



**The Transcript of the Interview Conducted by Hizb ut Tahrir in the Wilayah of Syria
Radio with the Engineer Othman Bakhsh, Director of the Central Media Office of Hizb
ut Tahrir, about the Al-Rayah Newspaper**

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(Translated)

Question 1: Would it be possible for you to provide us with a general overview of the Raiah newspaper; its beginnings, goals and contents?

The Raiah Newspaper (*also spelled as al-Rayah*) is a newspaper issued by Hizb ut Tahrir and it has been called Al-Raiah, aimed at the Rayah of Islam and Muslims based upon the Shahaadah of *Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasoolullah*. The newspaper is therefore Islamic and addresses the issues of the Muslims that relate to the resumption of the Islamic life, whether that is in terms of pursuing the political events taking place and exposing and explaining the colonial plotting and schemes lying in wait of the Ummah with evil, or in terms of shedding light upon the Islamic concepts, provoking the Ummah to have awareness of them and to work so that their context becomes one of practical application and action. As such, the Raiah Newspaper aims to be a platform for the Haqq (truth) to proclaim the truth in the midst of the chaotic media existing in the world today. All of the media platforms today serve the interests of their owner or those in charge of them. As for the Raiah of Hizb ut Tahrir then it is distinguished by not being tied to a state, official agency or party. Rather, it only comes from the basis of Islam and seeks to raise the call of Islam and support all of the Muslim issues. The Raiah Newspaper had been issued previously where its first edition was published in 1954. However, the transgressing rulers in Jordan at that time could not bear to hear the word of truth and so after 13 editions Glubb Pasha, the head of the Jordanian English army at that time, closed it down and the authorities prevented its issuance.

Question 2: Why did the Raiah Newspaper stop for so many years previously? And why has it been issued once again after all of these years?

When the Raiah Newspaper was launched from Amman the existing regime, a fosterling of the English colonialism, could not bear to hear the word of truth and so it prevented its issuance and so it was suspended for all of these long years. We were hoping for the reissuing of the paper to coincide with the coming of the dawn of the rightly guided Khilafah (Caliphate) which we hope to be soon. And so the Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir, scholar Sheikh Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah, may Allah support him, decided that the current time is appropriate and fitting to reissue it in order to participate and share in shedding light upon the Muslims' issues and to accompany the activities of the Da'wah after this blessed Da'wah has spread to all corners of the world; from Indonesia and Malaysia in the East to Central Asia and Siberia in the West, including the Anatolian Plateau, Ash-Shaam and North Africa. Indeed, the concepts of the Da'wah have even spread to the world as a whole across the continents, the Raiah Newspaper therefore comes as a distinct media platform that proclaims the word of Haqq (truth) and it is a platform that people can go to in order to know the true realities of the events that the Islamic Ummah is facing. That is particularly in the circumstances of the rival colonial states from Europe, Russia, China and America, working to prevent the return of the Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the path of the Prophethood. We therefore want the Raiah Newspaper to be a luminous platform of truth to expose the darkness of the colonialist scheming, which works to attach the Islamic Ummah to the western civilisation, just as it works to promote the political schemes of the oppressive transgressing rulers who are agents of the western states. The Raiah Newspaper therefore represents a flame of truth that exposes this deception and this darkness so that it can be a

beacon of light that lightens up the path for all those working for the resumption of the Islamic life. That is what we ask Allah (swt) to assist us to undertake and perform this in the best possible manner.

Question 3: In the midst of the tremendous advancement in other means of communication like the internet and satellite, is there any practical worth or point in reissuing the Raiah Newspaper?

Yes, we realise that the world today has witnessed a technological revolution in terms of communications in media and the means utilised in it, including what is written, read and heard, the great number of newspapers, satellite channels in addition to the means used for expressing opinions which have become known as 'social media' (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube amongst others). It is clear that there is a flood and abundance of media outlets and platforms that turn the patient into the bewildered, not knowing where the truth lies in respect to what one hears and sees, whilst one flips from one media means to another. As for what distinguishes this paper whilst it speaks in the name of Hizb ut Tahrir, then it is distinguished by that which Hizb ut Tahrir is distinguished by itself. Meaning that this party is the pioneer that does not lie to its people, the pioneer that has taken it upon itself to proclaim the word of truth, expose the falsehood and the scheming plots of the colonialist states and their agents, the rulers. Just as it sheds light upon the Islamic concepts that are based on to the Shar'iah evidences from what the *Wahi* (Divine Revelation) came with in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. And the Hizb, as we know, and everyone knows, is not linked to any official body, role, organisation or state. Rather, it is based upon the Islamic Aqeedah and seeks to support this Deen and raise the word of Allah. Similarly, it is this same policy that this media newspaper "Al-Raiah" is committed to, and so it does not seek other than the pleasure of Allah (swt) and to proclaim the truth, whatever the consequences. So yes, whilst looking at all of these facts we can say that the newspaper is truly a distinguished media outlet or platform and is unparalleled in the world. We have the honour, whilst all praise belongs to Allah, to oversee it and prepare its materials whilst relying upon the help of Allah (swt) and adhering to the methodology that is necessary in order to support this Deen without bending to this authority or directive or that one, without any fear from proclaiming the word of Haqq (truth).

Question 4: Where is the Al-Raiah Newspaper issued and how many followers does it have?

The Raiah Newspaper is issued as you know by Hizb ut Tahrir whose Da'wah, Al-Hamdu Lillah, has been launched and spread out to the horizons of Indonesia and Malaysia in the East, Bangladesh, India, Central Asia reaching to Pakistan and the Caucasus, Turkey, Anatolia, Shaam to Africa. No, rather it has reached the five continents wherever Muslims are found. Therefore, the newspaper is grasped by the male and female affiliates of Hizb ut Tahrir in all regions and they work to deliver it to the varied people of the Ummah wherever they are located. Of course the Raiah has two editions; a paper edition printed and issued on Wednesday morning and alongside an electronic version which is available upon the internet. As such, there are those who receive a paper edition and there are others who follow it online. Therefore, it is difficult to give you a clear number in respect to the number of readers and followers however what has reached us in terms of comments, responses and suggestions from our dear readers, Baarakallahu Feehim, and what we receive from a variety of lands including Yemen, Sudan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey and others, it tells us that, Al-Hamdu Lillah, Al-Raiah has spread to the horizons and across the Muslim lands. That has led to some of the other biased media outlets to undertake a campaign of distortion against Al-Raiah, to whom we respond when appropriate and necessary, as we are not able to follow up with every criticiser.

Question 5: What is the nature of the topics published in the newspaper?

The newspaper is a comprehensive Islamic newspaper concerned particularly with political matters. It is a weekly newspaper that addresses the most important hot political issues and events, whether it relates to the Muslim lands like if we were to write about Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Turkey or Syria etc. Or relating to global politics like the global economic crisis or the struggle between Russia, America and Europe. We are therefore concerned with general political matters in addition to ideological topics. Thus we shed light in the newspaper about the Islamic viewpoint and the Islamic treatments for the issues of the state and society whether these relate to the social, economic or other aspects. In addition, from what we gather together from other media sources in terms of articles, subjects and statements that deal with the Islamic Ahkam and Islamic concepts, that which has significance from that we address across the articles that we publish. An example of this is clarifying the Islamic viewpoint in respect to how to treat the poverty crisis, clarifying the nature of the Islamic economic system and how it is distinguished from the capitalist system. It also includes responding to some writers who distort the Islamic rulings whether that is related to the Khilafah (Caliphate) or other matters. As such, we in the Raiah Newspaper address all of these issues, that is we strive to shed light upon these issues and clarify the Islamic viewpoint in respect to them and to exhort the Muslims to have an awareness about them and to adhere to them, so as to discriminate the correct from the incorrect. In this way we are a platform proclaiming the truth, disclosing the falsity of falsehood and speaking the word of truth by the permission of Allah Ta'Aalaa.

Question 6: Who are the writers of the Raiah Newspaper?

The writers of the newspaper, Al-Hamdulillah are a group from the select best of the Shabab of Hizb ut Tahrir. In truth, we have an expansive team. We have writers, each of which is distinguished by his precision of examination and accurateness in understanding the topics they are addressing, and in respect to their pursuing of the details of the political events, ideological issues and other than these. As such, the list is long, however we have a distinguished team of brothers writing from Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and even from within the lands of emigration. The truth is that the list is long and within the writing team some of the noble sisters from the team of the Central Media Office participate with us. Those sisters also participate with us in the carrying of this Da'wah and as such they take charge of writing about subjects that cover the activities and issues that the Women's Section of the Central Media Office is concerned with and this is within a number of regions. By the favour of Allah, this Da'wah has spread and the number of writers, male and female, are many, whilst the followers of the pages of the newspaper read the articles by these writers, may Allah reward them with all goodness for the benefit they bring to us.

Question 7: Does the newspaper publication express the opinion of Hizb ut Tahrir or does it express the opinion of the writer alone?

The newspaper, my brother, is issued from Hizb ut Tahrir and consequently it expresses the opinion of Hizb ut Tahrir and not the personal opinion of this or that writer. That has been mentioned in the heart of our page (issued from Hizb ut Tahrir). Therefore, everything it contains abides by the methodology of the Hizb and its vision towards the issues, events and realities.

Question 8: Does the revolution of Ash-Shaam hold a special place within the newspaper?

It is not hidden from any follower that the revolution of Ash-Shaam (Syria) has become the focus of attention for all Muslims due to the resolve and resilience that it has been

distinguished by and due to the failure and incapability of the colonialist states to eliminate as what happened in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and amongst other places. The colonialist America and Europe have been unable to take hold of the reins of the revolution so as to eliminate it. For that reason, they resorted to escalating the acts of killing, destruction and terrorising in an attempt to subdue the revolution and stop it. It was then only natural and obvious for the revolution in Ash-Shaam to take a main central place within the Raiah coverage. We have been continuously following the course of events and exposing the plots of the western states and warning about their scheme. Including all that is related to Geneva, the Riyadh conference, and the relevant details. Also included is the effort of some of the groups to promote the slogan of a 'democratic state' in addition to many other issues and details, even including the bloody fighting amongst the groups that took place in Al-Ghoutha... In a large variety of issues and details, we follow all of the events of the revolution of Ash-Shaam, in an attempt to disclose the darkness of the western colonialist plotting and its tools comprising of the rulers of the neighbouring lands like Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf states. We have given all of this a great share of coverage; we are still following it closely and will continue to do so. Our affair in that is the affair that we have adopted in respect to the adopting the affairs of the Ummah and particular those affairs that we hope for the birth of the Khilafah State upon the methodology of the Prophethood to arise from by Allah's permission.

Question 9: What difficulties have you encountered, whether related to the publishing or any other matter?

The difficulties arise from the newspaper being issued weekly; there is always the pressure of time, the time-factor, meaning that we are bound in our pursuance of a specific time. That which happens, sometimes, is what has been called last-minute, which means that you are in bewilderment regarding what are the most important events and issues are that you want to cover, then all of a sudden in the last moments important events take place which then places you in a time constraint. This is from the difficulties confronted and sometimes due to the importance of an event we are compelled to give it its full right, then because of time constraints we are forced to delay it until the following edition. That is our reality. Also from amongst the difficulties that we have been informed about from our brothers, the Shabab in some regions, is that the security authorities work to prevent the spread of the Raiah Newspaper. So if one is found to have it in his possession is punished. Despite, that we are not dissuaded from continuing with determination and patience to make this media message reach the segments of the Ummah:

﴿وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not”
[Yusuf: 21].

Question 10: Has the newspaper been published in languages other than Arabic?

No not yet. This, by the will of Allah, falls within our hopes and aspirations, and within the plan that we are working upon, by Allah's permission, to expand the scope of the spread of Al-Raiah. It is not hidden that there are hundreds of millions of Muslims who do not speak the Arabic language and we hope that we will be enabled to deliver it to them in their local languages and even if it is done gradually.

Question 11: Has Al-Raiah accomplished its objective?

The objective of Al-Raiah is to share and partake in the spread of awareness amongst the Muslims upon the reality that the Ummah is facing in respect to the western colonialist scheming that is working to prevent the return of the Khilafah upon the methodology of the Prophethood, and also to shed light upon the Islamic concepts related to the issues of the

state and the society... What has reached us in terms of responses and comments from the Shabab brothers and sisters in the various regions, is that when they distributed "Al-Raiah" amongst the people during their interactions with them, that Al-Hamdu Lillah, they found a strong responsiveness towards it. That is from one angle, from another, when we see the exasperation of some of the hired media outlets when addressing "Al-Raiah" where they attack it and what is written within it, then this is an additional indicator that "Al-Raiah" has been successful in delivering its voice and proclaiming the word of truth. Even though we consider the highest and greatest objective that we strive and aspire to, is to stir and encourage the Muslims to work for the establishment of the Khilafah state. Al-Raiah is only one means amongst a host of activities and actions that Hizb ut Tahrir undertake across its branches and Wilayahs. Therefore, the greatest success that we aspire for and ask Allah (swt) to consolidate for us, sooner and not later, is the establishment of the Khilafah. At that, by Allah's permission, "Al-Raiah" will find for itself a standing of regard that it is worthy of.

Question 12: Is there anything that you would like to say to the followers of the Raiah Newspaper specifically and the Muslims in general?

In conclusion, I remind all of the listening brothers and sisters that Hizb ut Tahrir is from you and for you. Hizb ut Tahrir works with the Muslims for the resumption of the Islamic life and Al-Raiah Newspaper is a means of media. The aim of which is to make the voice of the Da'wah reach the segments of the Ummah; to those who love them and the supporters and all of those who are concerned with the political issues and the issues of the Muslim lands. In addition, do not hold back from giving us suggestions and providing responses and comments. We know that there are circumstances of pressure on the ground in some of the regions that do not allow readers to make contact with us. However, at the same time, that is possible over means of communication online whether through Facebook, twitter, email or Al-Raiah's internet site... So there is more than one way and means that our dear readers can make contact with us. We hope from them all to cooperate with us and to place their hands in ours so that the Raiah Newspaper and truly be the newspaper of the Ummah. With what we have of capabilities and modest effort, we ask Allah (swt) to bless us in our work and to write that this newspaper is accepted and becomes widespread. And that He opens the breasts and hearts of the Muslims so that they work alongside us to support this Deen and raise high the word of Allah (swt), that is what we are able to say.

I conclude by thanking you for providing this gracious opportunity to discuss with you the concerns and anxieties of the media work on Al-Raiah Newspaper. Baarakallahu Feekum. And we repeat that we welcome any comment, suggestion or advice because the Deen is An-Naseehah (advice), as we know.

Baarakallahu Feekum, to all of you, Wasalaamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakaatuhu