

Hindi transcript:

लखनऊ जो है, वह religiously बहुत ही rich है। तो हम जो हैं, वह लखनऊ... हमारी family... हम लोग लखनऊ मुहर्रम के मौके पे जाते हैं। बहुत इमामबाड़े हैं वहाँ पे, बहुत दरगाहें हैं। और मुहर्रम जो है, वह दस दिन का एक... दस दिन का नहीं actually two and a half months का एक पूरा period होता है, जिसमें mourn करते हैं मुस्लिम। और यह दस दिन बहुत ही crit... critical होते हैं, जो first ten days of the month होते हैं। इसमें लोग observe करते हैं mourning: they don't wear colorful clothes, they don't wear jewelry, और ज्यादातर ब्लैक कपड़े पहनते हैं। और especially दस मुहर्रम – that is called आशूरा – उसमें, दस मुहर्रम को लोग बिल्कुल ब्लैक पहनते हैं कपड़े, खाते नहीं हैं कुछ – because that is to symbolize the death of the nephew of the Prophet, इमाम हुसैन। तो उनके लिए लोग मुहर्रम observe करते हैं। I am, like, one of them. So, I go to Lucknow, which is one of the main places... दिल्ली में भी होता है, हर जगह होता है इण्डिया में। दुनिया में होता है। लखनऊ में मेन होता है, because वहाँ बहुत बड़े इमामबाड़े हैं, बहुत मौलवी हैं, बहुत मौलाना हैं – जो clerics होते हैं। तो, और वहाँ बहुत ही enthusiasm से मनाया जाता है, बहुत लोग... हर...हर रि...हर faith के लोग उसमें आके participate करते हैं। तो आपको इमामबाड़े मिलेंगे, आपको दरगाहें मिलेंगे, जहाँ लोग आपको ब्लैक कपड़ों में मिलेंगे, और नणो पैर मिलेंगे। So, it's a different experience. So, उससे लगता है कि इण्डिया कितना culturally rich है। लखनऊ में वैसे तो बहुत सारी जगहें हैं, लेकिन काला इमामबाड़ा, छोटा इमामबाड़ा और काजमैन – ये तीन जगहें मेन हैं, जहाँ पे मुहर्रम बहुत (अस्पष्ट) धूम से मनाया जाता है। होता क्या है मुहर्रम में? Usually clerics जो हैं, वह मजलिस क...कहते हैं उसे, मजलिस पढ़ते हैं, जिसमें they talk about क्या हुआ past में इमाम हुसैन के साथ। And then people mourn about it. फिर इन जगहों पे जुलूस उठते हैं। लोग मातम जनी करते हैं, and सीना जनी करते हैं – that's called मातम। So, यह...यह एक part of mourning – it's a part of the tradition, mourning का एक part है। तो ये तीन जगहें हैं जहाँ पे आपको ये सबसे ज्यादा मिलेगा। वैसे तो लोग अपने घरों में भी छोटी-छोटी मजलिसें करते हैं, जहाँ पे ladies अलग करती हैं, gents अलग करते हैं। Gents ज्यादातर बाहर जाते हैं, ladies अपने घर में करती हैं। लेकिन everybody also goes out and participates in this mourning.

English translation:

Lucknow is religiously very rich. So we ... Lucknow ... our family ... we go to Lucknow on the occasion of Moharram. There are many *imambadas** and memorials there. And Moharram is a period of ten days ... not ten days; actually it is an entire period of two and a half months during which Muslims mourn. And these ten days are very critical ... critical – the first ten days of the month. In these ten days, people observe a period of mourning: they don't wear colorful clothes; they don't wear jewelry and mostly wear black clothes. And especially on the tenth day of Moharram – that is called *Ashura* – on this day people wear only black clothes, [they] do not eat anything – because [these rites are meant] to symbolize the death of the nephew of the Prophet, Imam Hussain. So people observe Moharram for him. I am, like, one of them. So, I go to Lucknow, which is one of the main places. It is also observed in Delhi, it is observed in every place in India. It is observed the world over. But Lucknow is an important place, because there are many *imambadas* there, [and] there are many clerics, many clergymen. So, also it is observed with great enthusiasm ... many people ... people of every faith come and participate in it. So you will find *imambadas*, you will find many memorials where you will come across people in black clothes and bare feet. So, it's a different experience. So, through this you can sense how culturally rich India is. While there are many places in Lucknow, the *Bara imambada* (Big imambada), the *Chhota imambada* (Small Imambada) and Kazmain – these three places are the important ones, where Moharram is observed with great fanfare. What happens in Moharram? Usually the clerics say the *majlis*,** read the *majlis* in which they talk about what had happened with Imam Hussain in the past. And then people mourn about it. Then there are processions that start up (speaker says 'arise') from these places. People express their grief and beat their chests – this is called *maatam* (mourning). So this ... this is part of mourning – it's part of the tradition, it is a part of mourning. So you will find this to the greatest extent in these three places. Usually, people convene smaller *majlises* in their own homes, where women do it separately and men do it separately. Men usually go out, women [read the *majlis*] at home. But everybody also goes out and participates in this mourning.

*An *imambada* is a place where the *taziya* – a representation of the shrines of Imam Hussain and Hassan, sons of the Prophet's daughter with Ali – is preserved. The *taziya* is carried in procession on Ashura (see below) in the month of Moharram. In effect, an *imambada* is a Shia shrine. Hussain perished with his armies on the battlefield of Karbala in 680 CE.

**A *majlis* is an assembly of people at which the clergymen tell the story of the defeat and death of the Imam to those in attendance.

***The speaker is referring to the mourning rituals that believers perform to mark the death of the fallen Imam. Part of the aim of these rituals is to unite the community of believers in a shared emotion. It can result in a deeply moving experience for the onlooker.

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