

Alhamdulillah! Our “MTA” has become a fruitful tree, with numerous branches taking root worldwide. I am fortunate to have witnessed this fragrant tree grow from a seed into a fruit-bearing entity.

In the early days of MTA’s launch, it was a source of great joy, especially for those far away. Living close to the mosque, we attended in person, but women still had to watch on screens. Even being present, without MTA, we felt as incomplete as those far away. MTA became essential for everyone, benefiting all, near or distant. Alhamdulillah.

My children and I are blessed to be associated with MTA from the beginning. My daughter, Sarah, had the opportunity to work with Respected Raqeeba Gulzar Sahiba. My son, Munir Shehzad, worked with the esteemed Jaswal brothers from day one. Alhamdulillah.

During the early “Tilford Islamabad” Jalsas in the era of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him), TVs were placed at intervals in the women’s tent to watch all MTA programs. Everyone wished to be near a TV. My husband, Basheeruddin Sami, had duties that required him to stay late after the Jalsa, so we waited for him, often being the last to leave. We would spread our sheet near the stage close to the TV at night and find it waiting for us in the morning. Until the Jalsa began, we spent time with our mother in her tent, where she and father hosted guests with delightful treats. My father had duties in the Langar, so he always had a tent there. Alhamdulillah, we experienced very enjoyable and enthusiastic Jalsas, whose joy remains in our hearts and minds.

By Allah’s grace, we thoroughly enjoyed the Jalsas at Hadeeqatul Mahdi. Before COVID-19, I aimed to attend at least one day by train, as traveling with fellow Ahmadis reminded me of train journeys in Pakistan and the chants of “Nara-e-Takbeer.” I also enjoyed seeing the diligent Khuddam performing their duties, providing an opportunity to pray for them. Watching Lajna members actively assisting women and children was heartwarming. I cherished these memories and preferred traveling to the Jalsa by train and bus. On the return, Khuddam distributed packed meals of minced meat pilaf and curry with bread, and gave chocolates and toffees to children. Believe me, I cannot forget those scenes and delights. My children found it challenging for me to travel by train, but they didn’t realize how much joy it brought me. I have cherished these memories in my heart.

Now, due to age, attending Jalsas is no longer feasible, making MTA even more valuable in my life. For the past two or three years, I’ve watched all programs from my room at home. This year, I watched all programs from home; if I felt like lying down or sitting on a chair, I could. If tired, I took a walk in my garden but didn’t miss any program. Alhamdulillah.

I renewed my Bai’at with the global community, shedding tears freely. It’s comforting that no one is watching, allowing for heartfelt prayers and humility before Allah. If I dozed off, the enthusiastic chants of “Nara-e-Takbeer, Allahu Akbar” would bring me back to the Jalsa. Honestly, sometimes being old has its perks. Watching on MTA, the beautiful, pristine white new city, the scenes inside the marquee, and the fragrance of flowers on the stage reached me. I watched all documentaries, listened to poems, and heard Huzoor’s addresses. Jazakumullah.

I have prayed from the depths of my heart for all MTA workers, whether Ansar, Khuddam, Lajna Imaillah, Nasirat, or Atfal, serving in any capacity. May Allah bless our Huzoor and all scholars of the Jama’at with His mercy and blessings, and reward everyone abundantly. May our Jama’at continue to flourish, and may the entire MTA team achieve even greater progress. Ameen.

The only thing missing from this Jalsa was that I couldn't enjoy the Langar's food, which I deeply regret.

(Safia Basheer Sami, London)9