

Mohammed or spelled **Muhammed** is the founder of the religion of Islam. He is regarded by Muslims as a messenger and prophet of God i.e. **Allah**, the last and the greatest law-bearer in a series of Islamic prophets as taught by the Quran 33:40–40. This Great Prophet was born in 570 on the twelfth day of **Rabi-ul-Awwal**, the third month in the Islamic calendar, in the Arabian city of Mecca. According to Islamic beliefs, at age 40, in the month of Ramadan, the prophet received his first revelation from God. Three years after this event **Mohammed** started preaching these revelations publicly, proclaiming that "God is one".



His birthday is also celebrated as **Milad-un-Nabi** all over India among the Muslim community. The word "**Milad**" has been derived from "**Viladut**" which means 'birth'. Hence, **Milad** signifies the place and time of birth. According to Islamic **Shariah**, **Milad** is remembered as the term of events that took place at the time of the birth of the Holy Prophet. This year his birth day is going to be celebrated on February 27th all over India.

THE ORIGIN OF MILAD-UN-NABI



The origins of the observance of **Milad-un-Nabi** can be dated back to the Fatimid dynasty in eleventh century Egypt, four centuries after the death of **Muhammad**, as a Shia ruling class festival. The main thrust of this **Milad-un-Nabi** is to remember, observe, discuss and celebrate the advent of the birth and teachings of Prophet **Mohammed (pubh)**. Some are with the

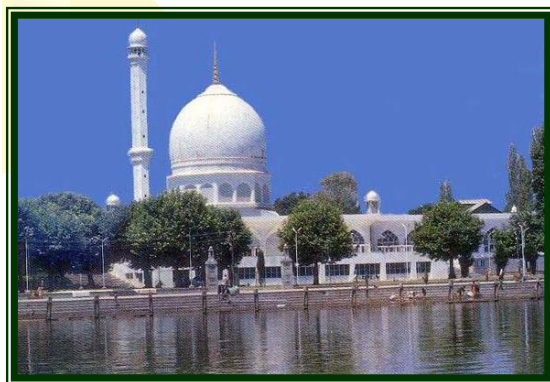
*belief that this day marks the death anniversary of Prophet Mohammed. Thus, **Milad-un-Nabi** is observed as a festival only in the Indian sub-continent and a few Arab countries like Egypt, while most Islamic countries do not attach any special significance to this day in consonance with the Islamic principles of not celebrating birth or death anniversaries.*

CELEBRATION OF PROPHET'S BIRTH DAY IN INDIA

*During **Milad-un-Nabi** festival, the Muslims of different age groups visit Mosques and offer special prayers to **Allah** for the welfare of the faith and remission of all sins. At the end of the prayer, learned men deliver lectures focusing on life and noble deeds of the Prophet. Holy **Quran** is also read out and recited. At many places, religious meetings are organized in Mosques. The devotees pray all throughout the night in homes and in mosques. People invite friends, relatives and offer food and clothing, etc to the poor. On this day Scholars and Poets recites **Qasida al-Burda Sharif** in Special gatherings, the famous poem by 13th century Arabic Sufi **Busiri**.*



In India, this day is declared as a public holiday. The holy relics of the Prophet are



*displayed in Jammu and Kashmir State of India at **Hazratbal** shrine, on the outskirts of Srinagar. This place is also known as **Assar-e-Sharief**, **madinat-us-Sani**, **Dargah Sharief** and **Dargah**.*

*After the morning prayers on the day of **Milad-un-Nabi**, '**Shab-khawani**' night-long prayers are held at the **Hazratbal** shrine which is attended by thousands of people. Muslim devotees across Kashmir Valley even come here on this day to worship.*

CELEBRATION IN ORISSA

Birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed is also celebrated piously in many parts of Orissa. Districts like Bhadrak, Kendrapada, and Cuttack where the majority of Muslim community staying celebrate this festival with all sorts of enjoyment. Devotees go to Mosque and pray Allah, visit each other's house, offer gifts and sweets to each other and to the poor. State Government declares holiday on this day.



Milad un Nabi
Peace and the Blessings of Allah
on his Holy Prophet Muhammed