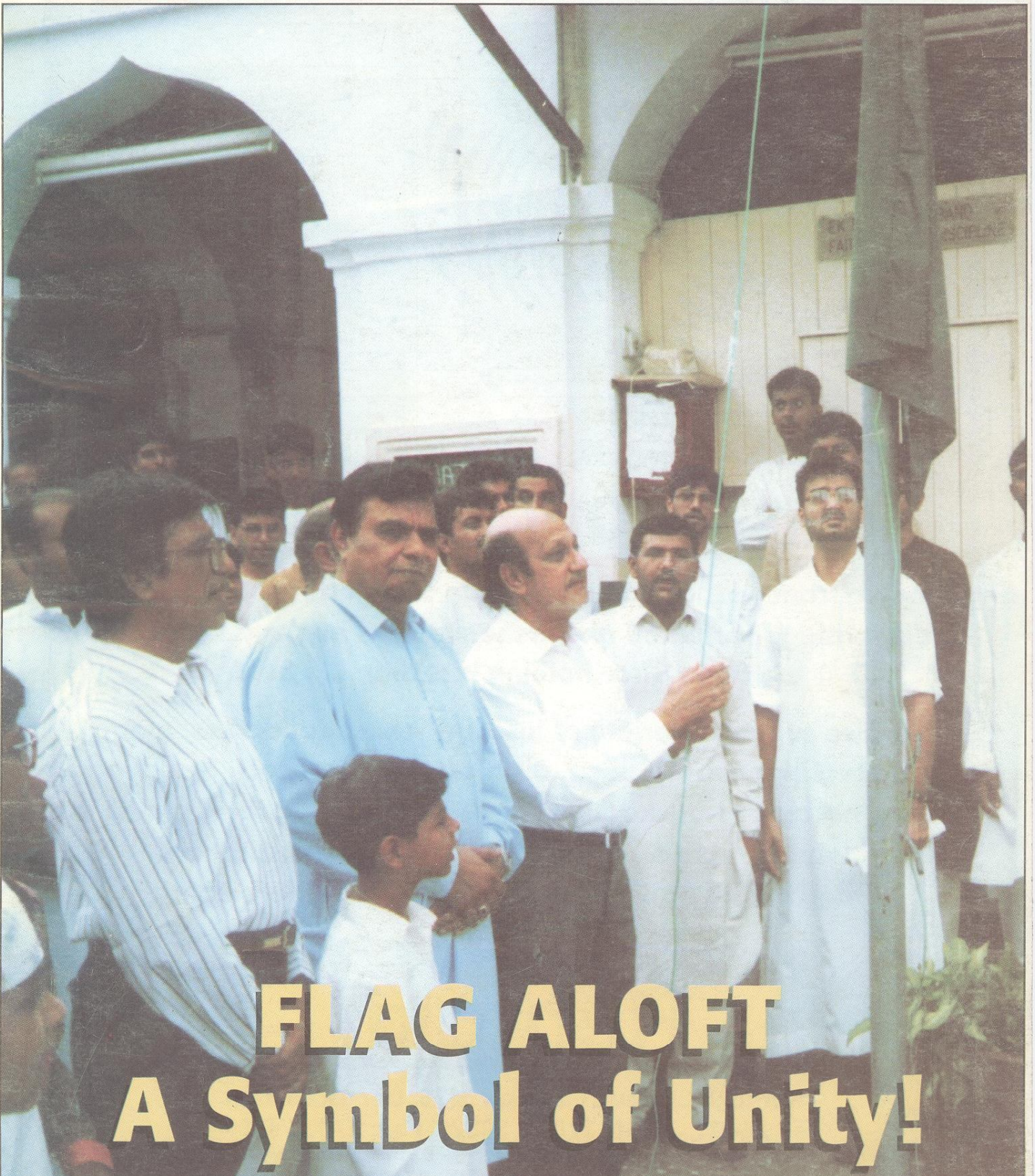




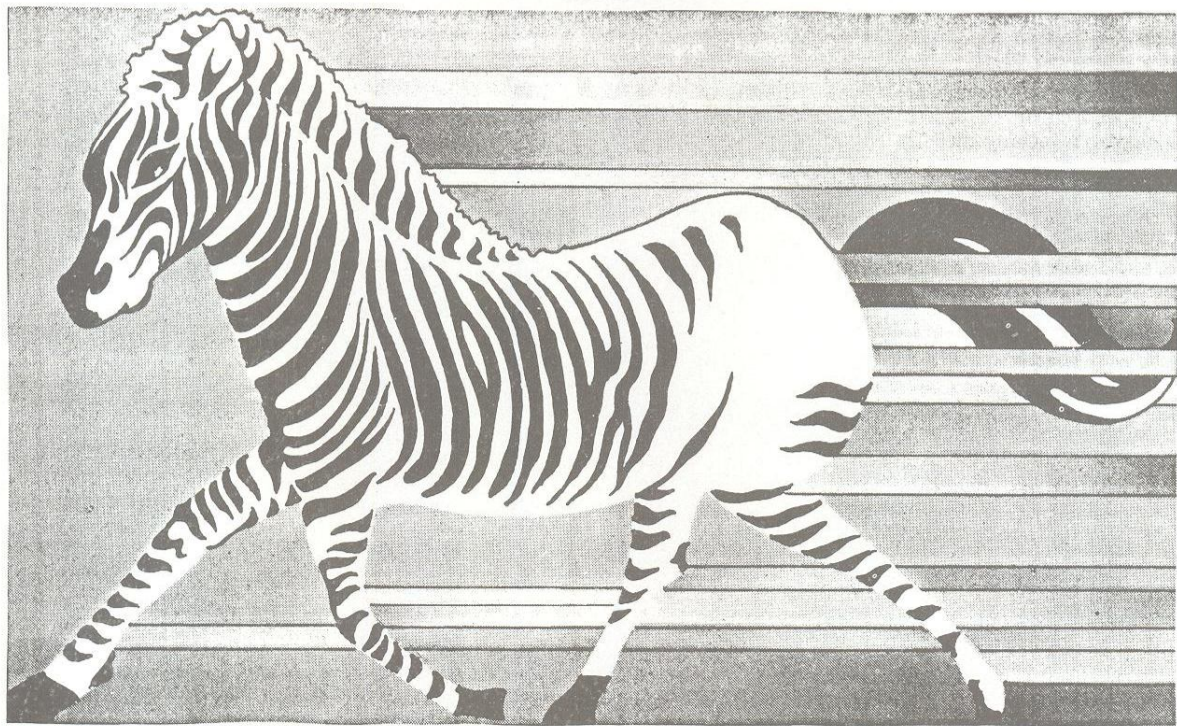
Federation Samachar

Volume 28, No. 4. Zilkaad 1415 A.H. / April 1995



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FEDERATION SAMACHAR

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Ithna Asheri Jamaats of
Africa.

Volume 28, NO. 4

Zilkaad 1415 A.H.
April, 1995



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Dar es Salaam.

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COVER PICTURE

The Federation flag being hoisted at
the Dar es Salaam Imambara com-
pound after Eid prayers. Pictured
from left to right are the Vice Chair-
man of the Federation, Alhaj Habib
Virani, Dar es Salaam Jamat Presi-
dent, Asgher Bharwani and Federa-
tion Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji.

From the Editor's Desk

Accountability is the objective

It can be said that the major aspect of the success of the World Federation Conference of October, 1994 in the United Kingdom was the acknowledgement, however late, that the extent due of accountability and effectiveness of the organisation was not actually being achieved.

It is possible that it was simply an assumption that the structural (and constitutional) aspect of the organisation was the cause of the malady. The sudden rise of the issue without a prior notice may however not have afforded adequate time to address it objectively.

It is also possible that the issue being sensitive and the Resolu-
tion coming, as it did, from the floor - a rare phenomena - both
were so presented as to facilitate a smooth passage of the latter
with little embarrassment.

It is clear that no organisation can be effective or seen so, if it
fails to project its credibility. Lack of credibility ensues where
there is a poor show of accountability which always includes
transparency and commitment to the constitution.

The type of constitution enjoyed by the World Federation is no
different from that enjoyed by other regional organisations in
the community and they do not appear to have any problem with
it.

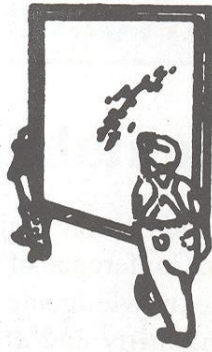
If the conditions had been favourable, it is possible that the Con-
ference would have come up with more plausible causes for the
deficiency.

However, it is obvious that there is no guarantee that upon re-
structuring of the organisation, the problem will have been solved
if the structural aspect was not the cause ever. On the contrary
the problem could get worse.

As accountability and effectiveness were the object of the Reso-
lution and not the institutional re-structuring for its sake, we are
confident that the sub-committee to be appointed will implement
the resolution objectively.

The challenge is by no means small. We appeal for such a sin-
cere support to the sub-committee as to allow it to exercise its
independence of mind fully, without any move to influence it to,
or away from, any particular direction or directions.

Editor



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Dar es Salaam

Readers are welcome to pen in their views, opinions or articles to us. Correspondence should be addressed to:

The Editor, Federation Samachar, P.O. Box 6710,
Dar es Salaam.

Dear brother,

Indeed, we need an interpretation

I would like to congratulate and thank you for printing the letter "Interpretation sought on World Federation Ijaza" by Brother Nisarali Fazel of Allentown, USA, in your issue of Shaaban 1415 A.H. [January, 1995 - Vol 28, No. 3].

I felt joy in my heart to see that there are yet people in our community whose imaan is intact and who are ready to take a stand on the righteous issues whilst exercising caution and acting responsibly. I too would like to have an explanation from the President of the World Federation regarding the translation which is reported to have been given by Alhaj Mulla Asgharali of his Ijaza in the World Federation Press release of May, 1994.

May Allah [S.W.T.] bestow upon you and Br. Nisarali, His peace and His blessings and place your names amongst those who are momineen of our Imam Al-Hujjat (A.F.).

Ali Fazel
Peterborough, England.

Dear brother,

It's only human to err!

May I commend the Editorial Board for an excellent Shaaban issue of the Federation Samachar.

With regard to the letter "Interpretation



sought on World Federation Ijaza" which sought clarification on the translation of ijaza, it surprises me that an explanation of the same has not come from the World Federation.

It is clear that the objective of the letter was not malicious and whether or not there are misinterpretations of the Ijaza, these should have been elucidated.

We are not out to blame each other or find faults in others and we all know that it is only human to err -- not that I am insinuating a misinterpretation of the ijaza!

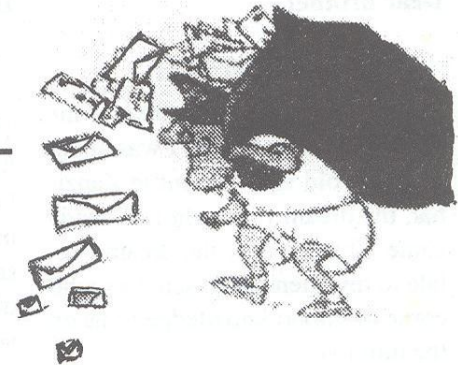
Our media should be there to enlighten and it is sad that the forum you initiated on the issue was unresponded to.

Reader
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Dear brother,

Some more questions

I am a regular receiver of the Federation Samachar and have been reading the same with great interest.



The most interesting and daring articles have appeared in your January issue namely on the Ijaza and leadership. My hats to you all for standing firm on the right path and publishing such articles.

It appears that in some cases our Community has lost its sense of direction and the following points keep on recurring in my mind for which probably someone may have an answer for me:

1] Is it not true that not all Ijaza holders act according to the instructions outlined in their Ijaza? When an individual sees this happening what should he do?

2] When debit and credit entries for khums money are made [against the instructions stipulated to the Ijaza holder] to redirect the funds to particular projects are such actions allowable?

3] The Marja has traditionally issued Ijazas to leaders whilst they hold office. There is a risk in letting personal ijazas prevail because individuals who are not in the public eye can be lured to misappropriate funds or irrationally direct them to particular projects for personal popularity. Can we not tell the Marja to disallow personal ijazas?

God help our community to get sincere, honest and accountable leaders!

A G Merchant
Middlesex, England.

Dear brother,

I dream...

I would like to share my dream - the dream I have had since I was about 16 years old as a student in Zanzibar, the dream I brought to Canada some 20 years ago, the dream I relate to my friends and scholars who come to impart knowledge to us on the mimbars.

I dream of our majlises taking the form of lectures after which we can ask questions or request clarifications... I dream of a lecturer/ Zakir supporting his delivery with audio-visual aids.... I dream of a time when the Zakir will pass out to the audience an outline of the lecture for us to make notes.

I dream of a time when our Centres will be used by our youths to drop by after school to do their homework and ask for help from their peers on an informal basis. After which they could engage in sporting activities, say their prayers and return home. This would save them of social vices and keep them away from the ravages and messages of the TV.

I dream of seeing our youths working together in our centres to produce computer programmes for our children in the madrasahs or audio-video programmes... I dream of seeing our youths getting together to write childrens' stories about our past and our aspirations as citizens of the countries we reside in.

I dream of our elders sitting in our Centres with their grandchildren on the laps telling them stories of our glorious past.. I dream to see the elders learning the language of the adopted countries of the grandchildren and the grandchildren the language of their grandparents thereby avoiding a loss in heritage.

I dream of our youths working with our elders in setting up archives... I dream to see our youths planning to

Dear brother,

Well received....

The January issue of the Federation Samachar was well received in the United States. I received calls from most subscribers expressing their satisfaction. They prefer more news of the Community and I am sure you will continue to expand in this area of the Samachar.

Gulamabbas Dhala
Los Angeles.

participate in Community and Provincial projects such as walkathons or runathons for the Heart Foundation etc. and erecting 'shamiyana' and serving water to thirsty runners in the name of Imam Husain (A.S.) rather than erecting it only at the Mosque on Ashura day. Let's not leave the advise of our Imam to MacDonald's.

I dream of our youths from various Universities and Community Colleges talking to high school students at our Centres about education and educational institutions and becoming their mentors and also their peer counsellors I dream to see our Centres housing islamic schools and Centres of Islamic research ... I dream of our Centres becoming Centres for promotion of inter-cultural, inter-racial and inter-faith understanding.

I dream of a day when our Centres will become the hub of our social, cultural and economic life besides religious activities and when we become a model to the people of the countries we live in.

I have just woken up and realised that we have to work at it. Let us all pull our resources together and if each Jamaat takes up one project at a time, we will inshallah succeed in due course.

Nisar Sheraly
Toronto, Canada.

Dear brother,

My admiration....

The letter "Interpretation sought on World Federation Ijaza" was very enlightening. Your decision to carry it proved that there are committed intellectuals in our Community who are ready to stand for the good and righteous cause of our Community.

Asgherali M.A. Tejani
Peterborough, England.

Dear brother,

Praying at Disney World

I do receive issues of the Federation Samachar from my parents who reside in Dar es Salaam. I would like to take this opportunity to say that your whole team is doing a commendable job in compiling this insightful magazine and may Allah [s.w.t] reward you for devoting your valuable time for a very noble cause.

I am responding to the initial proposition by Munir Daya requesting the Disney World resort to make available halal food and a worship room for prayers. To this effect I enclose a letter which I am about to send to them and to various embassies and Islamic organisations.

With mass appeal through such letters we can get the Disney resort to honour our wishes.

Kazim F. Kermali
New York, USA.

The contents of your letter have been noted and we do hope that the intended objective is attained.
Editor

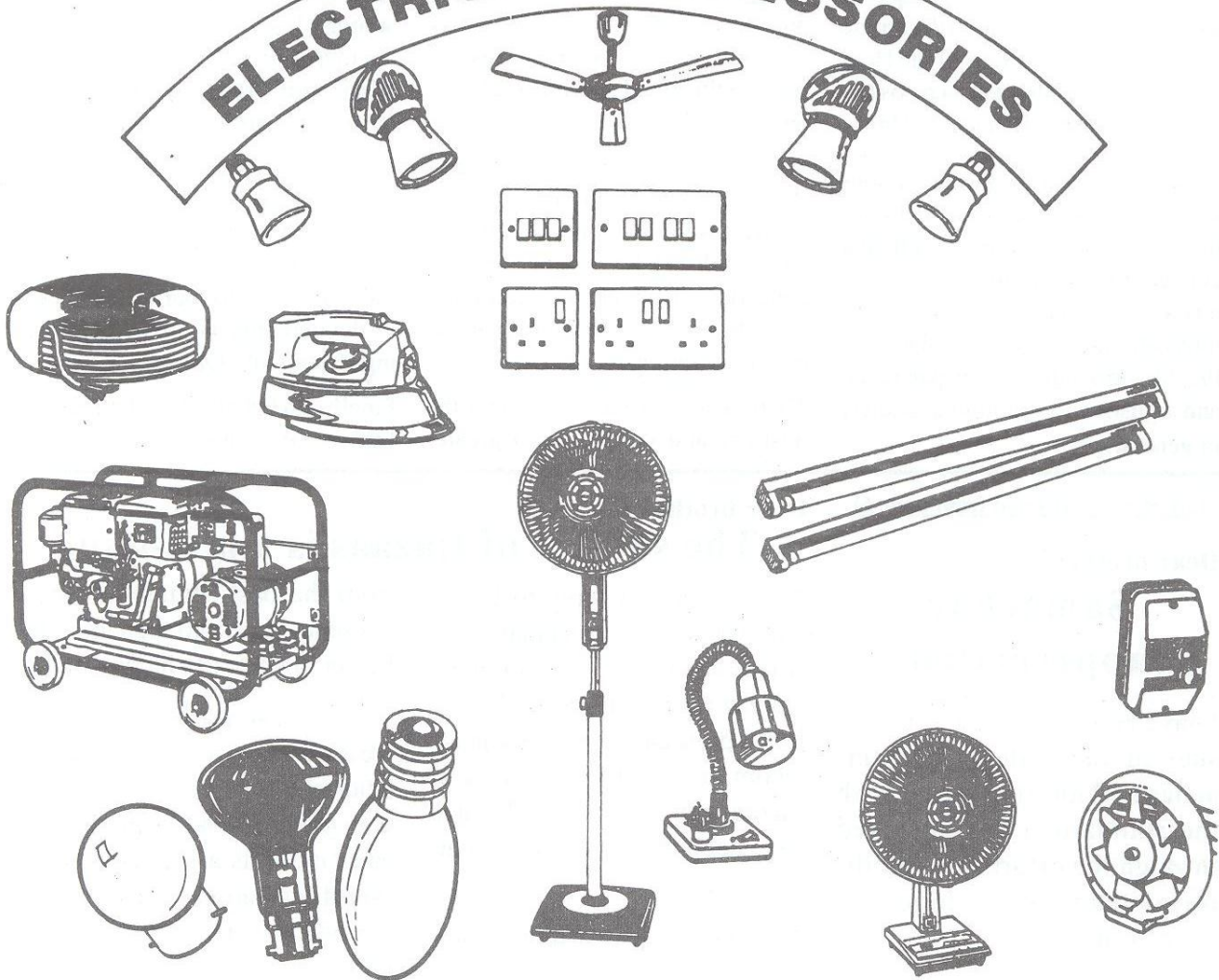
[...Letters continued on page 8]

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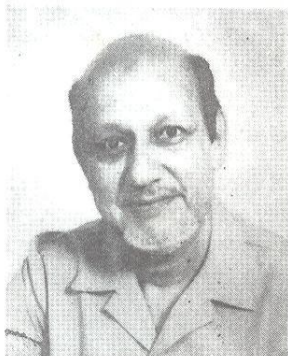
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"Unity is the hallmark" says Chairman in Eid message



"Once again Allah [s.w.t.] has graced us with the opportunity of earning the Mercy and Blessings of the Holy month of Ramadhan and then observing Idd in our thankfulness to Him.

Brothers and sisters, new situations keep on arising each year, sadly for the worse. A situation of particular concern to us as a Muslim Community this year is the increase in the international hostility to Islam and the Muslim interests in particular and injustice to the human society in general.

We see rich nations which are few, continue to get richer while subjecting the poor nations which are many, to still deeper poverty through united economical and political domination, military intimidation and misuse of their technological advancement.

Such injustice and oppression to the human race are not acceptable to Islam which on its part exhorts struggle for justice and peace and preaches submission only and solely to Allah [s.w.t.]. Islam places the responsibility of this struggle directly on Muslims as believers.

It is therefore not difficult to understand the reason for the hostile stance in the fora and lobbies of the so called Global Power whose only concern is materialistic wealth and consideration as their norm for human civilisation.

There is no justifiable reason for the hostility and yet we see a greater

unity and a stronger determination for it. We as Muslims have a just cause to struggle for justice and peace in human society and yet we see ourselves as Muslims more divided at almost every level and losing our Islamic sense of priorities.

All Muslim Communities worldwide and our Community is no exception, have the obligation of promoting unity and maintaining it among Muslims as one of the essential means of defending the goals of Islam and propagating its noble message of justice and peace.

It is the duty of each one of us, more of the leaders and even much more of the Islamic preachers, scholars and writers to ensure that we do not fail, for if we do, our fate here and in the hereafter is obvious according to the Holy Qur'an.

Finally, on behalf of the Federation, I convey to you all, the greetings of Eid."

[...Letters continued from page 6]

Dear brother,

Samachar appreciated

I have been receiving some issues of the Federation Samachar and am impressed with the standard it has achieved through the efforts of the Editorial team. Well done and keep it up.

I have enclosed an article on 'retirement' for publication in your next issue.

Mohamed Suleman Mohamed Dubai.

Your article will insha'allah be carried in the next issue. Editor.

Dear brother,

The subject of Ijazaas is a non-issue

This is partly a reply to B.A.P. who wrote in the Shaaban 1415 A.H. issue of the Federation Samachar on the 'Politics of Ijazaas'. It is a prerogative of a Marjaa to whom to give and not to give an Ijazaas and normally Marjaas' have deep insight and do not act on impulse.

The Marja is in a different country and does not know every Shia who applies for an Ijazaas. Though we are united by Shia faith, our culture and language is different from his, so when he gave an Ijazaas to Mulla Saheb or to whomsoever, it is expected that he would study the Ijazaas

from the past Mujtahids which are sent to him and then grant the Ijazaas to whoever he deems fit.

What I am surprised about is why we are arguing about the interpretation of Ijazaas i.e. if Mulla Saheb was given an Ijazaas in personal capacity or as a President of the World Federation. We are living in a modern world and could telephone the Marja in Iraq and question him on his ruling directly. By doing this we would not have to worry about what the Marja meant by "Umoore Hasbiya" or "Dast-gardan."

**Muhammad S.M. Ladak,
P.O. Box 36, Moshi.**



Al-Noor ceases publication

The English issue of Al-Noor, a monthly Islamic Magazine published by the Al-Khoei Foundation office from Chevening Road, London has ceased publication. The editors tritely but abruptly announced in the February, 1995 issue that for reasons beyond their control the magazine would cease publication with immediate effect.

The announcement was placed at the end of an editorial calling for unity amongst Muslims. The editorial appealed to Muslims not to let petty theological differences be a source of conflict amongst them.

The first issue of Al-Noor was an eight page issue which was released in July, 1991 [Muharram, 1412]. Two months later the issue grew to 12 pages after which it grew to 16 pages and remained so to its end.

Another Soviet Afghanistan in Chechnya?

Three years after declaring independence from Russia, the Republic of Chechnya was invaded by Russian troops on the orders of Boris Yeltsin, President of Russia.

Many fear another Afghanistan here and though initially Russian tanks stopped some 25 kilometres outside the capital Grozny evidently because some Russian Generals were hesitant about fighting the Chechens, fighting eventually broke out after talks to resolve differences failed. The attack sparked fury from liberal members of the Russian parliament and

Knowledge of the Shias had become so obscure that some people even believed that the Shia faith came into existence only in recent years at the time Ayatullah Khomeini staged the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Over the years Al-Noor enlightened readers on many issues relating to fiqh and views supplemented with explanations of the Islamic philosophy.

The magazine was not politically or commercially motivated but was initiated with the the objective of providing a forum through which the heritage of Shia Islam and its contribution over 1400 years to science, arts, culture and civilisation could be brought to light. It also aimed to counter unjust propaganda waged against the Shia faith.

disturbances have subsequently spread throughout other north Caucasus regions including Dagestan and Ingushetia.

The present conflict is unlikely to strengthen the Russian Federation. On the contrary, it could herald a fall of Russia's remaining empire with its military power being vulnerable to revolutionary counter-attacks. To say that Chechnya is part of Russia is as absurd as France pretending Algeria is French. Whatever the future, Chechnya can never be reconciled with Russia's hegemony.

HONESTY AWARD

Maniza Akhtar, 13, was presented by her school a special Peacemaker certificate for being honest. Maniza found a purse containing 300 sterling pounds in cash on the floor of a city centre supermarket in Sheffield, looked inside for a bus pass with a photo and recognised from the picture an old lady searching for her lost money. Maniza handed over the purse to the old lady who told her she would have no food for the next two months if she had lost it.

BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Islamic Publishers Association (IPA), established in July, 1994, has announced a 'Book of the Year' Award for the best book written in English on Islam and published during the year preceding the year in which the Award is made.

The first Award will be made this year. Authors or their publishers will be able to submit any number of books, provided that "any such book is about any aspect of Islam or its teachings", says Afsar Siddiqui, chairman of IPA.

The IPA was established to unite all Muslim publishers, authors and booksellers on one broad platform "in their efforts to realise their common goal which is to convey the teachings of Islam to as many people as possible". The main objectives of the IPA are to "promote and establish the teachings of Islam and to safeguard and protect the rights of Muslim publishers, authors and booksellers worldwide".

Three prizes will be presented to the winners. The first prize will be sterling pounds 10,000 whilst the second prize is sterling pounds 7,000 and the third prize will be sterling pounds 3,000.

Medical Advisory Board warns on AIDS and Cousin Marriages

We could be having up to 1000 HIV carriers amongst us!

The Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation [MAB], Dr. M.T. Walji has warned that the Community needs to beware of the AIDS virus and on the negative consequences from Cousin Marriages. He said that in the last three years the MAB has found 34 members HIV positive of whom about 12 have since died.

In his opinion the figures are just the "tip of an ice-berg" and he believes there have been about 100 deaths in our Community from AIDS in the last three years and that up to 1000 members could be HIV carriers.

The Medical Advisory Board organised a one day seminar in October, 1994 at Stanmore Imambara, on 'AIDS' and on the 'Consequences of Cousin Marriages'. The session, which was held to coincide with the sixth triennial Conference of the World Federation, was attended by 91 participants from the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Australia, India, Sweden, Canada and Iraq. Amongst the participants were 20 Community leaders, 40 Community social workers, 13 doctors, 5 nurses, 5 Ulemas, 1 pharmacist, 4 dentists, 2 opticians and 1 physiotherapist. Eminent researchers and lecturers from the the University of Birmingham Medical School and Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Medical Centre addressed the gathering and discussions were held thereafter.

HIV infection is spread through homosexuality, heterosexual relations with an infected person or persons

like prostitutes, blood transfusion with infected blood, use of needles and syringes used on an infected person or from an infected mother to a child during labour and breast feeding.

From 1 to 312!

If one man is HIV infected, his will soon be infected and if hypothetically they have five children, all of them will be infected. When the five get married, their partners will be infected bringing the total number of infected to twelve. If these five couples have five children each, they will all be HIV carriers and as a result, in one generation, from one person's infection, sixty two will be affected and in the following generation, three hundred and twelve. Indeed HIV and AIDS are spreading faster than ever today and will soon reach epidemic proportions. There is no cure for HIV infection or AIDS -- the outcome is tragic death and the community needs to be alerted.

Of the cases received, the MAB has categorised patient's reactions as follows:

1] Acceptance of the disease with also an intention not to spread it;

2] Non-acceptance and also blaming MAB for undertaking wrong tests;

3] A 'not to worry' attitude saying Allah [SWT] had given them the disease and that it was up to Him to save them; and

4] A 'it does not matter attitude' with also a dangerous intention

of not doing anything about it.

When the virus called Human Immunodeficiency Virus [HIV] enters one's blood stream, the person is considered to be suffering from an HIV infection. Then, after a brief period [few weeks] of a flu-like illness, the patient has no signs or symptoms of any illness for up to 10 years. During this healthy period, only specific HIV blood tests will show that the patient has indeed got HIV infection. No other blood test will give such an indication. As a result of this infection the afflicted person's health deteriorates when the body's immune system is gradually damaged and the patient is then considered to be suffering from AIDS [Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome]. The patient will be dead in two to three years.

Cousin marriages

On 'cousin marriages' it has been found that physical abnormalities often result in children born therefrom. A cousin is classified as one who is the son or daughter of one's father's or mother's brother or sister.

Doctors advise that cousin marriages should be avoided. However, if such a marriage is contemplated or has taken place, genetic counselling should be sought before children are conceived. Before marriage, screening for Thalassaemia which is a disorder of the red blood cells and AIDS should be seriously considered.

One of our Mujtaheeds, Ayatollah Nasir Maqarim Shirazi of Qum has said that according to our Aimmah's narrations, it is advised to refrain from cousin marriages.

Many Muslim countries have already introduced compulsory testing for couples wishing to marry. Community members have to be alert to the risks we are exposed to.

Medical Advisory Board '*works its fingers to the bone*' to provide health-care

...but treatment costs are sky-high and we need to look at health insurance!

The *Samachar* Editor, Munir Daya annotates on his experience with the Medical Advisory Board [MAB] of the World Federation during his visit to Birmingham in March, 1995.

The end of the Holy month of Ramadhan [March, 1995] marked the beginning of a tense '*hang by a thread*' period during which my mother was prescribed surgery. After contacting MAB to fix the required appointments, we then faxed pertinent local medical reports to provide doctors with a preliminary insight of the complications involved. My notes on the MAB and its activities are not through elateness arising from the full recovery of my mother but rather, are based on actual observations.

The MAB was formed in 1979 primarily to cater for patients who require medical attention away from their home countries. In its first year, 4 patients sought treatment but by the end of 1993, the number of patients handled rose to 2790. In the last five years up to 1993, an average of over 200 patients per annum have been visiting Birmingham for medical treatment under the MAB.

From 1980 to 1993, 1267 patients came from Tanzania, 396 from Kenya, 284 from the UK, 294 from Pakistan and 165 from Iran. Others came from a wide range of countries.

The leading ailment has been heart disease comprising 17% of patients from 1991 to 1993. Ailments include gynaecological problems, cancer, neurological disorders, ENT and Eye problems, diabetes, mental illness and others.

Patients arriving in the UK are provided with transport at a nominal

cost and if needed, appointment letters are provided for visa and immigration purposes. Accommodation, if required, is provided in Birmingham at the Community hostel [located near our Mosque]. The hostel charges about 6 Sterling pounds per person per night. Food costs for say a couple would be between sterling pounds 10 to 20 per day. Doctors on the Board work voluntarily but patients have to pay 50 sterling pounds towards administrative costs.

The MAB has direct contact with specialists for different medical problems and does arrange quick appointments. With some hospitals such as the New Priory Hospital in Birmingham, MAB patients get a 20% discount on costs. The room charge in this hospital is about Sterling 250 per night and considering that a patient may stay for up to 10 nights, such discounts are precious. Through a system of fixed-cost pricing, patients can at times save up to 40% on bills.

Treatment in the UK is not cheap and it is beyond the means of MAB to finance all patients. What it seeks to do is to obtain the best treatment at the most economical price and patients have to foot their bills. In some special cases however, MAB does finance needy patients. This would require, first, a recommendation of the local Jamaat or health institution after which, subject to the finances available, the MAB compares the case in question to other pending cases which also need financing, before committing 'paid' treatment.

The MAB also sends medicines, equipment, journals, books and other support to community health

organisations world-wide. The following booklets are now available free from the MAB:

- 1] **A Guide to the Medical System in Britain;**
- 2] **Employment of Overseas Doctors and Dentists in the UK;**
- 3] **Medical Specialities which describes the specialities in which post graduate education is available;**
- 4] **Overseas Doctors Training Scheme; and**
- 5] **The Medical Council - Information pack.**

The MAB even provides advice on post graduate medical education in the West and in some cases offers grants or interest-free loans.

Between 1977 and 1992, the World Federation organised sixteen Haj Medical Missions with the primary objective of treating our patients from around the world. With Haj groups now becoming larger and better organised [some groups now even bring their own doctors], the MAB decided to change the function of the Haj Medical Mission to an advisory capacity.

The MAB has also conducted medical screening programmes in most of the UK Jamaats and away from the UK it undertakes Primary Health Care Projects in India at Govandi, Bombay, Patna, Bihar and in Hyderabad.

Whilst the MAB has '*worked its fingers to the bone*' to provide health-care, the deterrent has been the high treatment costs involved. Suitable international health Insurance schemes would help in alleviating this problem thereby enabling more members to take advantage of the services that MAB provides.

Hijab bans in schools degrade secular democracies

A 13-year-old Muslim girl at a French language high school in Montreal was sent home after being told that the scarf she was wearing did not conform to the school's dress code. Norman Dore, principal of Louise Riel Secondary School, justifying the decision, equated hijab with Nazi regalia saying "distinctive clothing like hijab or neo-Nazi regalia could polarise aggression among young people.

In another private school, the parents' committee ordered hijab to be banned claiming that it broke the school's dress code. Dania Baali, 15, said she will be forced to change schools when the ban became effective and has lodged a complain with the Quebec Human Rights Commission claiming religious discrimination.

Quebec, which has a French speaking majority, seems to be following the example of France. Francois Lemieux, the head of the nationalist St Jean Baptist Society, said that the hijab was incompatible with the values of Quebec society because it was a symbol of the subjugation of women. He said the hijab defied the values of equality of men and women that prevails in Quebec.

The local government is supporting the ban. Bernard Landry, the Minister of Culture communities, said religious freedom, like all the others, had its limits. She said, "our role is not simply to allow the exercise freedom but also to establish limits."

Meanwhile in France, 115 girls have been expelled in recent campaigns against Muslim girls who refused to remove the hijab in school.

French police have even battled against Muslim girls protesting a ban

against the hijab in state schools. In outlawing the hijab, the Education Minister Francois Bayrou called it "an ostentatious symbol" that sets its wearers apart from others and "violates the principle of separation of Church and state." But so do the yarmulke, the Sikh turban, the cardinal's skull cap, the crucifix and the Star of David when worn in public places!

An Editorial in the best selling Canadian daily newspaper, the Toronto Star, decried the non-tolerance and selective discrimination practiced against the Muslims saying that matters of religion should be best left to the believers, as long as their practices did not unduly infringe upon the rights of others.

In the past, infamous regimes, both secular and religious, have penalised individuals who did not dress according to official dictates. Turkish despot, Kamal Ataturk banned the hijab in the 1920s as did the pro-Nazi Reza Khan, the first Shah of Iran in the 1930s. It is well known that both practised anti-religious zealotry in the name of secularism.

Soviet Communists cracked down against the scarf in their totalitarian drive against all religions and the cadres of the Chinese Cultural Revolution beat up those who wouldn't wear Mao suits.

Contemporary politics offers equally dreary examples. Egypt's Hosni Mubarak is known to be deploying police to enforce his ban on the hijab in schools.

All democracies should accommodate the religious symbols of others and not to do so would be to sacrifice an even greater principle, that of freedom of religion and conscience.

Los Angeles Elections

At the Annual General Meeting of the Los Angeles Jamaat held on 11 March, 1995, the following were elected to the Executive Council for a term of two years:

Mohamed Iqbal Somji	President
Mrs. Shabnam Dewji	V. President
Mushtaq Kermalli	Secretary
Gulamabbas Khakoo	Treasurer
Mohsin Ali Khakoo	Councillor
Mrs. Fatma Bata	Councillor

Book explains Islam to Westerners

A handbook by Ruqaiyyah Maqsood, **World Faiths: Islam** in a 'teach yourself' series has everything for Westerners and beginners who are curious to know about Islam, Muslims and their daily life. The book has a plethora of information dispensed in an interesting and concise manner.

It starts with the life of the blessed Prophet Muhammad (SAW), through the revelations, the early struggles and finally his triumphant pilgrimage and last sermon. Many important issues are covered intelligently and full chapters are devoted to the Qur'an, its teachings and the five pillars of Islam. The writer has also managed to clearly separate traditions and cultures which have nothing to do with Islam.

There are answers here (though not in depth), on major questions that Westerners always ask: Why the chopping of hands for theft? Why polygamy? Why arranged marriage? Why wear a hijab?

The abundant black and white photographs further enhance the book which sells for about sterling pounds 6.99 in the UK.

Karachi in maelstrom of violence

Community expresses shock and deplors the killing of innocent civilians

The violence, robberies and murders in Karachi have continued unabated debasing the very meaning of Pakistan which means "Land of the pure." The white strip on the otherwise green flag of Pakistan, which bears a crescent and a star, represents the various ethnic and religious minorities who, according to the Constitution, can live freely under the precepts of their faith. The Country, now entangled in savagery, has abandoned what its flag stands for thereby besmirching its own name.

The founder of Pakistan, Qaid-e-Azzam, Mohamedali Jinnah, himself from a tiny minority Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Community, set an example of paramount loyalty first to Islam, Muslim interests and the State in subordination to all other ethnic and sectarian considerations.

Karachi, which has a population of about 10 million, has been in a maelstrom of violence involving rival factions of Mohajir Muslim migrants from India, between the terrorists and the Government. Add to that a booming heroin trade, a kidnap-for-ransom industry and a mountain of weapons left over from the 1979-89 Afghanistan war have augmented the problem, the result being 1200 murders in the past year thereby making Karachi amongst the deadliest cities in the world [In New York City, notorious for its violence, about 1600 were murdered last year]. The death toll this year is about 360 as at the end of March, 1995.

The murder at dawn of nineteen Shi'a Muslims by five masked gunmen in two mosques, including the Mehfil-e-Murtaza, during the holy month of Ramadhan and the subsequent bombing outside a Mosque during Friday prayers [wherein the

bodies of children were charred to cinders] are despicable and cannot be justified on any grounds. The Mosque is the most sacred place for Muslims and committing murders there was heinous. It was an act of pure savagery and an insult to Pakistan and Islam.

Amongst those who died were the Imam and prayer leader of the Mosque, Maulvi Ayub Sabri and Haji Hamidali Bhojani, the President of the Khoja Pirhai Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat. Messages of Condolence were sent in to the Karachi Jamaat from around the world with the President of the World Federation, Alhaj Mulla Asgher expressing shock at the sudden death in his condolence message.

The Africa Federation also deplored the incident and the state of events in Pakistan and sent a commiseration letter to the Vice President of K.S.I. Pirhai Jamaat, Dr. Sibtain Dossa expressing sympathy on the tragic deaths of our members.

Taken aback by the fact that such an atrocity was committed in as sacred a place as a Mosque, in as Holy a month as Ramadhan to persons undergoing fasting in a country which got its birth through a struggle for Islam and Muslim rights, the Federation also sent a letter condemning the killings to the High Commissioner for Pakistan in Tanzania, Ghayoor Ahmed who responded by accepting the fact that the killings were "senseless."

The Shi'a community in Pakistan has flourished for decades and were a recognised and honoured Muslim group in Moghul and British India. They have long played an important role in the rich religious and

multicultural life of Pakistan. Today Shias and Sunnis coexist amicably in Karachi, Sind, Punjab, the North West Frontier, Kashmir, Hunza and Chitral. They both share senior positions in government and are fairly represented in the judiciary, the military and in education and business.

Pakistan's history, however, has not been free of ethnic and political conflicts which have now become a part of Karachi life. Sectarian conflicts are not new either but the new threat which has arisen in Pakistan is the violent and organised nature of sectarianism. The tolerance that is fundamental to Pakistan's very survival now seems to be drowning amid cries of vengeance and hatred perpetrated by extremist groups which the Government should ban or isolate from mainstream Islamic politics.

One group that has been identified to be causing the furore is the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan [SSP] which emerged in the Jhang district of Punjab. This group not only poses a threat to Shi'a Muslims but also to a vast majority of Sunni Muslims who do not agree with their message. Shi'a Muslims must not fall into the trap of identifying the SSP as representing Sunni Islam but should join hands to prevent SSP's message of hatred and violence to affect or influence Islamic communities at large, particularly in countries such as India, Afghanistan, Yemen, the Gulf and amongst Muslim communities in the West.

The event in Pakistan and the arrival of some of the leaders of the SSP in Britain has caused alarm amongst many British Muslims as it will reinforce the misconception, already

[continued on page14]

[from page13]

widely prevalent in the West, of fanatical Muslims and of an intolerant Islam. It will also impede efforts by Muslim organisations, Sunni and Shi'a, to fight prejudice and to work together towards satisfying their many grievances in the West.

Back in Karachi, vulnerable businessmen are calling for a return to martial law because they fear that the police cannot contain the many civil wars which are being fought simultaneously in the city. The recent killing of two American Embassy staff was the first in recent memory that both, involved foreigners and was not connected directly with crime or sectarian strife. With at least three killings each day, Karachi continues to be in a mealstrom of violence until God knows when.

Obituary

Haji Hamidali Bhojani

Amongst those who died on the dawn attack at Mehfile Murtaza on 25 February, 1995 was the President of the K.S.I. Pirhai Jamaat, Haji Hamidali Bhojani.

Haji Hamidali practically dedicated his life to the welfare of the Pirhai Jamaat in Karachi with many time worn dreams being realised. The numerous projects initiated, some of which have duly been accomplished, now stand as testimony of his far-sightedness and wisdom.

It was under his leadership that the Pirhai Jamaat, the largest Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Jamaat in the world, entered the fold of the World Federation membership. He was also an Executive Councillor of the World Federation.

The late Haji Hamidali was humble, polite and gentle by nature and his sudden demise is an irreparable loss to the Community worldwide. May Allah [SWT] rest his sould in eternal peace.

Lieicester Elections

At the Extra ordinary meeting of the Muslim Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community in Lieicester, UK. the following office-bearers were elected to the Management Committee:

- Muslim Rajani President
- Yusuf Sabur Vice President
- Munawer Badami Secretary
- S.G. Askari Mukhi
- Sadiq Kanji Member
- Barkat Rajani Member
- Zulfikar Rajani Member

Saint flees from Karachi

A celebrated 63-year old Islamic philanthropist and humanitarian worker, Abdul Sattar Edhi who was well known as "The Patron Saint of Karachi", has fled the ambattled city after receiving death threats.

It is believed that he is hiding in the British countryside.

Khamenei'i refuses post

Ayatullah Sayyed Ali Khamenei'i, the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the demise of Grand Ayatullah Sayyed Khomeini, has rejected calls for his appointment to the position of *Marja' at-Taqleed*, or *'Source of Emulation'*, following the death of Grand Ayatullah Shaykh Ali Araki.

The 55-year old charismatic head of the Islamic Republic dampened speculation by some Shi'a faithful who want the Marja' institution to have a greater and more direct political role.

Re-Union Elections

During the General Elections held on 7 January, 1995 the following were elected into office of the re-Union Jamaat:

- Mustafa Hassanali President
- Irshad Chinai Vice President
- Akberali Amirali Vice President
- Mehboob Jiwan Treasurer
- Murtaza Visram Treasurer
- Akber Jiwan Secretary
- Azad Abdulhussein Secretary

The Councillors are Babu Gulamali, Mohamedraza Gulamali, Salim Mohamedali, Nasir Hassanali, Amir Kassamali, Raza-ali Asgharali, Anverali Sunderji, Salim Hassanali, Zulfikar Akberali, Umedali Jafferli and Nazir Bahadurali.

Another Samachar!

The Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Muslim Community of Australia [KSIMCOA] came up with its inaugural four page issue of the Aussie Samachar in January 1995 [Shabaan 1415 a..h.] which intends to provide a forum for the exchange of news and views.

Those wishing to obtain news from Australia may write to The Editor, Aussie Samachar, P.O. Box 478., Kogarah NSW 2217, Australia.

Residence in New Zealand

The Africa Federation has received a Self Assessment Guide to help those wishing to settle in New Zealand. The Guide has been classified into General, Business, Family and Humanitarian categories.

In the General category, prospective migrants score points through a self-assessment guide. The Business category is for those with skill, work experience or ability to invest. The Family Category relates to those with close relatives in New Zealand and the Humanitarian category covers those whose life elsewhere is exceptionally difficult. Detailed forms are available at the Secretariat.

Human-beings can achieve wonders...

..irrespective of how large the challenge is. We only need the will to counter the challenge.



Space: Bandhe Khudha

Mombasa strives towards boosting Educational standards

In order to uplift the standard of education at the Alibhai Panju Jaffery Primary school and to promote a competitive spirit, the Education Board has introduced a system whereby prizes are awarded to the class that achieves the best results. This scheme also provides incentives to teachers.

The School now also holds regular pastoral lectures for upper Secondary school students. Recently in two of such sessions, a leading Coast pathologist, Dr. A.N. Mandalia assisted by Sister Nazerali talked on H.I.V. and AIDS whilst Sister Zainab Manji of Dar es Salaam, a graduate in banking and finance spoke on the importance of higher education for women.

The Education Board recently acquired four computers which have been installed at the Academy with an additional nine computers to follow. The computer facilities are earmarked to be used by all students from Nursery onwards. Adult computer classes are also being envisaged.

In October last year, Seyyid Murtadha Kashmiri, the representative of Ayatullah Seyyid Seestani, visited the school and was pleased on the emphasis laid by the community on education.

The school recently occupied a New block of five classrooms, a Home Science room and a mini all-purpose hall. Plans are now underway to construct additional classrooms and facilities which would be required in the next five years. The proposed construction will enable the Academy to offer secondary education upto A' Levels.

14 Students visit Iran for Islamic orientation short course



The Tabligh Sub Committee of Dar es Salaam arranged to send 14 students, ten of whom were from Dar es Salaam, three from Tanga and one from Morogoro to Qum, Iran for a 3 months short course on Islamic orientation. The students departed on 10 January, 1995 and returned back on 8 April, 1995. When in Iran they also visited Tehran, Isfahan, Kashan, Shiraz and finally to Mashad during the Nauroze holiday. Picture shows the students prior to their departure.

Third I'tikaaf held in Dar and...

The Tabligh Sub Committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat this year again organised an I'tikaaf. More than 150 boys from primary and secondary schools attended this spiritual detachment where one restricts oneself to the Mosque for at least three days.

I'tikaaf can be done by both men and women and is recommended during the last ten days of Ramadhan. However it can also be performed in other months like for example in Qum, Iran where many scholars and students perform I'tikaaf on every 13th, 14th and 15th Rajab [to mark Imam Ali's anniversary week] in the Mosque of Imam Hassan Askari [A.S.].

In Dar es Salaam, the first I'tikaaf was held in Ramadhan 1413 [March, 1993] being introduced by the visiting scholar, Syed Hussein Murtaza Naqvi of Qum, Iran. This was continued the following year by his student scholar, Sheikh Shabbir Hassan Maisami who had visited Dar es Salaam for Ramadhan majlises. The

Chief Guest at the close of this year's session was the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Habib Mulji.

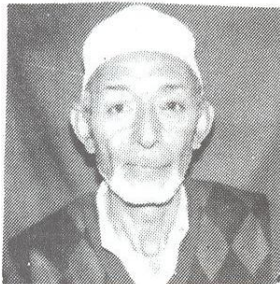
Other Tabligh activities undertaken by the Sub Committee were:

* During Ashre-e-Zainabiya, for the first time, Gujrati majlises were organised for youngsters. These were recited by the Alim of the Hussaini Madressa, Sheikh Maqbool Fayyazi who hails from Qum, Iran.. Children also had the opportunity to ask questions after the Majlises. The wife of Sheikh Maqbool recites majlises and conducts Fiqh sessions for our ladies.

* Guest speakers were invited to speak on subjects relevant to our Community. The speakers included Sheikh Abdillahi Nassir, Sheikh Muslim Bhanji, Bwana Ally Sheriff and Haji Hassan M. Jaffer.

* On the birth day of Imam Mahdi [AF], pamphlets were circulated calling on one and all to create awareness of the Imam's presence in an environment of happiness.

**Inna Lillahi Wa Inna
Ilaihi Raajiu
Samachar Editor
passes away**



The sad death of the Editor of the Federation Samachar, Alhaj Mohamedali Chagani (59) occurred on 15 March, 1995 in Arusha.

Born on 7 June, 1935 at Tabora, Tanzania the late Chagani was a social worker of long standing. Starting as a volunteer in Tabora in the 1950s he has served a number of community institutions in various capacities.

In Dar es Salaam, where he stayed for about 15 years, he served first as the Joint Secretary and later as the Hon. Secretary of the Jamaat. It was during his term as Secretary that the establishment of Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary was reactivated and he was personally actively involved during its formation stages, being a member of the first Board of Governors.

The late Chagani also served as a Councillor and was Hon. Secretary of the Africa Federation for a brief period until he decided to move to Arusha for permanent settlement in 1987. He has been actively involved in the Supreme Council Education Board based in Moshi, was a member of the Board of Directors of National Investment, an investment Company comprised of Community members and also held the Governor position of the Golden Crescent Group.

The late Mohamedbhai was great company and his touch of humour in meetings will be sadly missed. The Editorial Board too will miss his wise counselling and proficient writing. May Allah [swt] rest his soul in Eternal peace.

'TAQLEED' Explained

The Chairman of the Federation, Alhaj Habib Mulji sought clarification from Ayatullah Al-Ozema As-Seestani on Taqleed and the respected Marja replied as follows:

"In case the Muqallid had been a Muqallid of some late Maraji' [R.A.] and at present, he cannot, through any Shar'i way, recognise whether the Marja' was A'lam or the present one is, and he thinks that they are probably equal, he can follow the alive Marja' in issues he likes; unless in a certain issue he makes sure where a precept is obligatory - e.g. one Marja' says that in such a case Salat must be said Qasr whereas the other one says it must be said Tamam. In this case then, he must attend precaution [i.e. say his prayer both Qasr and Tamam in the example given above]. And God is All-Knowing."

The Chairman passed this reply to Hujjatul Islam Seyed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi for explanation who responded as follows:

1] Shar'i method to ascertain A'lamiyyat between two Mujtahids includes personal knowledge, testimony by two 'Adils who are in a position to know and/or Shiya'- which may roughly be translated as general recognition.

2] The reply of Ayatullah Al-Uzma Seestani is applicable to a Muqallid who is unable to ascertain through any Shar'i method whether the past Marja' was A'lam or the living one is: yet he thinks that both were probably equal. Such a Muqallid has a freedom to a certain extent to follow the living Mujtahid in all masa'il [except in certain cases which are not common].

If a layman is not in a position to ascertain the A'lamiyyat through any of the above mentioned methods and also has no idea whether the two were probably equal or not, then the directives given in this reply are not applicable to him.

In simple words, such a layman should follow the living Mujtahid only in all Masa'il.

Ayatullah Al-Uzma Seyyid As-Seestani informed Hujjatul Islam Seyed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi by telephone on 3 April, 1995 that: In case the Muqallid has no idea at all concerning the A'lamiyyat between the present and the past Mujtahid, he should do Taqleed of the present Mujtahid, and he may at the same time continue following the past Mujtahid in some masa'el if he likes.

**CITATION SUMS UP CHAIRMAN'S
TOIL, SWEAT AND TEARS!**

The following Citation was presented on the opening night of the Tri-ennial Conference to Alhaj Habib Jafferli Mulji of Dar es Salaam by all Constituent Jamaats in Africa to mark his completion of two terms as Chairman and two preceding terms as Vice Chairman.

"Murabbi Habib-bhai,

Salaam Alaikum. IN THE HISTORY of leadership of the Federation in particular, and the community world-wide in general, yours, among the rare, appeared exemplary.

YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED by words and deeds, that your decisions and actions were always such as you believed would please Allah (SWT) and benefit the community.

AND THEREFORE you always ensured that reasons prevailed over emotions and sincerity over human ego.

YOUR SERVICE AND CONTRIBUTION were distinguished by your concern for the absolute peace and unity in the entire community regardless of geographical barriers and you always chose to exercise a keen sense of foresight, of proportion and of priority, as the occasions demanded from time to time, all for the sake of peace and unity as a necessity for progress and development and also for a spiritual tranquillity.

THEREFORE THIS CITATION is an expression of sentiments as hereinabove, shared by all Jamaats, and also an expression of praise to Allah (SWT) for having inspired in the community such an enlightened leadership, and further also a message of prayers for you and your family."

Alhaj Asgherali Bharwani, Chairman of Dar es Salaam
Jamaat on behalf of all Constituent Jamaats.

Tabligh Committee seeks information

The Tabligh Committee of the Africa Federation has called for a feed-back on the present syllabus, which it originally formulated and which has been in use for several years now.

The feedback is required from Madressa Principals, Teachers and Tabligh Committees of Jamaats on syllabus content and scope, length of the syllabus, relevance to individual classes and on suggested inclusions or omissions.

The objective was to obtain useful information to help the Committee in considering a revision to the present syllabus.

The Committee has also sought confirmations from Jamaats whether guidelines issued by the Committee in 1992 for resident Alims and Zakireen are being complied with and if not, on the problems faced. Moreover the Committee wishes to know if dua translations are being recited in important months like Mahe Ramadhan and whether English or Gujrati majalis are being recited prior to the traditional Urdu preachings in Muharram.

When is the 7th?

The sixth K.S.I. Supreme Council Sports Festival was held in Nairobi in December last year, an extensive coverage of which was carried in the last issue of the Federation Samachar [Vol.28, No.3]. Readers appreciated the coverage but some wished to know when the next Festival would be played. Does the Sports Committee have any proposed dates? Let the Committee know that the vanquished are eyeing the victors for revenge! After all, competition is always healthy.

Editor.

Dar hosts historic Tri-ennial Conference amid Golden Jubilee celebrations

The 19th Constitutional Conference which is held every three years will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 14 April to 17 April, 1995 along with the 53rd Session of the Supreme Council.

About 100 participants are expected to attend. These will include the Presidents and Councilors from over 40 Jamaats from 11 African countries plus local and overseas invitees particularly from Pakistan, India, UAE, Europe, Canada and the USA.

The Session will bid farewell to the current Chairman of the Federation, Alhaj Habib Mulji who will be vacating his post to make way to his successor in line with the Constitution which bars reelection of a Chairman for a third consecutive term.

Alhaj Habibbhai has been the Chairman of the Africa Federation for the past six years. Before becoming Chairman, Alhaj Habibbhai served six years in the position of Vice-Chairman thereby bringing his cumulative period of service from the helm to a period of 12 years.

The Community has few of such experienced leaders and it is hoped that Alhaj Habibbhai will stay accessible to the incumbent team and to the Community at large for consultation and advice.

During the Session, religious (tabligh), social, welfare, educational and general planning issues are discussed when annual reports are received from 11 committees for adoption. Yearly audited accounts and budgets are also approved during the Session.

Proceedings will mostly be in Gujrati as some participants are expected to come from non-English speaking countries.

The Session has special significance this year because it coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the Federation. The Golden Jubilee Anniversary Committee has arranged various programmes to mark this historic occasion including a Grand Banquet at the Diamond Jubilee Hall on 15 April, 1995 during the run of the Conference. A Golden Jubilee Souvenir Publication is also expected to be produced by a Souvenir Committee to cover the celebrations and to highlight important events in the history of the Federation.

The 50 years Celebration Committee under the Chairmanship of Alhaj Roshan Fazal declared the 17th day of Rabi-ul-Awwal as a common day for the purpose of presenting mementos to the children born and to the newly wed couples, for the celebration of the 50th anniversary. Jamaats have been requested to record and submit pertinent details of marriages and births taking place on that day.

The Committee has also suggested that Madressas and the Ladies Sections of our Jamaats should organise special sessions to raise awareness of our children on the importance of the Federation and the role it continues to play in the Community. The suggestion is for such sessions to be held after publication of the Souvenir Golden Jubilee publication which will contain historic information pertaining to the fifty years gone by.

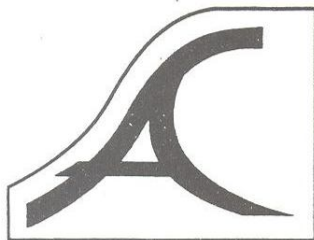
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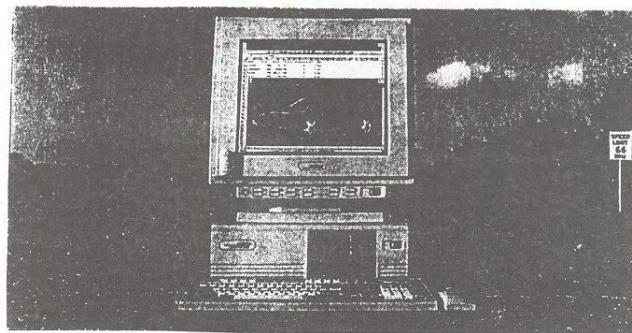
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COUNCIL DELEGATION MAKES HISTORIC TOUR OF INDIA

In the 50 years' history of the Federation, this was the first delegation ever and it was a tour across almost entire India from west to south and then to east, north and back to Bombay in the west. This was the first time ever for a regional Federation to undertake such an extensive tour over a tight period of four weeks.

The five man delegation was led by the Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji and also comprised Alhaj Mohamed Khalfan of Dar es Salaam, a Trustee; Alhaj Mohamed Hassam of Dar es Salaam, Hon. Treasurer; Alhaj Ramzanali Nanji of Nairobi, Trustee and Alhaj Ali Sheriff of Arusha, Councillor.

The delegation left Nairobi after the culmination of the Supreme Council Sports Festival on 29 December, 1994 and commenced the tour in Bombay from where they visited Hyderabad, Bangalore, Patna, Lucknow, Delhi, Agra and a number of villages and small centres in the proximity of the cities before arriving in Gujarat.

In Gujarat, the Jamaats visited were Ahmedabad, Mahuva, Khutawda, Kikirya, Rajula, Palitana, Una, Kodinar, Talaja, Vijpadi, Bhavnagar, Shihor, Vartej. In Kutch the delegation visited Bhuj, Mundra, Nangalpur, Kera, Mandvi and other small centres.

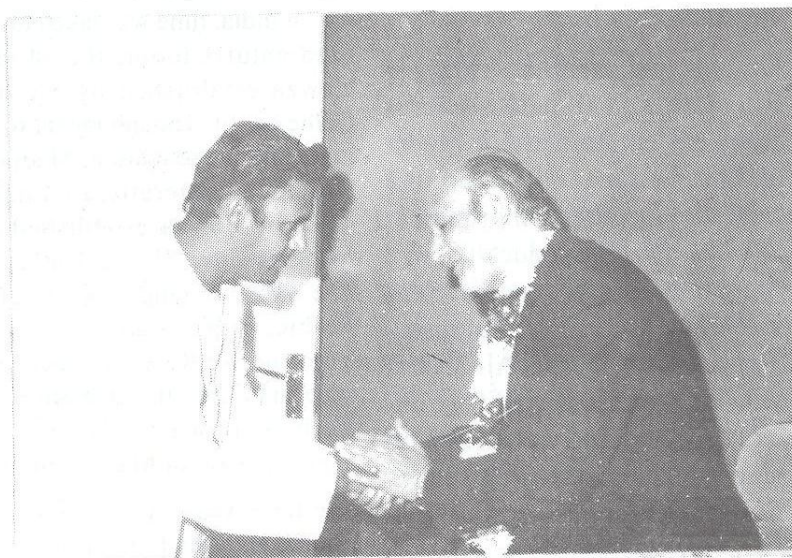
In response to invitations over recent years, from various organisations, on different occasions, the tour of India had been on the agenda since 1993 but owing to a busy calendar for the Chairman and the difficulty of fixing a common convenient timing for a month long tour in apt weather by a delegation, the tour was repeatedly delayed.

During the visit the delegation inspected projects, discussed the structure and activities of organisations and exchanged views with local leaders with an objective of fostering unity, brotherhood and co-operation. Discussions towards promoting religious and higher education and on the welfare of Community brothers, especially the sadaat families, were also held.

Host Institutions and Jamaats held several programmes for the visiting delegation and in some of such occasions the Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji addressed the well-attended gatherings in Gujarati. The largest congregations, wherein a great number of Jamaat members attended, were in Mahuva, Bhavnagar, Bhuj and at other Jamaats in Gujarat. In Bombay, two functions were arranged one of which was by the Bombay Jamaat and the other by the K. S. I. Jame Masjid, Madressa and Imambara Trust.

At both occasions, the Chairman addressed the gatherings, advising the large local Jamaat to join the membership of the World Federation, saying that such a big Jamaat could not afford to

[...continued on page 20]



The President of the Kutch Federation, Rajabali Gulamhusein welcomes the Chairman of the Africa Federation to a session wherein official talks were held. Also present at the session were representatives from five Kutch Jamaats.

[...from page 19]

remain isolated from the global stream of unity. He also answered questions to dispel any apprehension or misunderstanding which subsisted on constitutional aspects and rights of membership with the World Federation.

The theme in all discussions was to call for unity amongst the Khoja Communities world-wide under the World Federation and the need for education - - two aspects which are a prerequisite for the survival of our Community as a tiny minority in the ethnic, sectarian and racial multitude of masses.

Some Institutions which were visited were hitherto unknown but were seen to be struggling to keep up with their part in the vast field of services to the needy.

In the course of the tour, the welfare, educational, housing and entrepreneurial needs of the deserving sadaats was always looked into. Noteworthy was the pitiable 'existence' in Hyderabad, Bangalore, Bihar, Lucknow and in Govandi, Bombay.

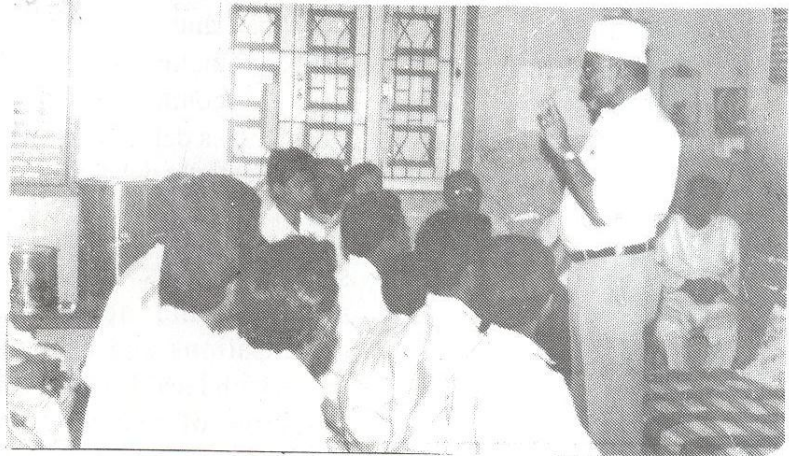
Options and facilities available for male and female students from Africa to acquire higher and professional education in a relatively secured environment and also religious education in a more homely and conducive environment were also scrutinised. To this effect, Bwana Ali Sheriff who is also a member of the Education Board and an advisor on Hawza matters, has prepared informative reports.

The delegation is pleased to reminisce the great affection towards the Africa Federation far and wide across India. In Calcutta

for instance, the delegation was only in transit but yet, a Trustee (who was also a Seyyid) of a local institution came to meet them. At all places the delegation was hosted with warmth and kindness and departures were always a sad occasion.

The success experienced on the visit underlines the fact that peri

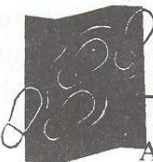
odical tours overseas, especially of India are instructive, morally compelling and spiritually satisfying. Such visits also give first-hand insight of the realities thereby enabling obligations to be handled with prudence whereby projects requiring priority can be given due precedence.



Alhaj Ali Sheriff talking to students at a School in Mahuva.

Footsteps to Aligarh University

A report by Alhaj Ali H. Sheriff after he visited Aligarh when the Council delegation toured India.

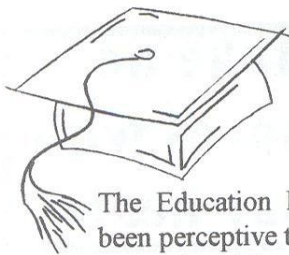


When we visited the Aligarh Muslim University in India, time was taken to visit Madinatul Uloom, the Modern Hawza established by Maulana Qalbe Sadiq. Though meant to impart religious education, Madinatul Uloom is generally an English medium Hawza established and recognised by Aligarh University. The subjects taught are English, Arabic, Fiqh, Islamic Theology, Comparative Religion, Social Science and Computer Operation. The teachers are senior lecturers or retired Professors of Aligarh University.

The three year basic course being offered is meant to train students to become scholars and leaders with vision. The Hawza was initiated on 21 March, 1994 with a batch of 12 students who were selected from

160 applicants. The minimum requirement is Form IV and passing of some IQ tests at the Hawza. The next batch of 20 students will be selected in **May, 1995** for which applications can be directly submitted to the Hawza.

The Hawza is unique because it is located on the famous University Campus of Aligarh. Selection is done on strict criteria and students are accommodated in a reasonably good hostel. The beautiful Abdul Kalam Azad Library of Aligarh University is open to Hawza students for reference. Secondary students with an aptitude for religious courses can contact the Hawza on:
Madinatul Uloom, P.O. Box 53, Sahibul Asr Manzil, Zohrabad, Aligarh 200 002, India.



Education in India -- Straight from the horse's mouth!

The Education Board has been perceptive to the increased demand for higher education amongst boys and girls. The regular Careerama Programmes for the past three years have been having their impact on secondary school students with a realisation that secondary education is only a stepping stone towards a better and secured future.

Along with educational opportunities available in Western Countries, the Education Board has sought more information on similar Educational opportunities in India so as to offer options to students aspiring to go for further education.

The Council delegation to India included Alhaj Ali Sheriff of Arusha, a member of the Education Board, to facilitate inspection of Educational Institutions in India and to get information 'straight from the horse's mouth'.

The information obtained from colleges, universities and polytechnics during the visit was invaluable and instructive. Sitings with a State Minister, professors, senior lecturers and career guides enlightened the delegation on the Indian Educational system. Noteworthy and encouraging was the offer of our brothers in India to assist our students towards seeking admission.

Up to 1975, a few of our students from East Africa continued to travel to India for a variety of courses but with the migration in the seventies and the eighties to the West, our students began looking more at the West for further education.

The Education Board has recommended India as an additional option. For foreign students the Government of India has established ED

CIL which can be contacted at the following address:

**The Educational Consultants
India Ltd. [ED. CIL.],
C - 24, Friends Colony
New Delhi 110 065, India.
Tel: 6839474 / 6836462 / 6838050
Telex: 031-66754 EDCL IN.
Fax: 6847861.**

Many developing countries have signed an agreement with this establishment to handle applications from their countries. A student aspiring to go for further studies to India after his secondary education is required to send his results or terminal report indicating the course and his preference of any particular College or University. This has to be done in March or April each year. ED CIL in Delhi submits the papers on students behalf, obtains admission if minimum requirements have been met and informs the relevant Indian High Commissions abroad to issue the pertinent Student Visa. This is a cost saving service rendered by ED CIL. Students who travel to India on a Tourist Visa, on obtaining admission in an educational institution, have to return to their country of residence to obtain Student's Visas. Such a Visa cannot be obtained in India under any circumstances. This was important information given to the delegation by the Tanzania High Commission in New Delhi and was reconfirmed with ED CIL.

The Educational facilities in India are in many ways similar to the ones available in the West. The Education Board can now guide students in secondary schools on the course options available and it is recommended that students refer to the Board when in Form Four.

Amongst the courses available are some useful and interesting job-oriented courses which do not require Advanced Secondary Education (ASE). At the Women's Polytechnic in Bangalore a variety of practical courses were seen to be offered exclusively for women. And as for professional Medical and Engineering Courses, it is suggested that Advanced Secondary Education [ASE] be done in India to enable students to stand a better chance of selection in these courses which are highly competitive. The Indian qualifications of professional courses are recognised all over the world.

The Board recommends prospective students to consider applying to Institutions in Pune [Maharashtra], Hyderabad [Andra-Pradesh], Bangalore [Karnataka], Lucknow and Aligarh [Uttar Pradesh]. Good Educational Institutions were noted at these centres and religious facilities during Muharram and Ramadhan are adequate with helpful people in case of need or assistance.

It was interestingly noted that French speaking students from Francophone countries also seek admission in India to get the opportunity to pursue higher studies and to learn English. Special English Classes are arranged for such students to prepare them to follow lectures in English. Students from Madagascar, Mauritius and Re-union may wish to consider this opportunity.

The Board's findings are not exhaustive because India is a vast Country but the initial details obtained are encouraging. Follow-up visits will be required in future to update information with the objective of enabling our students to obtain the best higher education at cheaper costs.

Handling death

by Naushad Suleman, Consultant Psychiatrist, Birmingham.

Sooner or later all of us unfortunately have to suffer the death of someone we love and care for. Those of us in the caring professions often think or talk very little about this event even though it occurs around us fairly often. Death is a fairly common occurrence and the people who have cared for the individual almost go through the same stages of bereavement, as do their respective families.

Initially we are often protected from these feelings by our professional allegiance which makes us dutybound to care for those who have passed away and then completing the necessary arrangements and breaking the news to the relatives, some of whom could be having an intense attachment to the person we cared for. But eventually we also are left to cope with facing the death of someone we have known and loved.

Grieving takes place after any sort of loss but the one which perhaps affects us most is the death of someone we love whereby feelings take a while to be understood, worked through and eventually resolved.

A few hours or days after the event, most people go through a phase of shock and emotional numbness. There is often little or no belief that the event actually happened and denial, however brief this may be, is often the main emotion we then go through.

After several days or even months, this is replaced by a stage of yearning and 'want' for the bereaved person. At times this may lead to a significant degree of agitation during

which it may be difficult to relax.

Recurring thoughts and dreams may be disturbing and the sleep cycle is often distorted. There may even be periods of time when one sees or imagines the dead person around them. These feelings are often complicated by those of anger and guilt, though in some cases this is replaced by some sort of relief, particularly if the person has died from a painful or prolonged illness. Sometimes there is late anxiety which is strongest two weeks after death and is followed by a depressive phase when the carers often become fairly withdrawn and silent.

A stage of resolution then follows and the person may gradually return to a stage of 'normality' often lasting several months and this is when acceptance of the loss becomes a part of our new lives. The stages overlap very often and the thoughts of people fluctuate between them, but more importantly the variations in thought are seen and accepted as normal. Personal factors, individual families, support systems, social and cultural factors also impede upon the way we deal with death and every time there are variations in the way society deals with death. Similarities across cultures are also common.

As carers we bear the responsibility to be able to comprehend and handle the emotions expressed by ourselves, colleagues and the relatives of the patient. We are also dutybound to be sensitive towards those afflicted with the loss and to help them by providing varying degrees of support.

Take no chances with your heart

Elevated blood cholesterol is a major cause of coronary heart disease and lowering high blood cholesterol levels will reduce the rate of coronary heart disease.

People should become aware of their blood cholesterol levels. Adults and children with a family history of elevated blood cholesterol or heart disease should therefore be screened regularly.

The general population should attempt to lower the average cholesterol level with a diet that is lower in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.

Individuals at moderate risk of heart disease should lose weight, lower fat intake, especially saturated fats and restrict dietary cholesterol. Those with a high risk of heart disease may need additional medical and dietary treatment.

The following steps can make a difference in your cholesterol level and your heart health over the long run.

- Cut down on red meat like beef and lamb;
- Eat fish and more fish;
- Avoid fried foods! (Broil, boil or bake);
- Drink skim or low-fat milk;
- Use safflower, sunflower, soya bean or corn oil;
- Choose juicy, ripe fruits for dessert and snacks;
- Let whole grains be the choice for breads, muffins, cereals.
- Don't rely on cheese, it's often 75% fat.
- Eat chicken or turkey products (no skin!) for sandwiches or dinner.
- Eat vegetables, raw or lightly steamed for the main course or snacks.

In America, heart disease is still the number one killer but deaths from heart attacks have fallen more than 30% since the late 1960's because many people have improved their lifestyles by exercising more, eating healthier and giving up cigarettes. Better control of high blood pressure and better medical care in hospitals also help to curtail coronary death rates.

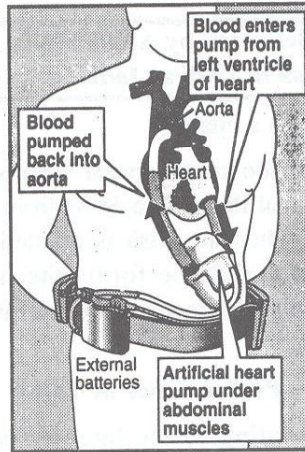
Battery-powered hearts offer hope to heart patients

In August, 1994 a 62 year-old man was implanted with a permanent battery powered heart at the Papworth Hospital in Cambridge, England in an operation which promises to transform the prospects of thousands of heart-failure sufferers and which may eventually replace heart transplant operations.

Previously, battery-powered hearts were only used temporarily whilst patients waited for donor hearts. Transplant operations are limited because of the unavailability of enough donor hearts and this new procedure certainly gives hope to many who need a permanent treatment for heart failure.

The Hospital is carrying out a series of tests to see if battery-operated hearts offer a better quality and length of life than existing drug therapy. This American-made heart is known as a Left Ventricular Assist device. It takes over most of the work done by the left ventricle, the heart's main pumping chamber and is powered by a battery pack attached to a belt the patient is required to wear.

The consultant cardio-thoracic surgeon who led the operation team said that the implant might "one day" be used to replace transplants but at this stage surgeons are treating the prospect with caution.



The importance of this trial is that it is the first time that this particular concept has been examined for long-term use in heart failure but any new technology has to be adequately evaluated in terms of clinical, technical and quality of life outcome, as well as cost, before being adopted for use in health services.

The patient who received the implant has requested anonymity but was reported by the U.K. Daily Telegraph newspaper to be "very well and in good shape" after the implant.

The cost of this new treatment is about Sterling 50,000 per patient which is double the Sterling 26,500 cost for a heart transplant. Nevertheless if the treatment is adopted for public health systems, costs are expected to drop.

Warning to non-smokers

Leading doctors are now demanding that second-hand smoke be officially declared as carcinogenic (cancer-causing).

Studies have showed that sidestream smoke from a burning cigarette, to which non-smokers are exposed to, actually has a higher concentration of toxic substances than the mainstream smoke inhaled by a smoker.

There is also more tar and nicotine in sidestream smoke along with other carcinogenic substances while carbon monoxide is said to be two to fifteen times higher in sidestream smoke.

Medical analysts say that non smokers are also exposed to mainstream smoke which a smoker exhales after each puff and that in a confined space like a closed room, the non-smoker breathes almost the same amount of cancer-causing substances as the smoker himself.

It is well known that wives and children of smokers are more susceptible to colds, bronchitis and pneumonia and now could also be vulnerable to cancer.

Being able to breathe clean air is a basic human right and smoking should be categorised as a public nuisance with smoking being banned in public areas.

Weight-lifting or resistance training is now an integral part of any fitness programme, increasing both muscle strength and bone mass. Many athletic injuries such as runner's knee are caused by muscle weakness and joint instability which weight training can offset.

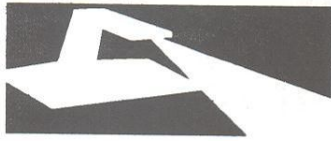
With weight training, results do not take time to show. Even if you have never done it before, you

Pumping iron



can increase muscle mass by 50 per cent.

There are a wide array of variable-resistance machines available on sale or for use at health clubs which all make weight training even more easier to undertake. One's programme should work all the major muscle groups and should be adapted to one's age and the size of one's body.



Shedding light on Nazar Manta

An abridged version of a speech delivered by Alhaj Mulla Abdur Rasul Khaki of Mombasa in 1975 at Jadini.

Nazar is a vow, a voluntary undertaking of an act of virtue, binding oneself in gratitude for some special favour prayed for. It is a solemn promise to God. Nazar is of importance in the performance of religious duties and types include:

- a) Nazar Bir (Shukra - Thanks) - If a particular wish is fulfilled then to undertake to do an act of virtue;
- b) Nazar-e Istidfa'e baliyyah - For removal of bala'a i.e. overcoming a difficulty. e.g. The Nazar of Imam Ali, Bibi Fatimah and Bibi Fizza;
- c) Nazar-e Zajaro Tanbih - Nazar of reprimanding oneself for committing a sin. e.g. If I backbite I shall be bound to pray two rakaats of namaz etc.

Apart from the above three conditional nazars, the fourth type of nazar is unconditional and is known as "Nazar-e Tabarrua": e.g.

- i) To bind oneself to pray Namaz-e Shab during the month of Ramadhan, for the sake of Allah [s.w.t.].
- ii) For the sake of Allah [s.w.t.] to refrain from a particular misdeed.

Whenever a man is in distress, whenever a man is surrounded by endless problems, he naturally turns towards the Almighty and craves for his assistance. God says in the Holy Quran: 'Verily who is the one who listens to the calls of the distressed, renders assistance and solves the problems?'

Nazar is a media by which a human being seeks assistance and pleasure of God. Whenever one prays to God for assistance or otherwise, it is laid down that one should go through a media that can take him to God. Nazar

is such a media.

A person keeps a nazar when seeking a fulfilment of a desire from God and when the wish is granted, the person then performs the nazar thereby also increasing one's faith in God.

Performance of Nazar

According to the late Mujtahid, Sayyed Abul Kassim Al-Khoei, the nazar can be performed in the following manner:

- 1) It is essential that a nazar should be kept for the SAKE OF ALLAH. It is essential to say "LILLAHILALAYYA" whilst keeping nazar. If the above condition is not met, then a nazar does not become binding.
- 2) A sensible person of matured age with his own will and intention can keep a nazar. A nazar kept under duress or under emotion is not however valid.
- 3) The nazar of an extravagant is not valid.
- 4) If a husband asks his wife not to keep nazar and whilst performing nazar, the rights of the husband are likely to be encroached upon, then the wife cannot possibly keep a nazar. However, if the husband has granted his permission, he cannot subsequently stop his wife from performing the nazar. But if she has kept a nazar whereby whilst performing such a nazar the rights of the husband are encroached upon, then it is not advisable for the husband to stop the wife from performing such a nazar. However the husband still maintains the right to stop his wife if his rights are being encroached upon.

5) Whilst keeping a nazar one should be capable enough to perform it. If the performance of the same is not within his bounds then the nazar is void. e.g. If one keeps a nazar he will go to Kerbala on foot, then such a nazar is void as it is not practical.

6) A nazar cannot be kept to give up "WAJIBAT" (voluntary deeds); or to carry out MAKRUH or HARAM deeds i.e. (forbidden deeds).

7) A nazar should always be performed in accordance with the original intentions. For instance, if one keeps a nazar to give charity or say prayers on a particular day, then such a nazar should be performed on that very particular day and should not be postponed to another day.

8) Non performance of nazar or violation/s in performance of nazar would necessitate the imposition of "KAFFARO" i.e. Penalty. The "KAFFARO" penalty includes payment:

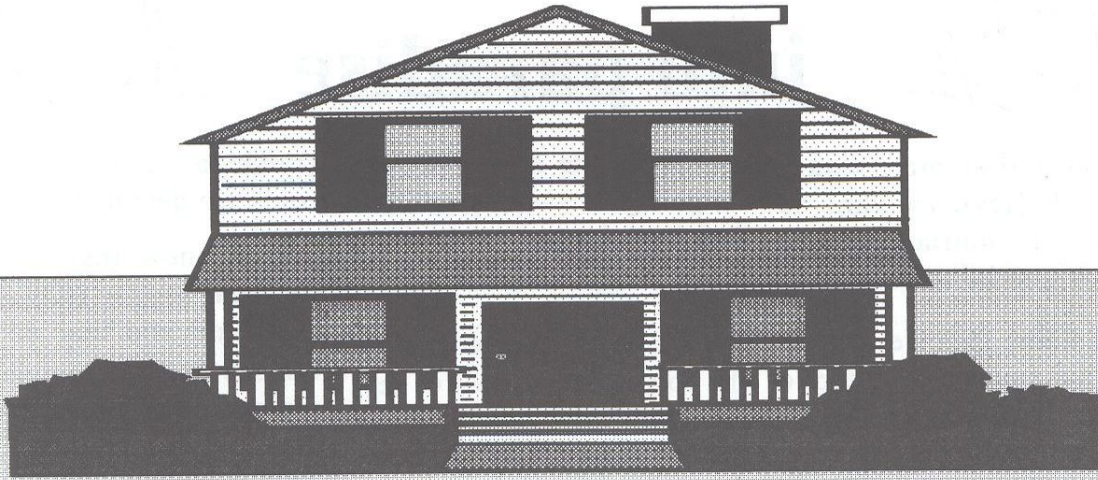
- i) To feed 60 poor people; or
- ii) To fast for two consecutive months.

9) If a person keeps a nazar to fast on a particular day and he intentionally does not fast on that particular day, then he shall have to keep 'KAZA' and at the same time pay "KAFFARO". However, if he is prevented from fasting on that particular day because of genuine reasons, e.g. if he falls sick or if he travels for Haj Pilgrimage, etc., then he shall have to keep "KAZA" with the "KAFFARO" being absolved.

10) If a person has kept a nazar to give a certain amount in charity on a particular day and he dies before the due date, then the said amount shall be given in charity out of his estate.

The laid down rules of nazar-manta are important and the community needs to be enlightened.

THE SECRET...



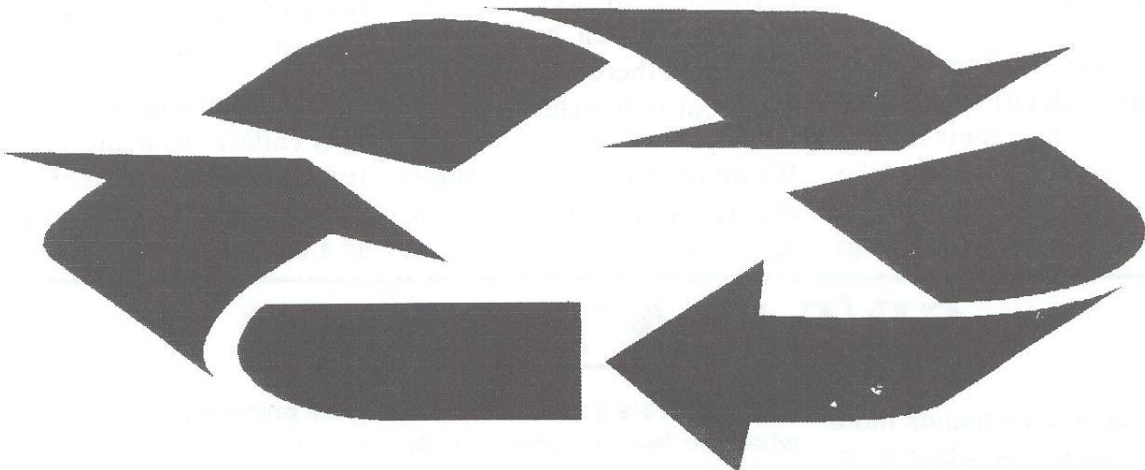
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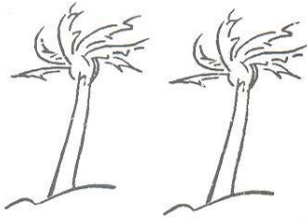
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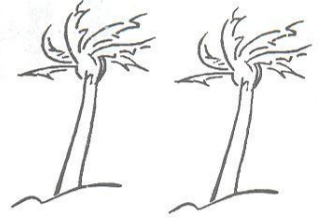
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We can't sneak into paradise



It is said that man would readily believe in what he knows to be untrue; because he likes it to be true.

We do know that we are not infallible (maasum); we pile up sins by failing to meet, now and then, our obligations to God and to society at large. We also know that that Tauba (penitence) is essential for forgiveness, that God is Just and that every soul shall bear its own burden and not a single deed, however tiny, will be found missing in the records of our deeds. And yet we believe in a short-cut or easy admission into Paradise, regardless of our mis-behaviours, mis-demeanours and mis-deeds.

There are some faiths (mazhab or deen) which guarantee Heaven to their followers on very easy terms, like, as examples, having merely a belief in a certain ideology

(aqida) or the dead body undergoing certain rituals before burial or a burial with a written intercession note.

We can imagine what can be the conduct and deeds of persons who do not entertain any fear of accountability on the Day of Judgement, when God describes the fear and horror of the Day in the Holy Qur'an. Even good souls will remain concerned regarding their fate. Each soul will worry about its own self and blood relations, family ties and former friendships will be of no avail.

All Praise is due to Allah [s.w.t.] that, despite some confusing preachings, we have not fallen prey to the belief that there exists an easy short-cut to heaven for us.

We do ignore all those tempting guarantees that there are easy ways for the sinful to

sneak to where the saintly souls are destined.

We do know that in Islam, wajibaat supported by Imaan is central and that no traditions or devotional rituals can replace wajibaat at the centre or displace it from the centre. This is because wajibaat has its own importance whilst the devotional traditions and rituals have a religious significance of their own.

To achieve 'Qurbat' to God and the proximity of Maasumeen, a good mu'min cannot be daunted by the challenges of wajibaat and instead start looking for short-cuts because all the wajibaat, according to the Holy Qur'an, are within the capacity of man.

There is definitely intercession (Shafa't) on the Day of Judgement but ironically for those who never banked on it as a back-door to Paradise.

GIVE IT A THOUGHT!

If you talk to your friends more than to your spouse about problems in your marriage, you sure should be in serious trouble!

If you allow someone to make you angry, you will have let him conquer you.

A better name for aging would be growing!

Always there is a space between what you feel and what you do and in that gap all human sadness lies.

If you are lonely when you are alone, you are in bad company.

Faith always overcomes fear.

Hatred is like acid. It destroys the vessel that holds it.

Work enjoyed is as much fun as leisure

Worship is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.

A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.



Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

NATURAL THERAPY

Many of us harbour the ambition of living good and healthy lives, a life in peace and with minimum or no body ailments. Familiar curatives like consuming good food and water, avoiding smoking and drinking, exercising, staying away from polluted environments and toxins like pesticides or getting a full night's sleep to bring out the clear happy side of the mind are well known.

Nurturing positive emotions, being tolerant and pleasant towards everyone, acting on due reflection and not on impulse, refraining from anger and criticism and similar positive traits also do help in developing a penchant for love and care. Anger and criticisms [restricted to the moment] may however be justified at times to bring out constructive changes or to wipe out negligence or crime -

justified anger when expressed also releases the heated pressure in you!

On the same count, by allocating time daily for play, humour, relaxation, praying and to good company including the family, one draws closer to developing a stature of serenity.

However to really get one's senses purified one needs to associate with nature. For example the reflection of the primeval phenomenon of a sunset is visible in a thousand utterances to the creative mind and similarly when one spends time outside in nature by say walking on the sea side or amidst the greenery of trees or by listening to the singing of birds or the rustling of trees, one can actually feel one's senses being purified.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods where none intrude or in the rapture of the lonely shore or in the deep sea which radiates a music in its roar. The pleasures are not there to be seen with our eyes but to be felt by our hearts. If you reside in Dar es Salaam, try an early morning walk [with a blank mind] on the street adjacent to the Botanical Garden and amidst the friendly chirping of birds you are likely to experience the pleasure of tranquility which nature provides.

The reason for the sublime simplicity in the works of nature lies all too often in the sublime short-sightedness of the observer because the natural world is so dynamic that from the expanding universe to the hair on a baby's head, nothing is the same from one moment to another. Deviation from nature is a deviation from happiness. Let us all draw peace by being truly observant of our natural environment.

The holy Qur'an also encourages us to consider the spiritual dimension. **"Do they not consider the spiritual dimension of the heavens and the earth and whatever things Allah has created." (7:185).**

AT DEATH'S DOOR....

Last month I had to attend two funerals of people I knew well. When paying homage to the deceased, I was obsessed with the reality of death and on how ephemeral our lives are.

Descending into the grave with a dead body shrouded in white, brings one closest to the reality of death and with it also comes a realisation that in the few years [or days] to come we also will enter the grave, not to bury but to be buried!

Death is destined for us all but when someone close to us passes away we are more reminded of our mortality though in due course many of us

forget and carry on living as if we are to live eternally.

In the game parks when a pride of lions attack a herd of wildebeests and kill one for their meal, the wildebeests all dash away to protect themselves, fully aware of the danger poised by the lions. Yet soon thereafter the same wildebeests graze in the same area leaving themselves vulnerable to yet another lion attack. Human beings who only remember of death when a close one dies are like the wildebeests because instead of accepting the reality of death and moulding their deeds to prepare for the

hereafter they treat the subject of death as a taboo thereby not feeling any guilt for wrongdoings done in this temporary world.

The world is like a transit lounge at an airport. All passengers in the transit lounge [irrespective of sex or age] leave the lounge when their flight time is ready whilst at the same time a new lot of passengers enter the lounge to also await their flight time. A person is born to die and at birth one enters the transit lounge to await one's flight time! Death may come too early or too late but let it not find us in a state whereby we cannot face our Creator!



Islamic Justice

by Mohamedali Pardhan, Barrister-in-Law, Karachi

However when we glance at the Shariah we get a different type of justice from what we normally are used to in our day to day affairs. Shariah or Islamic Justice tells us to be fair and just with all, even if it is against your own self or parents or close relatives - - this is in Ayat No:135 of Sure Nisa.

Justice is to do right and to handle affairs fairly. It is the opposite of oppression, deceit and wrong doing. All human beings are endowed with a sense of justice. However environment and upbringing may affect one's sense of justice.

We may divide Justice into three categories;

- a) Divine Justice or Adl is a belief and assigned only to God, the Almighty Allah [SWT];
- b) Legal Justice or Law of the Land is based on man-made laws;
- c) Shariah or Islamic Justice is based on the laws derived from the Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet and his progeny or as enunciated by the learned in law.

There are over 31 Ayats on Justice in the Quran. Most refer to the sins people commit or in the past, have committed. For example those who commit sins prohibited by Allah [s.w.t.] will be dealt with on the Day of Judgement with Adl or Divine Justice. In the same manner those who killed or tortured the Messengers or Prophets sent by Allah will also be punished without any injustice being done to them.

Similarly Sure Maida, Ayat No:8 tells us that justice is nearer than piety from Allah's point of view. And then we have a very famous Ayat in Sure An-Aam nos:152/153 about what real Justice means to Allah. In this Ayat, Allah first tells us what is forbidden: do not associate anything with Allah: do not kill your children or approach the property of orphans with bad intentions etc. etc.. and then goes on to tell us to give full measure and weight, to behave with kindness to parents etc with a general statement that Allah does not impose on any soul a duty beyond his capacity. This is real Justice. Now let us examine ourselves and delve deeply into our actions and speech. Do we really come up to this measure? Do we practice clean and fair deeds? Can we not try to live up to what Allah desires that we do.

Finally we may look into the wisdom of Hazrat Ali when he talks about FAITH in Nahjul Balagha Saying No: 30. He says Faith has four pillars namely Patience, Conviction, Justice and Jihad (Struggle).

He states that each of these has four aspects. The four aspects of Justice are: a) Understanding of a problem

or matter in hand; b) Deep knowledge of the matter in hand; c) Power to be able to make a decision in the matter being dealt with and lastly d) Firmness or forbearance in such a situation. He goes on to explain that in order to do real justice one must apply ones mind to that particular situation and therefore a study of the said matter is essential in order to grasp the complexity of a case or situation. And to do this one must have deep knowledge and then be able to take a decision in the matter. Once a decision is taken one must be firm on it but at times one has to show forbearance to give a chance to the one who has committed wrong or sin.

Finally you will note that normally people do not follow the law of the land. This is because it is not permanent. The laws keep changing and today's law may be amended or cancelled by a new government or a changed administration. There is no change in the law of Allah and though others argue that Shariah should be amended to suit the times, Allah has prescribed the law of nature to be permanent and rightly so. Allah is our Patron and he would never ask us to do something which is beyond our capacity. It is only our laziness or weak desires which makes us lethargic in the performance of our duties. Only when we carry out duties with understanding can we ask for true and just compensation. Reading and understanding of the Holy Quran is thus a must for anyone who desires to be Just and Fair in his dealings.

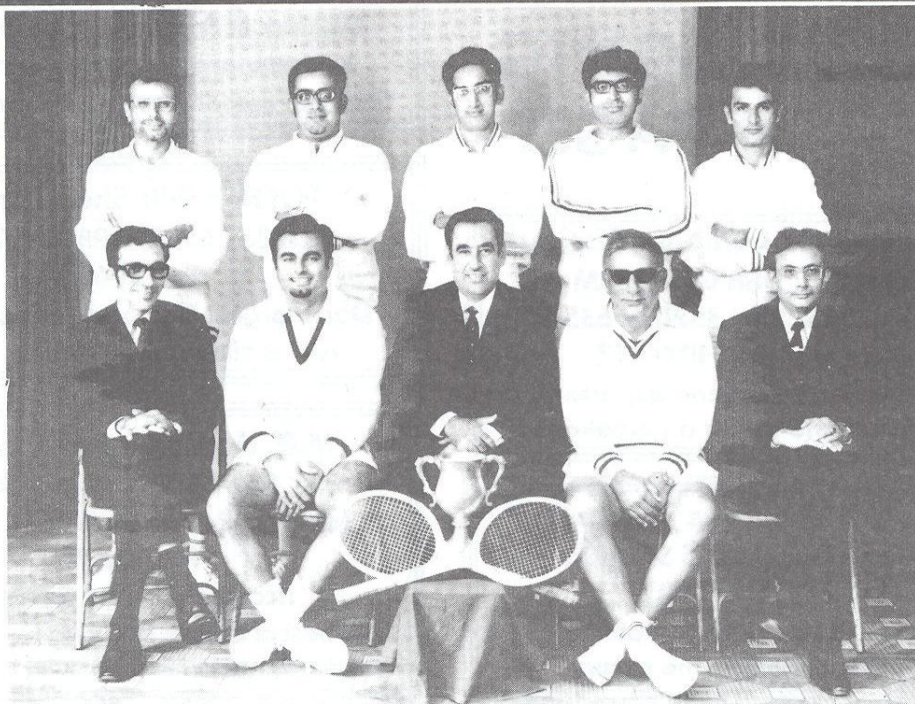
LIFE-THREATENING...

If one has a life-threatening illness: So long as one other person has survived the illness you currently have,

you can be number two. And if no one has survived the illness, you can be number one. Thinking

positively by having a true faith in Allah [swt] has been proven to even cure advance disease patients.

DOWN MEMORY LANE



The 1972 winners of the Inter-Club Tennis Tournament at Mombasa were the Jaffery Sports Club. Sitting from left to right are Hassanali G.N. Lakha [non-participating Captain], Sikander Pyarali [Captain], Abdul Moloo [Vice Chairman], Gulamhussein Khaku and Husein Dhalla R. Panju. Standing from left to right are Gulamabbas Tommy, Gulamabbas M.T., Pyarali Karim, Roshan Dattoo and Mahmood G.S. Khaku.



In 1953 at Malindi, the Ithna-Asheri Sports Club of Mombasa played a football match against the Malindi Combined side. Photo shows standing from left to right, Ebrahim H., Gulamabbas H., Pyarali R., Abbas G., Akberali H. Sitting from left to right are Mohamedali N., Ahmed R., Kassamali N. Panju, Ahmed H. [Captain], Abdul R. Sitting on the floor are from left to right, Sadiq M. and Hassanali K.



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GIRLS CAN PROPOSE FOR MARRIAGE!

O ye believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the women against their will (Quran 4:19).

Islam has given women independence in choosing their future husbands according to Islamic principles. A woman is obliged to God to choose a good, suitable partner for herself. In an effort to protect her cherished status, it is however necessary for a girl to marry with the permission of her father.

So marry them with their family's permission and give their marriage portion decently so that they live a protected life. (4.25).

The permission of the father is restricted only to the character of the prospective husband. He may only reject if he knows of and can prove some basic impediment in the character of the suitor. It is not allowed to refuse permission on merely financial or material basis.

One of the problems in our society is that a girl may know a man who can be a good husband but her father, due to such reasons as wealth, employment or other things prevents the marriage from taking place. Such actions are unislamic!

Islam has given women complete freedom in choosing a spouse save for the conditions which do not intend to restrict her freedom but, on contrary, are conclusive to maintain it. There is no such thing as "forced marriage" or "arranged marriage" in Islam.

The Prophet has said: A virgin or a widow shall not be married without her consent. Islam has not decreed that a woman should sit in hope to wait for proposals of marriage. On her own initiative, she may suggest marriage. This would normally be done through her parents.

This is because parents know more about other families and can gather information about the quality and behaviour of the new partner.

For example of this right, one has to look at the marriage of the Prophet. It was Bibi Khadija who through her friend Nafisa approached the Prophet Mohammed with the suggestion of marriage.

What about Prophet Shuaib who proposed a marriage to Nabii Mussa to marry one of his daughters? This was after having learnt the strength and boldness of Mussa who helped his two daughters to get water from the well.

As parents, when you see a good man in society and you have a good girl at home, it is your responsibility to see the possibility of marriage. It is advisable for the two persons who are to marry to see each other in the company of other people before marriage. This is to help them finally decide.

Islam permits that before proposing marriage to any woman, one should have a look at her. However, Islam is against the idea of friendship before marriage with an aim of knowing each other. This can result in children being born illegitimately and should the friendship fall, the woman's respect, honour and dignity could become questionable.

The Prophet has given a clear guidance on what qualities of women we should look for. He said: - A woman may be married for four things: for her wealth, nobility, beauty and character (religion). So look for a spouse who has a good character.

A religious wife will always bear children of good character and she will be able to upbringing the children well.

Agree to disagree!

When married couples say "We never argue," it's an incomplete sentence. Rather it should be, "We never argue in public or in front of the children" maybe. Ironically there is something wrong when two people actually agree never to disagree because life becomes dull at home.

Psychologists studying such behaviour say that certain kinds of fights can actually improve marriages. It gives mates a chance to express their anger and perhaps learn how to compromise when there are differences.

Some couples have engaged in the most dazzling wars of words and yet maintain happy relationships.

Experts contend that healthy fights develop a kind of marital efficacy that makes marriage stronger as time goes on. You just have to know when to disagree, how far to go and how to keep anger within bounds.

Who's a savage?

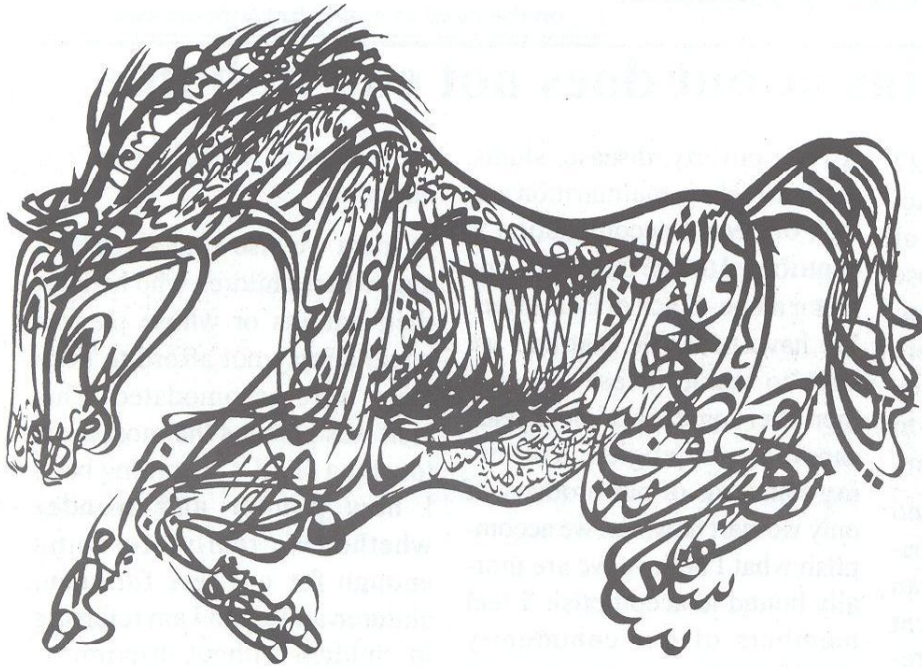
An English Professor wrote the words "Woman without her man is a savage" on the blackboard and directed his students to punctuate it correctly.

The men wrote: "Woman, without her man, is a savage."

The women wrote: "Woman! Without her, man is a savage."

The truth is that men and women need each other.

The *artistry* of Arabic script



Illustrated on the left is the work of a major contemporary artist, Egyptian-born Ahmed Moustafa who uses Arabic script as a creative medium, producing studies which take their inspiration from the Holy Qur'an.

Ahmed's compositions are calligraphically immensely accomplished. They draw upon his sound historical sense and his deep personal knowledge of the classical tradition of Arabic calligraphy. Whilst many of his predecessors showed their piety in the writing of the Holy Qur'an, he concentrated on individual Qurani verses.

Ahmed has represented Egypt in many national and international exhibitions and has also held several one-man shows.

SOME MAJOR SINS

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1] POLYTHEISM | 15] TELLING A LIE | 29] SORCERY [Visiting a sorcerer or a fortune-teller and being an attester of all they say makes one a 'Kafir' (an infidel) towards all the heavenly books which Allah [s.w.t.] has sent]. |
| 2] HOPELESSNESS | 16] SWEARING FALSELY | 30] SHOWING OFF [This includes pride and also the attitude of considering other people to be smaller or inferior to you because of your money, education etc.]. |
| 3] FEELING SECURE FROM ALLAH'S DECEPTION | 17] WITHHOLDING A TESTIMONY [meaning not to take back one's true testimony or to refrain from testimony due to fear]. | 31] EATING THE FLESH OF THE DEAD, BLOOD AND PORK |
| 4] MURDER | 18] BREACH OF PROMISE OR CONTRACT | 32] INTENTIONALLY FORSAKING OBLIGATORY PRAYERS |
| 5] SUICIDE | 19] TREACHERY | 33] NON-PAYMENT OF ZAKAAT |
| 6] DISOBEYING PARENTS | 20] STEALING | 34] FORSAKING WAJIB HAJJ |
| 7] SEVERING RELATIONS WITH CLOSE RELATIVES | 21] SHORT-CHANGING [meaning to deceive in buying and selling or in similar business transactions. | 35] PERSISTENCE ON COMMITTING MINOR SINS |
| 8] MISAPPROPRIATING AN ORPHAN'S ASSETS | 22] UNLAWFUL PROFITEERING | 36] MASTURBATION |
| 9] ADULTERY | 23] WITHHOLDING RIGHTS | May Allah [S.W.T.] purify us from our sins and protect us, Ameen. |
| 10] HOMOSEXUALITY | 24] FLEEING FROM JEHAD | |
| 11] FALSELY ACCUSING A PERSON OF ADULTERY OR HOMOSEXUALITY [also includes back-biting]. | 25] RETURNING TO IGNORANCE AFTER ACCEPTING ISLAM | |
| 12] ALCOHOLISM | 26] AIDING OPPRESSORS | |
| 13] GAMBLING | 27] IGNORING THE OPPRESSED | |
| 14] LISTENING TO MUSIC OR SINGING | 28] EXTRAVAGANCE | |



EDUCATION is a global issue. The Hon. Treasurer and Education Board member of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Hassam reminisces on his recent trip to India stressing on the need to spend towards education.

Charity begins at but does not end at home

Between December, 1994 and 27 January, 1995 I visited India accompanied by some members of the Council. The main purpose was to see at first hand the condition of our brothers down there and whether we could be of any assistance to them and also to learn a lesson or two from them.

The most striking thing I found was the sheer poverty accompanied with disease, lack of human dignity, struggle to earn a decent living and to be counted as respected members of the Community. In a country of 800 million people, approximately 200 million are Muslims of which even if 10% are Shias, that would swell the number to approximately 20 million. Not more than 2 million are above the poverty line and the rest are destined to the below par. The majority have nothing to look forward to, the dawn as meek and bleak as the dusk, the holy month of Mahe Ramadhan being no different from other months.

What has made them what they are? In final analyses we found one common factor--'Lack of education'. Nowhere did we see educated people living in slums, seven to a single room, which all in one is the bedroom, kitchen and the living room. And nowhere did we see an educated brother suffering from TB sharing the room and utensils and having no proper medical care.

All the poverty, disease, slums, over-crowding, malnutrition and lack of decent accommodation is contributed to one factor and one factor alone - 'Lack of Education'. We have to tackle that and we have to tackle it fast and only then after some ten or more years can we see the progress in the living standards of our brothers. If only we start now, can we accomplish what I believe we are morally bound to accomplish. I feel members of our community should ponder over this issue and should come up with concrete proposals on how to uplift the standard of education of our brothers in India.

While we are part and parcel of the country in Africa where we were born and earn our living, let us not forget that we have moral obligations too. Basing on the same fact that we have observed in India, let us try that every Jamaat establishes at least one school starting with Nursery and then after gaining experience to expand to the primary and secondary levels. I feel we must educate our children and when I say our children, I do not mean only the Shia Khoja children but also others'. We can do that easily because with the Grace of Allah [s.w.t.], finance is not a problem and with a little bit of devotion from some of our brothers and most of our sisters, we can provide basic education to

the masses in the country of our adoption.

In India we also visited orphanages where children who had lost their parents or whose parents could simply not afford to keep them were accommodated. This visit was perhaps the most heart touching of all. On coming back I now ponder and wonder whether we really are doing enough for our less fortunate children and again I am referring to children without discrimination of race or religion. Is there any town in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda or Madagascar where some orphan goes to bed hungry for lack of a proper orphanage or becomes a drug addict for lack of parental supervision. If so we have not fully played our part!

We may not have done all what we could have done and what we can do but it is never too late. Money spent in the cause of humanity is money spent for the pleasure of Allah [swt] and if we are seeking reward from our Lord, if we are expecting accountability to our Lord on the day of Judgement, there are so many things which we should do and we should do now before it is too late for alas no one knows when and where the end of this life comes and our prospects of facing the One who had granted us all His bounties. Not spending in His cause would mean being ungrateful to Him and that indeed is Unislamic."

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