bagh-e-Ahmad in the town of Winneba, Ghana.

Prior to the meeting a vast crowd gathered in anticipation. For nearly two hours the crowd sang songs praising God Almighty and His Messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One guest who had travelled from London to attend the event said he was amazed because amongst the thousands of people he could not hear one voice out of tune. The love in the hearts of the Ahmadis was thus expressed through the beauty of their voices.

Hazur began to meet the guests one by one at 5.30pm local time. He met with members of the Community from Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali and Togo. Hazur remained standing throughout the session greeting each and every person with a smile and often asking questions to the people he met. Younger children were given chocolates, whilst students were presented with pens.

The Ahmadis met Hazur in differing ways dependent upon their local customs. Some people shook hands, some bowed or knelt whilst others kissed the

blessed hand of Hazur.

The joy of the Ahmadis who met their leader was visible to all. A member of the Community from Ivory Coast, Aulawili Yusuf, described his feelings just prior to meeting Hazur,

“Meeting Hazur will be a genuine life changing experience for me. It will be a moment of history that I will never forget. I am so happy that I cannot describe.”

Mustafa Bo from Togo described his feelings moments after meeting with Hazur,

“This was the first time in my life to meet Hazur. Immediately he made me feel at home.”

Khalid Daboni from Burkina Faso spoke of how meeting Hazur had changed his life,

“I met Hazur for just a second and in that second my life was changed. Meeting Hazur has purified and reformed me because he is a true man of God. In future if I ever think of doing a bad deed I will stop and think that Hazur has touched this hand and if he knew I was about to do this deed he would not be happy and so I will stop.”

Another member from Burkina Faso, Isa Siyama, said that he had become an Ahmadi Muslim in 2005. He said that he was extremely thankful to God

Almighty for granting him the opportunity to meet Hazur. He said,

“I have not one regret about becoming Ahmadi. It is the perfect religion. I am so thankful that I was today able to meet Hazur.”

Al-Hadi from Burkina Faso said that his faith had been strengthened to new levels after meeting Hazur, whilst Abdur-Rahman from Ivory Coast said that he had never seen such a beautiful face as that of Hazur.

The queue of people waiting to meet Hazur was such that Ahmad from Ghana who was part of the Khuddam Security Team said:

“The queue is so long and it seems to be getting longer and longer. I do not know how Hazur can meet so many people. Certainly Allah has granted strength to the Khalifa.”

The meeting period concluded at 7.30pm as the time for the evening prayers approached. Commenting on the meeting, Abid Khan, Press Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at said:

“Yet again the scenes witnessed in Ghana today illustrated the love Ahmadis here in Africa have for Khilafat and in turn the love the Khalifa has for them. A few seconds with Hazur changed the lives of the thousands of people in attendance. Only God Almighty can put such love and devotion into the hearts of so many people.”

19 April 2008

KHILAFAT CENTENARY JALSA IN GHANA CONCLUDES WITH ADDRESS BY HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA}

The first Jalsa Salana attended by Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} concluded today. The final session, which was chaired by His Lordship Saeed Kweku Gyan, included a speech by His Excellency Alhaj Aliu Mahama the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana and the presentation of gold medals honouring academic excellence to a number of male and female students. The highlight of the session was the concluding address delivered by Hazur, which brought down the curtain on this year's Jalsa.

During his speech Vice President Mahama congratulated the Jama'at on the occasion of the Khilafat Centenary and said that it was a great honour to welcome Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V to the country for the second time since his appointment as Head of the Community. He spoke of how he greatly valued the commitment shown by the Jama'at to co-operate with other faiths and groups.

The Vice President spoke of the many positive activities the Jama'at was involved with throughout the country particularly in the fields of Agriculture, Education and Health. He said the benefits of such activities were there for all to see. His Excellency concluded his speech by speaking of Ghana's commitment to good governance, respect for human rights and access to education.

Hazur began his address at 5.10pm by stating that due to his participation and the attendance of Ahmadis from 32 countries this had been an International Jalsa. This was reinforced by the fact that the proceedings had been shown live worldwide on MTA.

Hazur drew the attention of all Ahmadis to the task of continually striving towards the path of God Almighty. Drawing analogy with crops in farmland, Hazur said that for a good crop to emerge weeds have to be removed at an early stage and continual care must be taken to water and develop the seeds carefully. Similarly a person must follow set procedures to derive maximum blessings from God Almighty. Hazur said:

“We have to nurture and take care of our hearts so the seedlings of good work begin to sprout.”

Developing this theme, Hazur spoke of how seeking God’s Forgiveness was not limited to uttering words of repentance, that is ‘Astaghfar’. In fact a person had to make a pure and firm resolve seeking God’s Help. Human nature was naturally inclined towards sin and thus God’s Help was necessary to fight against evil tendencies. The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) taught three conditions that had to be fulfilled for true repentance. Firstly, a person had to shun and distance himself from foul and corrupt thoughts. Secondly, he had to inculcate a feeling of shame and regret for any bad deeds that he has previously committed. The third and final stage of repentance was achieved when a person developed a firm resolve never to commit a particular sin again. When these stages had been accomplished then a person’s evil deeds were replaced by high moral values.

Hazur spoke of the importance of husbands and wives within a family. He said that harshness never produced good results. Husbands therefore ought to be examples for the entire family and thus when returning home at the end of a day they ought to greet their wives and children in a tender and loving manner.

Likewise women within a family had a hugely important role to play for they have been granted the honour and task of nurturing the children and consequently developing the future generations of their nation.

Hazur gave the example of a hardened criminal who had committed so many heinous crimes that he was awarded the Death Penalty. As a last request he asked that he may meet his mother. When she came he asked her to put out her tongue and when she did so he bit it in half. When asked why he had committed this atrocity as a final act of vengeance he said that when he was young his mother defended and even encouraged him when he was involved in little petty crimes. From thereon he progressed until he became the evil man he was now. He regretted that his mother had not stopped him. This Hazur said, showed that the influence of a mother stayed with her offspring throughout their lives. Thus whilst a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that Paradise lied under the feet of one's mother, Hazur said that if a mother did not discharge her duties of shepherding her family then in fact Hell lied under her feet.

Hazur concluded his address by invoking a great number of earnest prayers in favour of Africa and Ghana in particular. He said that Africa had a bright future and thus the people of the country had to be willing to work diligently and with

honesty so that the bright future emerged rapidly. Hazur ended his address at 5.50pm by praying,

“May Allah have Mercy on all of mankind. May this coming year of the Khilafat Centenary bring a revolution within each and every one of you. May Allah enable me to love you ever more than before. May Allah enable leaders to rise above their vested interests for the betterment of their societies. May Allah take you back to your homes safely. And may Allah make all the participants of this Jalsa Salana worthy of the prayers of the Promised Messiah.”

21 April 2008

TWO MOSQUES INAUGURATED BY HEAD OF HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA}

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad also visits three Ahmadiyya Educational Facilities in Ghana

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today visited three educational facilities founded and owned by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Ghana.

The first institution visited was the Ekumfi T.I. Ahmadiyya Secondary School which houses both Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi students. Indeed enrolled at the school are more non-Ahmadi students, underlying the commitment of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at to providing free education across the board, regardless of creed, caste or colour.

During his eight year stay in Ghana, Hazur was, for a number of years, the Principal of this school. Indeed during his time there the school developed a great deal through his guidance and stewardship.

Upon entry at 11.30am, Hazur was welcomed by a marching band made up of students. He was then escorted to his old office. Sitting at his old desk he wrote in the school Guest Book:

“Alhamdulillah – The school is progressing leaps and bounds. All the staff

members, Headmaster and of course the students seem to be feeling their responsibilities. Allah bless them all. Amin. – Mirza Masroor Ahmad (21/4/08)."

The tour of the school concluded after Hazur visited the house where he lived during his time as Principal. The building he had designed himself.

The second facility attended was Jamia Ahmadiyya Ghana, the Missionary Training Centre currently attended by 109 students from 15 different African countries. This visit was particularly significant as Hazur officially opened 'Masjid Noor' a large Mosque built on the complex. As part of the inauguration Hazur gave an address to the students of Jamia Ahmadiyya during which he reminded them of their great responsibilities as future ambassadors of the Jama'at. He said:

"Your responsibility is not small. Indeed it is a great burden on your shoulders and as the Jama'at continues to progress the responsibilities you bear will ever increase... It is your duty to work hard and to concentrate on your studies. Your Jama'at and your parents have sent you to Jamia so that you can go back and teach others what Islam truly is. Thus remember that if you fail to concentrate you will not be fulfilling your obligations."

Developing the theme further, Hazur said that as they increased in knowledge, the appearance, behaviour and attitudes of the students ought to develop side by side so that a true and living relationship with God Almighty could be fostered. Those who acquired knowledge yet did not practice what they had learnt were akin to hollow shells. Only when a person reformed himself could

he begin to reform others. Through one person's example was another example born.

Hazur instructed the assembled students that they ought not to assume that they would all be posted within Africa. He said they could be sent to countries within Europe or other parts of the world where the Jama'at needed to spread. Thus it was important that they broadened the horizons of their study so that they were ready for the call of Jama'at.

After leaving Jamia Ahmadiyya, Hazur inaugurated the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Potsin where he was also greeted by hundreds of Ahmadis. Hazur raised the flag of Ahmadiyyat and then planted a tree in celebration of the Khilafat Centenary. The opening of the Mosque was yet another example of the continuing prosperity of the Jama'at which is occurring despite the best efforts of its opponents.

21 April 2008

**HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} RETURNS TO JAMA'AT
HEADQUARTERS IN ACCRA**

**The Vice President of Ghana attends an Official Reception held at
the Ahmadiyya Headquarters in Accra in honour of Hadhrat Mirza
Masroor Ahmad**

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} returned today to the Ahmadiyya Central Mission in Accra following a number of days spent at Bagh-e-Ahmad. En route to Accra, Hazur visited a number of important places owned by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at. Thereafter, Hazur attended an official reception held in his honour at the Central Mission. The event was also attended by His Excellency, Alhaj Aliu Mahama the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana and His Excellency Darren Schemmer the Canadian High Commissioner in Ghana.

Hazur departed Bagh-e-Ahmad at 10.35am with hundreds of Ahmadiis gathering round and singing the words, '*I am with you, O Masroor*' which represented a phrase revealed by God Almighty to the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be upon him).

At 11.15am Hazur arrived at the Ekrafo Ahmadiyya Cemetery in which a number of prominent members of the Ghanaian Jama'at have been buried. Hazur prayed at the grave of Chief First Mahdi Appah who was the first Ahmadi

convert in Ghana and also at the graves of Amosah Mensah and Tahir Kwesi Hammond.

Later in the day Hazur inaugurated the Raqem Printing Press at the Regional Headquarters of the Community near Accra. Within the complex there was a computer room, a number of offices as well as the actual printing press. The print room consisted of machines used for cutting, binding, printing and finishing that had been imported from the United Kingdom. The inauguration ended as Hazur planted a tree celebrating the Khilafat Centenary in the courtyard whilst hundreds of Ahmadi sang the words '*There is none worthy of worship except Allah*' in unison.

The official reception in honour of Hazur was held at the Central Mission in Accra from 6.30pm. Dignitaries from many spheres of the local society attended.

During his speech His Excellency, the Vice President said:

"It is a privilege for me to be invited to this reception to welcome His Holiness... The Ahmadiyya Mission in Ghana always displays ample tolerance when dealing with Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This is due to the Divine guidance which is granted to His Holiness. The message he always spreads is of love."

The evening concluded with a brief address by Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} in which he thanked His Excellency for having been a long and loyal friend of the Jama'at.

He said:

“I remember almost five years ago His Excellency visited the United Kingdom and was anxious to meet with me and so we met at the Fazl Mosque in London. Normally non-Ahmadi Muslims never like to offer prayers behind Ahmadis, but the Vice President did offer prayers in our Mosque. I hope that, as he has done in the past, he continues to show such kindness that we cherish a great deal.”

22 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} COMMUNITY ARRIVES IN NIGERIA

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad pledges Ahmadiyya support to students in need

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today arrived in Nigeria on Day 8 of his West African tour. Hazur departed from Ghana at 12.15pm on an Air-Aero flight from Accra to Lagos. As he left Ghana, hundreds of Ahmadis came to see him off singing the same songs of joy and praise that had illuminated the past week.

Hazur arrived in Lagos at 2.05pm local time. Upon arrival, a Press Conference was convened and was attended by around 40 journalists representing both the national and international media. During the Conference Hazur spoke of how this year was a special year in the history of the Jama'at as it was celebrating the Khilafat Centenary. Upon being asked what his mission as Khalifa-tul Masih was, Hazur stated:

“My mission is simply to promote peace in the world. It is our task to propagate this message to every human in the world.”

The discussion turned towards the social contribution made by the Ahmadiyya Community. Hazur mentioned how the Jama'at always tried to serve humanity regardless of creed, caste or colour. This was illustrated by the many health

clinics and education facilities built and maintained by the Jama'at in the most remote areas. Hazur informed the assembled Press that currently the Jama'at was undertaking feasibility studies with regard developing fresh water pumps in parts of Nigeria where clean water was not available.

Regarding education, Hazur spoke of how he felt this was of paramount importance for the development of Africa. In this respect he pledged that if there were any students, of required abilities, who were genuinely unable to further their education due to financial reasons, the Ahmadiyya Jama'at would fund their education. He said this was not dependant on religion but was an offer available across society because providing such opportunities was a fundamental teaching of the Holy Qur'an.

Upon the conclusion of the Press Conference, Hazur travelled to the Ahmadiyya Central Headquarters in Lagos where he was greeted by thousands of Ahmadi Muslims overjoyed at seeing their spiritual leader. Ahmadi boys had prepared a special salute and karate exhibition for Hazur whilst the many Ahmadi girls sang songs in praise of God Almighty and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

23 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} INSPECTS AUXILIARY GUEST HOUSES IN LAGOS

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} today inspected two new Ahmadiyya guest houses built on the premises of the Nigerian Central Mission in Lagos.

Hazur began his inspection by visiting the guest house built by 'Lajna Immaillah' in Nigeria. He was escorted around the building by Sadr Lajna Nigeria.

Secondly, Hazur inspected the guest house built by 'Majlis Ansarullah' in Nigeria. Sadr Majlis Ansarullah Nigeria welcomed Hazur on behalf of the organisation and thanked him for his continued love and prayers.

Addressing the senior members of the organisation, Hazur spoke of how the word 'Ansarullah' meant 'Helper of Allah'. Thus using the wisdom and experience cultivated over many years, members of the organisation had a duty and responsibility to guide and look after other members of the Community such as new Ahmadi Muslims or those in need. They ought to be the leaders and guides for the rest of the Community.

Hazur said that attaining the age of forty did not mean that members could relax or neglect their duties. In fact they had to prove themselves as true Helpers of Allah. He commented that Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih III, Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^{rtā} introduced the system of 'Saf-e-Dom' for members

between the ages of 40-55 to illustrate the point that an Ansar ought still to be wholly active in Jama'at activities.

Hazur ended the inspection by instructing that members of Majlis Ansarullah in Nigeria must try its utmost to involve every single one of its members. He prayed that may Allah enable all the members to feel and heed this responsibility.

23 April 2008

NEW X-RAY THEATRE INAUGURATED BY HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V AT AHMADIYYA HOSPITAL IN APAPA

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today officially opened a new X-Ray unit at the Al-Apapa Ahmadiyya General Hospital in the town of Apapa, Nigeria.

Hazur arrived at the facility at 12.10pm and was greeted by children singing songs in praise of God Almighty. Above the entrance of the facility lay a large sign that read, *"We care, God heals"*.

Hazur was led to the X-ray unit by the Chief Administrator and Director of the Hospital, Dr Muhammad Sami-ullah. At 12.15pm, following an inspection by Hazur the Unit was officially opened. Through the Grace of God the Ahmadiyya Community's total commitment to the service of mankind was again displayed through the opening of the facility. The hospital is in an area with a large local population who benefit from the hospital regardless of colour, caste or creed.

23 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} BEGINS STATE VISIT TO BENIN

Over 50 Kings welcome Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today arrived in Benin as his Khilafat Centenary tour to West Africa continued. Hazur and his entourage crossed the Benin Border from Nigeria at 3.05pm and were greeted by His Excellency Jean Alexander, Minister of State and Government Spokesperson who was sent by His Excellency the President of Benin to receive Hazur as he began his Official State visit to the country. Also present to receive Hazur were over 50 local tribal Kings.

Following arrival in Benin a Press Conference was immediately convened. Hazur thanked the Government for their continued co-operation and for declaring him a guest of State. He said that the Ahmadiyya faith was based on friendship and love and so he hoped this spirit of co-operation would always to develop.

Thereafter a Reception was held at the Border during which the Minister of State spoke of his admiration and gratitude for the great service of the Ahmadiyya Community. He said:

“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been serving our country greatly. Thus it is our obligation that we welcome you. In every field your Community has excelled, be it in providing services such as water or in propagating your

faith. We are truly delighted that Your Holiness has come. We welcome you.”

In response to the welcome, Hazur commented:

“I am very happy that the Minister has come and has shown such a loving feeling towards the Jama’at. When I came four years ago I was able to observe that the local people were both extremely friendly and extremely welcoming. I developed a great love for the people of Benin and through this love the desire to help only increased. I hope and pray that more roads open so that we can serve humanity ever more. Our service is provided without distinction.”

Following the reception Hazur departed for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Headquarters in Porto Novo. Hazur arrived at 4.30pm as the heavens opened through a heavy rainstorm. Upon cessation of the rain the weather became cool and pleasant. A local commented that the previous days in Benin had been extremely hot, yet upon arrival of Hazur’s arrival immediately changed and became pleasant.

24 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT OF BENIN

President Boni Yahi welcomes Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad to Benin

The Head of State of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency, President Dr Thomas Boni Yahi today welcomed Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad on his four day State visit to the country. During the meeting the leaders spoke about the social contribution made by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Benin and the continued co-operation between the Government and the Ahmadiyya Community.

The meeting, held in the Presidential Office, begun at 11.25am as His Excellency welcomed Hazur to the country. Hazur thanked the President for his warm sentiments and spoke of the Community's commitment to the service of mankind. He said that through the Grace of God the Jama'at was now present in 189 countries of the world and in each and every country alongside propagating its faith, the Jama'at contributed to the service of humanity.

Hazur said that throughout Africa the Community had schools, hospitals and engineering projects aimed at serving mankind. He said that the Jama'at often went to service the remotest areas, where even the authorities were unable to go. In Benin alone there were three hospitals in Porto Novo, Alada and Tui.

The discussion turned towards the 'Water for All' scheme initiated by the Jama'at. Under the auspices of this scheme 20 water pumps abandoned by the Government had been rehabilitated and thus provided fresh drinking water to those in need. Hazur said that the Jama'at would continue to seek new ways of serving mankind and in this respect he thanked the President for the Government's continued co-operation.

The meeting concluded as the President thanked Hazur for all of the work undertaken by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Benin. He said that he understood that whatever work was done by the Jama'at was done for the sake of God and not due to any vested interest.

24 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} ADDRESSES DAY 2 OF THE KHILAFAT CENTENARY JALSA SALANA IN BENIN

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today addressed the second day of the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana in Benin. Hazur said that disaster had spread around the world and that the only form of salvation was the message of peace and love propagated by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at.

Hazur began his address at 6.20pm by stating that the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him) had not initiated the institution of Jalsa Salana so that people could gather together and partake in idle chat. It was not a political or social occasion but an occasion where people could enhance their faith and thus develop the best of manners in all spheres of their lives.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had prophesied that a Messiah and Mahdi would come when the world was faced with disaster and ruin. Hazur said that at the time the Promised Messiah made his claim this was the case. People had turned away from their Lord and the perfect religion of Islam had been tarnished and corrupted due to vested interests. Today, Hazur said, the world continued to face disaster and only the message of the Promised Messiah could avert the crisis. The Promised Messiah had been sent to win the hearts of people through his love, peace and wisdom and bring them back to God Almighty and today this continued to be the case under the

guidance of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

Hazur turned towards the subject of 'Taqwa'. He said that every Ahmadi should develop Taqwa in his heart. He explained that this in essence was true love of God Almighty. Thus a person had to strive to obey every law of God, to worship Him alone, to love His Creation and to always afford others their due rights. All of these ideals had to be developed due to the love of God. This was Taqwa in its truest sense.

Continuing upon this theme, Hazur said that occasions such as the Jalsa Salana ought to be utilised to reform. The key to reformation was the worship of God Almighty through the five prayers that are obligatory to every Muslim. Unless a mother and father were regular in prayers their children would never realise their importance.

Hazur continued by stating that the characters of each and every Ahmadi ought to be of the very highest standards. To cultivate such standards they needed to develop humility within their hearts, as this quality was looked upon with great favour by God Almighty. Further Ahmadis ought to abstain from envy and backbiting as both of these characteristics were sins which were the root cause of all the problems faced by the world. World wars had been fought due to these evils, whilst on a domestic level families had been torn apart.

As he drew to a conclusion, to a backdrop of nightfall, Hazur prayed that may all Ahmadis be enabled to excel in righteousness and may God Almighty keep all Ahmadis in His Benign protection.

25 April 2008

AL-MAHDI MOSQUE INAUGURATED IN PORTO NOVO

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} leads Friday Sermon at new Mosque in Benin

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today inaugurated the Al-Mahdi Mosque in Porto Novo.

Speaking during the Friday Sermon, Hazur said:

“Today here in Porto Novo this Mosque is being inaugurated. When I visited Benin in 2004 I laid the foundation stone and today I am opening it. Allah has granted us this beautiful Mosque so that people come together and worship Him.

It is Allah’s great favour upon this Jama’at that in all cities we are able to build Mosques. We have built them in both the poorest and most deprived areas of Africa and also in the large urban cities. In every place through the sacrifice of members of our Jama’at we are able to build such beautiful buildings.

This Jama’at has little in the way of worldly wealth but what we have in abundance is the wealth of faith which is the reason why Ahmadis are ready to make such sacrifices.”

Developing the theme of faith, Hazur said Ahmadis must always guard and protect themselves from evil and the best way to do so was to bow down in worship of God Almighty and thank Him for all His blessings.

Hazur said he hoped that this Mosque would always be full. He mentioned how a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon) stated that a person who prayed collectively with others in a Mosque would receive many times the blessings compared to a person who prayed on his own.

The concept of the equality of each and every person was another blessing of Mosques. Hazur said that in Mosques people of all social classes came together. It did not matter if a person was rich or poor, educated or uneducated - in a Mosque he was equal. Hazur said that if any person tried to influence who he stood next to in a Mosque or who he spoke to then he would not derive any blessings because in a Mosque the sole objective ought to be the worship of God Almighty.

If Ahmadis came together and prayed with sincerity then the blessings of their actions would not be limited to the four walls of the Mosque. In fact through their prayers the society outside would benefit as the message of love and peace taught by Islam would present itself to the world at large.

Hazur concluded his Sermon by addressing members of the auxiliary organisations within the Jama'at. Hazur instructed that these organisations, comprising of Lajna Immaillah, Majlis Khuddam-ul Ahmadiyya and Majlis Ansarullah Ahmadiyya, should always remember that their responsibilities

were limited to their own members. Thus a member of Ansar could not interfere with a Khuddam or Lajna matter or vice versa. Neither could they interfere with a matter relating to the Jama'at itself which was a higher authority.

Hazur further instructed that an auxiliary organisation had the right to develop its own programmes free from interference, however its members ought to consult with their local Amirs to make sure that their programmes did not affect any Jama'at matters. He concluded by reminding all Ahmadis that every member of one of the auxiliary organisations was ultimately subject to the Jama'at itself.

25 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF NEW MISSION HOUSE

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today laid the Foundation Stone for a new Mission House to be built on the site of the Al-Mahdi Mosque in Porto Novo, Benin.

Hazur laid the Foundation Stone immediately after inaugurating the Al-Mahdi Mosque on the occasion of the Friday Prayers. As he laid the Foundation Stone members of the local Jama'at raised slogans in praise of God Almighty.

The ceremony concluded with a silent prayer led by Hazur.

25 April 2008

STATE RECEPTION HELD IN HONOUR OF HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA}

The Government of Benin tonight hosted a Reception at the *Palais de Congress* in honour of Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba}. The event was attended by a number of Ministers, Members of Parliament and Kings, as well as many dignitaries from various spheres of the Benin society.

The reception begun with recitation of the Holy Qur'an at 8.45pm. Thereafter a number of speakers took to the stage, including some of the Ministers and Kings in attendance, who spoke in tribute of the work undertaken by the Ahmadiyya Community in Benin and welcomed Hazur to the country.

The highlight of the evening was the keynote address made by Hazur in which he expressed his thanks for the warm sentiments displayed by the guest speakers. He continued by stating that the purpose of the Ahmadiyya Community was two fold. He said:

“The world had become distanced from God Almighty and so the first purpose of our Community is to remedy this and bring people back towards Him. The second purpose is to safeguard the rights of all human beings which have come under threat due to the selfish nature of others. If these two purposes are achieved then all the problems faced by the world will be eradicated.”

Thereafter Hazur spoke of the Community's social contribution. He said that its

goal was to serve God's Creation and thus any help or service undertaken was not a favour on Benin but in fact was an obligation upon the Ahmadiyya Jama'at. He said that the people of Benin should not worry that one day the Jama'at would walk away, because it had never swayed from its service to humanity and it never would.

Hazur ended his address by thanking once again the Government of Benin for its heartfelt welcome to him. Thereafter dinner was served to all the guests. Upon conclusion, Hazur met individually with all the guests over a period of over one hour. The guests comprised both Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis alike. They came individually and sought his prayers. The event concluded at 11.15pm upon which Hazur departed for his residence.

26 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} RETURNS TO NIGERIA

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today returned to the Ahmadiyya Central Headquarters in Lagos following his three day State Visit to Benin.

Departing shortly after lunch, many members of the local Jama'at in Benin came to see him off. One person who had the fortune to meet Hazur, Rashid Ahmad said:

“I could never have expected in my wildest dreams that I would ever get the opportunity to meet Hazur here in Benin. I used to see people on MTA kiss his hand and always wondered if I would ever get the chance to do that. To be honest I never believed I would or could be so lucky.”

Malik Hassan from Benin converted to Ahmadiyyat in 1994. He too was able to meet Hazur. He said:

“The first time I saw Hazur I started to cry. In fact whenever I see him, I start to cry because the emotion is so much. Meeting Hazur has changed my life because now I have met the man who is my Khalifa. When I see him, I see nothing but truth. There is nobody else like him in the entire world.”

Following arrival at the Nigeria Border, Hazur was greeted by Amir Jama'at

Nigeria, Dr Mashud Adenrele Fashola and the Missionary-in-Charge, Khaliq Nayer. Hundreds of Ahmadi Muslims were also present to welcome Hazur. Thereafter the motorcade proceeded to the Central Headquarters where Hazur arrived at 6.30pm.

27 April 2008

INAUGURATION OF BAIT-UR-RAHEEM MOSQUE IN IBADAN

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba} also inspects Ahmadiyya Printing Press in Lagos

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today inaugurated the Bait-ur-Raheem Mosque in Ibadan. Arriving from Lagos at 2.20pm, Hazur was greeted by hundreds of local Ahmadiis who raised slogans in praise of God Almighty, following which the Nigerian National Anthem was rendered.

Thereafter, Hazur unveiled a plaque officially commissioning the new Mosque, thus joining a number of other Ahmadiyya Mosques around the world being inaugurated in this Khilafat Centenary Year.

Earlier in the day Hazur also inspected the Raqem Printing Press at the Central Headquarters in Lagos. Hazur was escorted around the Printing Press by Adnan Ahmad the Head of the Department.

28 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} MEETS WITH SENIOR MUSLIM JUDGE

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} met today with the Senior Qazi of the Shariah Court in the State of Kwara, Nigeria.

The Senior Qazi said that he believed that any person who proclaimed the Islamic Declaration of Faith '*There is none worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger*' was a Muslim. Therefore he rejected the call of certain non-Ahmadi clerics who argued that the Ahmadiyya Community was a heretical organisation. Upon hearing this Hazur remarked that he was pleased that the Qazi used the same definition as was used by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself.

Turning to the issue of the development of Africa, Hazur said that corruption continued to be a great problem. He said that God had blessed Nigeria and the other African nations with great resources, but that they could not prosper until their leaders disregarded their own vested interests. Further, the leaders and the people of Africa had to believe that they could equal and even excel the developed nations in terms of prosperity. Hazur said that if these points were followed then, God Willing, Africa could lead the world.

The Qazi then informed Hazur as to the types of cases received by the Shariah Court. He said they tended to receive cases of marriage, divorce, land registration and a number of other issues. Hazur suggested that because the

majority population Kwara State was Muslim, the authorities ought to develop a proper system of Zakat, as such would lead to the alleviation of many of the problems faced by the society.

Upon invitation from the Qazi, Hazur later visited the Shariah Court Library. During the visit, Hazur wrote in the Guest Book:

“May Allah enable the Court to make justice according to the teachings of the Holy Qur’an. Mirza Masroor Ahmad 28/4/08”

28 April 2008

RECEPTION AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE FOR HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA}

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} was today received by His Excellency, Chief Joel Ogundeji, the Deputy Governor of Kwara State at Government House, Ilorin. Also present were a number of High Commissioners and other local State officials.

The reception begun at 1pm and was started by recitation of the Holy Qur'an, following which Hazur led the assembled delegates in silent prayer. Thereafter Hazur was invited to address the delegates. During the course of his address he said:

“Firstly, I would like to thank the Deputy Governor for his kind gesture in receiving me. I could not refuse the opportunity to meet with him because it is part of Islamic teaching that when visiting a place, a person should always pay a courtesy call to the local leaders.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at has, and always will, try its utmost to serve mankind. We undertake humanitarian work in many different areas but such work would not be possible without the co-operation of the local authorities.”

The Deputy Governor then addressed the gathering. During his address he welcomed Hazur to Kwara State and said that His Excellency, the Governor had desired greatly to meet with Hazur himself, however as he was due to chair a

Governors meeting he had been unable to do so.

The Deputy Governor then went on to speak of the great work undertaken by the Ahmadiyya Jama'at with regard service to mankind. He said:

“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is known worldwide for its religious teachings and its service to mankind. The Community has made a vast impact in the fields of health, education and science in particular... It is a unique opportunity for me to meet with you and I am very grateful for it.”

The Deputy Governor then went on to make two requests on behalf of the State to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at. He requested assistance in the building of a hospital in the State and also he requested books to be donated to the State Shariah Court Library.

The reception closed as gifts were mutually exchanged between Hazur and the Deputy Governor.

28 April 2008

EMIR OF BORGU RECEIVES HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} AT PALACE IN NEW BUSSA

His Royal Highness, Dr Haliru Dantoro Con Kitoro III, the Emir of Borgu today received Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} at his Palace in New Bussa, Borgu. Hazur also accepted an invitation from the Emir to spend the night at the Official Guest House of the Emir.

Continuing his tour of Nigeria, Hazur left Ilorin at 3.10pm and arrived at the Palace of the Emir at 6.50pm. En route his motorcade passed by the vast River Niger and the Kanji Dam. As the motorcade approached New Bussa, members of the Borgu Council lined up on the border of Borgu to receive Hazur upon which Hazur stepped out of his car and met individually with the members of the Council.

Upon arrival at the Palace, the Emir welcomed Hazur and his entourage. He said:

“Today is an historic day in the history of New Bussa. Indeed it is a great blessing from God Almighty for the people of this State that Hazur has agreed to my invitation. I am particularly grateful that he has agreed to lay the Foundation Stone for the new Islamic Centre that I am having built. May Allah continue to guide him always.”

Following the Emir’s heartfelt welcome, Hazur responded by thanking him for

his kind words. He said that he had known the Emir for two years and that throughout this period the ties of friendship had continually increased.

Following the reception His Holiness was escorted to the Emir's Guest House by the Emir himself.

29 April 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR NEW ISLAMIC CENTRE

Emir of Borgu hosts Reception in honour of Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad

A Reception attended by a number of local dignitaries was today hosted by His Royal Highness, the Emir of Borgu, Dr Haliru Dantoro Con Kitoro III in honour of the visit to the State by Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V^{atba}. The climax of the event was the laying of a Foundation Stone by Hazur for the Hadiza Memorial Islamic Centre.

During the event a number of the attending dignitaries were invited to address the gathering. They unanimously welcomed Hazur to Borgu and also thanked the Emir for the opportunity to attend the reception.

Thereafter the Emir himself addressed the audience. He welcomed Hazur on behalf of all the people of the State and said that his visit heralded a historic day. He said that in July 2007 he met Hazur in London and that during the meeting they had spoken at length about the social and economic problems faced by the world. The Emir said he had been deeply impressed by the profound and practical solutions suggested by Hazur and his genuine desire that the African Continent prosper.

The Emir went on to thank Hazur for agreeing to lay the Foundation Stone of the Hadiza Memorial Islamic Centre. He said that the Centre was being named after his late mother and would be used to teach true Islamic values of love and peace to children. He ended his address by congratulating the Jama'at on the occasion of the Khilafat Centenary.

Hazur then addressed the gathering and begun by speaking of the Emir who he described as a brother. He said:

“Today it is my pleasure to be in the company of a friend. I have only known him for a couple of years but it seems as though he has been a friend for much longer because of the high morals and humility that he has shown. I speak of course of His Royal Highness, the Emir of Borgu. His high status has not made him proud or arrogant. Rather I have observed humbleness in him and that is why I could not refuse his invitation.”

Hazur went onto speak about the vast resources granted to Nigeria by God Almighty. He said that it was the duty of mankind to use such resources in the best possible way so that they could benefit as many people as possible. He continued by saying that the Ahmadiyya Jama'at had always tried to serve the people of Nigeria and in this respect he was instructing the local Jama'at to prepare a Feasibility Report regarding the best possible way to serve and help the people of Borgu.

The entire Conference then proceeded to the site of the Islamic Centre where at 12.20pm Hazur and the Emir together laid the Foundation Stone for the Hadiza Memorial Islamic Centre.

29 April 2008

MUBARAK MOSQUE INAUGURATED IN NIGERIAN CAPITAL ABUJA

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad opens Ahmadiyya Mosque and Mission House

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today inaugurated the beautiful 'Mubarak Mosque' in the Nigerian capital city of Abuja. The occasion was also marked by the opening of the Mission House built on the same plot of land.

Hazur arrived at the Mosque at 9pm after a 455km drive from New Bussa, which marked the end of three days of constant travel from Lagos to Abuja via Ibadan, Ilorin and Borgu. Hazur was immediately escorted to the Mubarak Mosque which he duly inaugurated with a silent prayer. Thereafter he led the Maghrib and Isha prayers in the Mosque.

Many of those present commented upon the beauty of the Mosque which includes a vast yellow dome and a tall minaret. The inside of the Mosque is built on two levels and can accommodate around 1200 worshippers at any one time.

Following the inauguration of the Mosque, Hazur also opened the accompanying Mission House. This building, also built on two levels, includes a number of guest rooms and kitchen facilities.

After the opening of the Mosque a National television journalist interviewed Hazur. Upon her question as to Hazur's mission in Nigeria, Hazur stated:

“My first and foremost mission is to meet with members of the Ahmadiyya Community here in Nigeria. It is my practice to visit different countries in the world, particularly where we have large Communities such as here in Nigeria.”

Upon being asked his message to the people of Nigeria, Hazur stated:

“Firstly, people in these times are forgetting their obligations to God Almighty. Thus my message to the people is to recognise God Almighty and thus become a recipient of His Blessings. Secondly, I would urge every human being to recognise that he must observe the rights of his fellow man. If these two principles are followed then instead of destruction we will see peace emerge.”

2 May 2008

**HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} OPENS KHILAFAT CENTENARY
JALSA SALANA NIGERIA**

**Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad urges Ahmadis to strive for
nearness to God Almighty**

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today officially opened the 58th Jalsa Salana in Nigeria, as his tour to West Africa continued. The event opened as Hazur led the Friday Sermon from Hadeeqat-e-Ahmad (Garden of Ahmad), the 85 acre stretch of land located about forty kilometres from the capital city Abuja. The event was yet another historic landmark in the history of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at as it was the first event televised live from Nigeria on MTA.

During his Sermon, Hazur spoke about the importance of the Jalsa Salana. He said that it was a true blessing of God Almighty that during this era where the majority of the world had turned away from religion, the Ahmadiyya Community continued to hold such Conventions in almost every country of the world. Such Conventions were not for the sake of showing the world the Community's strength, but were to be used as a means to learn the best ways to attain the love of God.

Hazur laid down a number of principles which were necessary for attaining the nearness of God Almighty. First and foremost a person had to be regular in

prayer. The five daily prayers were mandatory upon every Muslim and were a means for cleansing and purifying our souls. A person who offered prayer with sincerity and humility would find that God Himself opened avenues through which there were opportunities to do good. However such blessings would not be granted to those people who only performed prayer to try and impress their fellow human beings. Hazur counselled that although humans could be deceived, God Almighty could never be deceived in any way.

Thereafter Hazur instructed that all Ahmadis had to, according to their abilities, make financial sacrifices for the sake of God Almighty. Charity for the sake of God was always accepted and was a means for attaining His blessings. Further a person ought to foster complete honesty in all spheres of his or her life. In all our words and actions there ought to be no element of doubt whatsoever.

Jealousy was another evil that had caused and continued to cause a great deal of destruction in the world both on an individual and a collective level. Hazur said that it did not become any Ahmadi to be jealous of another's success or happiness. He said that the opponents of the Jama'at were filled with jealousy at the success of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at. Instead of jealousy, Hazur counselled that mutual love and consideration for the feelings of others were of paramount importance.

Hazur concluded his Sermon by speaking of the blessings of Khilafat. He said that this year the Jama'at was celebrating the Centenary of this august institution. This in itself was a great blessing upon the Community and thus all Ahmadis ought to be ever thankful to God Almighty.

3 May 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} ADDRESSES DAY 2 OF KHILAFAT CENTENARY JALSA SALANA

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad states that honesty is the key to Africa's future development

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today addressed Day 2 of the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana at Hadeeqat-e-Ahmad in Nigeria. During his forty five minute address, Hazur asserted the basic importance of honesty and specifically its role in the future development of Africa. Further, he used his address to once again wholly rebut the allegation that Islam was a religion that had been spread by the sword.

Arriving at Hadeeqat-e-Ahmad at 11.15am, Hazur was greeted by thousands of Ahmadis singing in unison the words '*There is none worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger*' in Arabic. The sight and sound was a scene to linger long in the memory of all present and indeed the millions viewing the Jalsa broadcast live via MTA.

A unique segment of the programme was the sight of children, dressed in local attire, welcoming Hazur to Nigeria in a number of different dialects. The first language Hazur was welcomed in was English, thereafter he was welcomed by children speaking the local African dialects of Yoruba, Hausa, Etsako, Gwari, Tui, Igala, Kanuri, Tulani, Igbo and Inupe.

A number of short speeches by dignitaries followed, including the First Military Governor of Ogun State and the Emir of Ogun State. The audience was also addressed by Sierra Leone's Ambassador to Nigeria. He said:

"I became an Ahmadi Muslim in 1954. No doubt it offers the true and best picture of Islam. It is a religion dedicated to establishing peace in the world... I take this opportunity to also inform Hazur that his flock of Ahmadis in Sierra Leone are there for him."

At 12.10pm, Hazur began his address by warning all Ahmadis to guard themselves from the evil effects of Satan. He said that just because a person called himself an 'Ahmadi' was not enough. Every such person had to develop a genuine and distinct change within himself. Hazur said that whilst one good act opened the door to many others, in the same way one evil act opened the door to many further evil acts. Thus a person who called himself an Ahmadi had to be an example of goodness for others to follow.

One fundamental quality which Hazur urged all his followers to strictly inculcate was of absolute honesty both in personal and business matters. He said that throughout the world lies were told for political, social or economic gain. However people ought to remember that even if they could cheat fellow humans, they could never cheat God.

Developing this theme, Hazur mentioned a narration from the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). A person came to him wishing to rid himself of the many evils he had developed. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon

him) counselled that if he rid himself of falsehood that would be sufficient. As a result in future whenever he was attracted towards evil he abstained knowing that if he was caught he would have to admit his guilt due to his covenant of truth.

The development of Africa was also dependent upon the integrity and honesty of its people. Hazur cited the example of Europe which he said had developed as a Continent due to its honest business dealings. Where an item was sold it was always as described and this example had to be followed by the developing world. All Ahmadi in Nigeria ought to lead the way in developing the country's economy so that it could stand shoulder to shoulder with the developed world.

Hazur then spoke of the misconception that Islam was, God forbid, spread by the sword. He said that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never once raised his sword until he and his people were under attack. Further when attacked his conduct remained of the highest order. At the Battle of Badr, the Muslims were small in number and arms. One of the few advantages they had was that they were in control of land from which water could be drawn. Rather than take advantage of this good fortune, as military commanders throughout history would have done, the Holy Prophet instead chose to let the enemy use the land to draw water for their soldiers. Further, his treatment of Christians, Jews and peoples of all Faiths was exemplary at all times.

The session concluded as Hazur brought his address to a close by instructing that loyalty to one's country was part of Islamic teaching. Thus each Ahmadi within Nigeria and other African nations had to lead the way in working tirelessly towards a better future for Africa. If this was not done then there was

little that could be done to stop Western powers coming and taking control of the vast natural resources available which would lead to the regression of Africa as opposed to its progression.

3 May 2008

POVERTY CAN BE ERADICATED IN AFRICA – HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA}

Press Conference held at Hadeeqat-e-Ahmad

Speaking at a Press Conference at Hadeeqat-e-Ahmad earlier today, Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} urged the leaders of Nigeria to put to good use the vast natural resources they have been blessed with by God Almighty. He said that through proper planning such resources could be used to feed all those subjected to poverty. All that was needed was genuine political will, on behalf of the Nigerian authorities, for the betterment of its citizens.

Hazur also urged Developed Nations to do their part in helping to eradicate poverty in Africa. He said that there was so much waste in Europe alone that could be put to better use. The will of the developed nations was often contingent upon their own vested interests. However the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at was committed to serving mankind without the requirement of any form of compensation as this was a fundamental teaching of the Holy Qur'an.

Upon being asked a question regarding the misrepresentation of Islam in the media, Hazur said:

“Recently we held a Peace Conference in London and during my address I gave an account of the true teachings of Islam as taught by the Holy Qur'an

and as practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). After listening to me many of the guests admitted that they now understood that Islam was a religion of peace, whereby serving and loving God's Creation was an inherent and fundamental teaching."

3 May 2008

HADHRAT MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD MEETS WITH WAQF-E-NAU CHILDREN IN NIGERIA

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today met with dozens of Ahmadi boys and girls part of the blessed Waqf-e-Nau scheme. The scheme which was set up by the Fourth Khalifa to the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rta}, required parents to dedicate the lives of their unborn children to the service of Islam.

During the meeting Hazur instructed the children to stay focused and concentrate on their studies. He said that upon completion of their secondary education they should write to the Central Jama'at (Markaz) stating what their field of interest was and requesting guidance as how to proceed. The Jama'at was in need of all types of professionals, be they doctors or engineers or any other professional.

Hazur said that Waqf-e-Nau children should always bear in mind that their status was extremely high and that this was a heavy burden that could only be fulfilled if they excelled in righteousness, piety and always remained heavily involved in the activities of the Jama'at. The meeting concluded as Hazur distributed gifts to all the children present.

4 May 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} CONCLUDES NIGERIAN JALSA SALANA

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today addressed the Concluding Session of the Khilafat Centenary Jalsa Salana in Nigeria. During his address he enjoined all Ahmadis to follow a path of righteousness. Prior to his address Hazur also visited the Ladies Jalsa Gah where he sat and listened to poems and songs sung in the praise of God Almighty and Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya.

Hazur opened his address by saying:

“Today by the Grace of Allah we are going to conclude the 58th Jalsa Salana of Jama’at Nigeria. I hope that all of you will have benefited enormously. My speeches during the past two days were designed to highlight the ways towards God Almighty, as taught by the Holy Qur’an and as practised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).”

The Head of the Ahmadiyya Jama’at then spoke at length about the foremost importance of righteousness, which he said was key to Africa’s progression. In this respect, Hazur gave the contrasting examples of two people from the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Hadhrat Bilal was an African slave who was beaten with hot coals and dragged through public streets simply for affirming his belief in the truth of Islam. On the other hand Abu Jahl was a wealthy and seemingly important figure in Mecca who subjected the early Muslims to great torture and never accepted the claim of

the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Yet ultimately Hadhrat Bilal was treated with such respect that he was known as 'Syedna' which meant 'Our Leader' whilst Abu Jahl's name meant 'Father of Ignorance'. Thus the people of Africa could themselves excel if they prioritised righteousness above and beyond everything else.

Thereafter Hazur spoke about the tribal system prevalent in Africa. He said that some tribes considered themselves superior to others, yet in the eyes of God Almighty this was not the case. Tribal distinction applied only with regard to recognition and it could not be said that one was better than the other. God differentiated on the grounds of piety and goodness, not wealth, creed or colour.

The need to be thankful to God Almighty was a fundamental requirement for all of mankind. Through the expression of gratitude greater favours from God were bestowed. Hazur laid down three principles for expressing thanks. He said:

“First, a person should fill his heart with the love of God. He should keep counting the Blessings that he has received. Secondly, a person ought to glorify God Almighty as a form of verbal praise. And thirdly, a person ought to show his gratitude by using properly the favours granted by God Almighty. For example a farmer ought to develop and cultivate his land to the best of his abilities so that others can benefit from the resources he has been blessed with.”

Addressing the many youths in attendance, Hazur warned them of the perils

they faced in contemporary society. He said that modern inventions like the internet could be used for good and for evil. Thus the internet ought to be used for spreading Islam's teaching of love and affection rather than be used to view or partake in harmful material.

Hazur concluded by instructing Ahmadis to follow a path of mutual love. He said that the enmity of another person should not allow an Ahmadi to lower his standards. When dealing with people who have expressed their hate for Islam, all Muslims should treat them justly and afford them their due rights. Grudge and malice were to be avoided at all costs. The hearts and minds of the enemies of Islam were to be won through kindness, love and tolerance. It was not the purpose of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at to increase its numbers for the sake of it. It was the purpose of the Jama'at to increase the number of righteous people and this could only happen through an example of compassion.

6 May 2008

HADHRAT KHALIFA-TUL MASIH V^{ATBA} RETURNS TO LONDON AFTER HISTORIC WEST AFRICAN TOUR

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad greeted by hundreds of Ahmadis at Fazl Mosque

Hadhrat Khalifa-tul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{atba} today returned to London after his three week Khilafat Centenary tour to West Africa. During the tour Hazur met with tens of thousands of Ahmadi Muslims, as well as a great number of dignitaries and officials. Throughout his visit he advocated the Islamic teachings of love, tolerance and service to humanity.

Hazur arrived at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja at 7am where he was greeted by hundreds of Ahmadi Muslims who had come to see him off. Many of the Ahmadis present commented upon the sadness they felt at the departure of Hazur. Such sadness illustrated the love for Khilafat felt by Ahmadis all over the world.

Flying on British Airways Flight BA 082, Hazur departed from Abuja at 8.40am. The flight arrived at 3pm at London, Heathrow where Hazur was greeted by Amir Jama'at UK, Rafiq Ahmad Hayat and many other members of the Jama'at. Hazur was then escorted to his residence at the Fazl Mosque in South West London where he was greeted by hundreds of Ahmadis who were all delighted that he had returned to London after his historic tour. Echoing scenes from the

tour, a number of African Ahmadis stood and sung songs in praise of God Almighty as Hazur waved to the men, women and children who had come to welcome him.