

<sup>13</sup>  
*Federation  
Samachar*

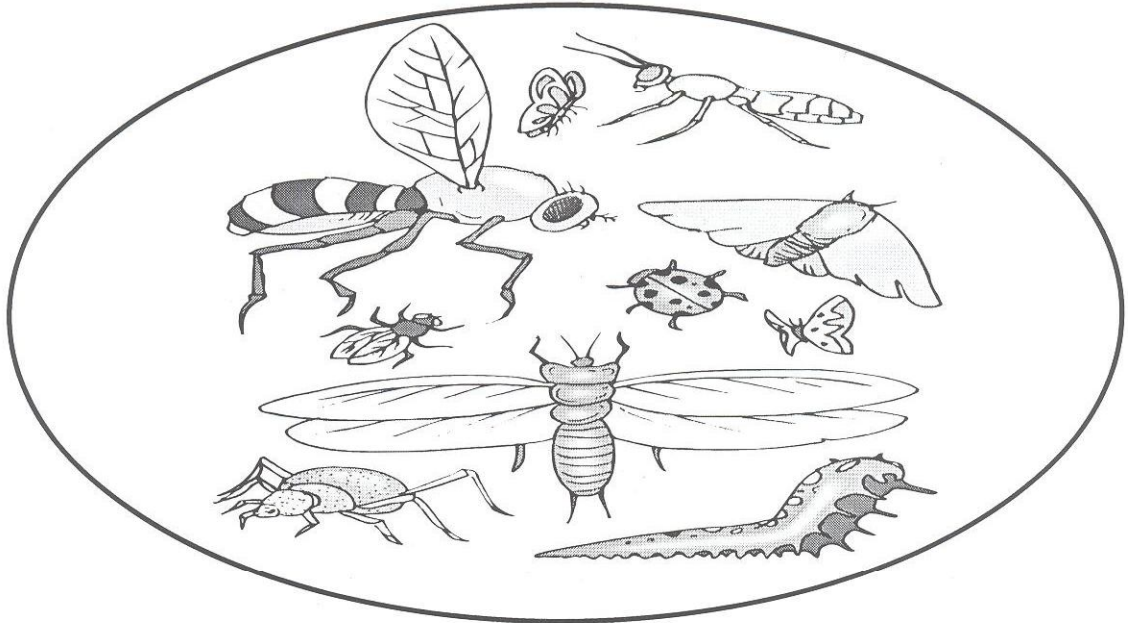
# Zanzibar hosts 57th Supreme Council Session



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## FEDERATION SAMACHAR

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**COVER PICTURE**

**The House of Wonders in Zanzibar which was formerly known as the Sultan's Palace.**

**Mulla Asghar and Mohamedbhai Dhirani embrace each other after the WF and AF reconciliation.**



## *From the Editor's Desk*

### **A healthy reconciliation but....**

The reconciliation in Dar es salaam on 2 March, 1999 between the World Federation and the Africa Federation brought to an end an unfortunate period which we hope will never transpire again. A crack in unity is always at the cost of communal progress and we congratulate both the Federations for finally coming up with an amicable solution to their differences. While it is human to err it is noble to reconcile and whenever there is a sincere reconciliation there are no losers but only winners.

While the release of the official communique on 4 March, 1999 signed by the Presidents of the two Federations attested to the revival of normal ties we believe the acid test on the effectiveness of the reconciliation will be determined by the way our meetings are conducted in future. A recurrence of what happened during the 7 June, 1997 Extra-ordinary Conference would make a mockery of the reconciliation.

If one has a retrospective view of events during and after the Extra-ordinary Conference it can be seen that there were flaws during the meeting and weaknesses in reconciling differences, something which can be attested by the fact that it took 21 months to reconcile a not so complex issue.

Generally, both the World and Africa Federation have made significant progress in different religious and secular fields but to catalyse significant improvements in ourselves we also need to spend more time strengthening our weaknesses than we do polishing our strengths. However strong we may be, we are limited in life by our greatest weaknesses.

The quickest, smartest and most effective way for us to improve is to rectify our weak points. This can probably be illustrated better by a mathematical example. Say there are three steel rings, one of which can hold a maximum of 100 kgs, the second ring can hold no more than 50 kgs. while the third can hold a maximum of 30 kgs. If any of the rings was to support more than its maximum, it would break. Now if these three rings are linked together, the greatest weight the entire ring link would support would be 30kgs. and not 100kgs. or 180 kgs. because a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The same applies to any organisation. Irrespective of how strong it is, it can be let down by its weaknesses.

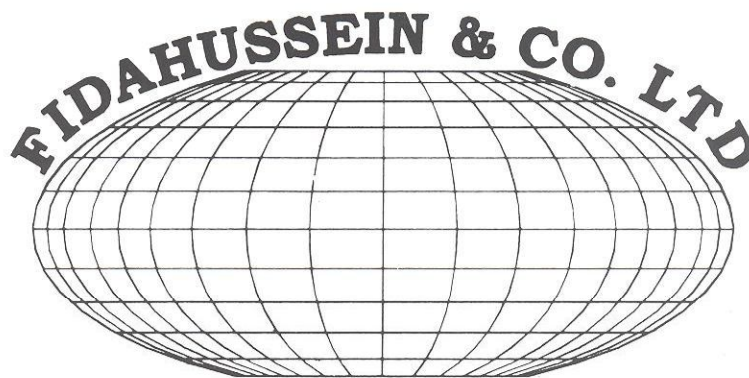
To correct our weaknesses we first need to identify them. In the World Federation and Africa Federation stand-off, the main weaknesses were officially raised by the Africa Federation to which the World Federation offered an apology for the mishappenings and assured the Africa Federation that its grievances would be entertained. Besides the main issues relating to the meeting of 7th June, 1997 other weaknesses also surfaced but it is beyond the scope of this Editorial to cover these as in any case they have been over-shadowed by the reconciliation.

At this stage may we however make a reference to the Minutes of the 4th Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation which offered explanations purported to answer the issues raised by the Africa Federation. Whether right or wrong, should these explanations not have been communicated to the Africa Federation formally by way of an elaborate letter or to the *Federation Samachar* which always vied to cover the World Federation-Africa Federation disharmony in a balanced way?

To make the World and Africa Federation reconciliation worth its weight in gold we would expect that past mistakes will not be repeated to an extent of jeopardising any of our future community meetings. With this expectation we offer our heartiest congratulations to the World Federation and Africa Federation for the reconciliation.

**Munir Daya**





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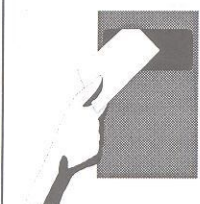
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## Your letters

Views, opinions or articles should be addressed to:  
The Editor  
Federation Samachar  
P.O. Box 6710, Dar es Salaam.

Dear brother,

## The Qur'an is amazing.....

Thanks so much for the copy of the Holy Qur'an which is such an amazing book. I also went through some of the past copies of the *Federation Samachar* which have a lot of lessons in them.

Just want to say thanks so much for the literature. I have noted that some of the things in the Qur'an are the same as the Bible. I hope that I will read until I understand. In addition to understanding religious books I believe it is also important to get along with people of all cultures, religions, tribes or colours.

Thanks so much.

Eddie

Action in Focus (A Kenya NGO)

This letter was received after the *Federation Samachar* provided the Action in Focus, a Christian Organisation with a copy of the Holy Qur'an.

Dear brother,

## In support of the HIV Resolution

I have read Dr Dhalla's letter in the January, 1999 issue of *Federation Samachar* on the above subject with interest.

Whilst debate on any community issues is welcome, the subject of HIV & AIDS in our community world-wide has been going on in meetings of the Africa Federation and World Federation for the last eight years. We have been asking the community and its doctors to 'wake up and face the issue and DO SOMETHING.' There has been a deafening silence from community leaders and doctors. Africa Federation and the World Federation have passed a resolution to take the first step - repeat, this is only the first step and done something. The resolution requires all prospective brides and grooms to undergo HIV test and the World Federation resolution goes further and requires the Thalassaemia test too.

To address Dr Dhalla's points:-

### 1. TYPE OF HIV TEST

*Federation Samachar*

The resolution by very nature can not define the type of test. It had to be broad based. Tests keep changing. It will be up to the doctors appointed by the Jamaat to decide and hence, we in the Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation and the Central Health Board of the Africa Federation are hence to guide the Jamaats.

### 2. THE WINDOW PERIOD

This issue is dealt within the guide lines issued by the Africa Federation and World Federation i.e. the test should be repeated at the time of marriage if the period between *nondh* and marriage is three months or over to cover the window period.

### 3. MEDICAL LEGAL ISSUES

a) Counselling the patient - the appointed doctor would undertake to do this.

b) Consent - the test can not be done without the consent of the bride or groom - obviously.

c) Confidentiality - the appointed doctor would see to this. The guidelines are quite clear. The Jamaat will

only perform *nikha* if it receives negative certificates from both parties. If one party is Positive, it will obviously not produce this certificate to the Jamaat. The question of breach of confidence does not arise.

### 4. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

a) Jamaats have to take a stance and can not make exceptions for the minority. Nobody can stop them from getting married but the Jamaat can refuse to marry them in our institutions.

b) This is why we recommend the test be done well before proposals are made. In any case, should such possibilities REALLY stop us from taking steps in stopping this disastrous disease spreading in our community? The doctor has a vital role when one party is found to have HIV Positive. (points *c, d, e* of Dr. Dhalla's letter are covered in point *a* above.)

### 5. FALSE HOPE AND SECURITY

I hope the community will not live in false hope. The action taken is only the first step. It will not cover those who are already married, do not want to get married or think they are too young to get married. They would be spreading the disease if they are HIV Positive. The community must do something in this area too.

### 6. WHY ONLY HIV?

Why indeed? We have to start somewhere. The reason we began with HIV is that it is a certain killer, kills the innocent partner and children and there is no cure.

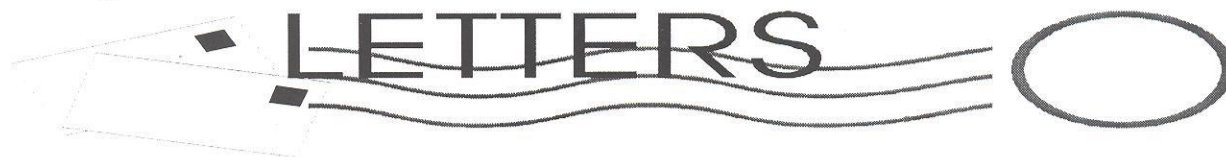
### A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

Sound and good advise - I agree. However, I cannot agree with Dr Dhalla's conclusion. The resolution should stay. The time for talking and discussions is over. We have talked for over eight years while the disease was taking a foothold in our community. It is spreading now.

Let us all wake up and act on the resolution while taking precaution of HIV & AIDS seriously.

**Dr M.T.I. Walji**  
Chairman  
Medical Advisory Board  
World Federation





Dear brother,

## From Canada with.....

I am a regular reader of *Federation Samachar* and compliment you for the wonderful work that you are doing. We who originate from Africa would like to maintain our link and your publication is an excellent instrument in preserving that link. Personally I have a long association with Africa Federation having served in as a treasurer. I follow the activities of Africa Federation and wish to comment on the following topics:-

1. *Relation with World Federation:*

This saga has prolonged for a long time and not to wind it up and settle the matter will be rated as our immaturity. With political will from both sides and our religious duty to maintain love and friendship I appeal to both the parties to meet and settle the matter in an amicable way. May Allah (swt) help us in achieving this goal.

2. The news that *Federation Samachar* will henceforth also be printed and distributed in North America comes as a relief to me and to many others. It always bothered us when we saw the high cost of postage, more than our \$20 per issue, that each issued carried. Keep it up.

3. News from your side say that the economic condition of our people there is tight. This is supported by the fact that appeals for funds for support are made locally. Is it not time that we give priority to spending community charity money locally then elsewhere? There is also a growing indigenous Shia community in East Africa whose condition calls for financial help. We can only expand this community by infusing funds for their economic and educational upliftment. This work calls for re-thinking our priorities.

Lastly, I wish to convey salaams and prayers to all our brothers and sisters and in particular to the wise and *Federation Samachar*

forward thinking leaders of our community.

**M.J.Hasham**  
5 San Romanoway # 1707  
Downsview,  
Ont. M3N 2&4  
Canada.

The World Federation and Africa Federation have now buried the hatchet.

Editor

Dear brother,

## My letter was over edited

I wish to thank you for your co-operation in publishing my letter "Stanmore-holy....." in your January, 1999 edition of the *Federation Samachar*. However, I must admit my disappointment at the way in which my letter was edited. While I accept that editing is both your job and prerogative I feel that omitting the first paragraph completely unfortunately led to the essence of my letter being lost.

My purpose of writing this letter was to point out the negative remarks made by an overseas speaker in the last Conference meeting, and the reaction of other participants to the said remarks including other brothers who had watched the video cassette here in Moshi.

I don't know how you would rectify this.

**Good Grace**  
Moshi

Thank you for expressing your reservations. The theme of your letter wished to condemn the foul language and rude behaviour in our meetings. We upheld the essence of your letter without unduly making any direct references to any individual.

Editor

Dear brother,

## Down Memory Lane provides worthy memoirs

The January 99' edition of *Federation Samachar* was very interesting especially the coverage and letters on HIV issues.

The Editorial Board is doing a wonderful job and may Allah (swt) give you strength and courage to continue this good job. I was also happy to see my grandfather's photograph on the Down Memory Lane page. These historical pictures are very interesting particularly because they inform us about the activities of our community in the years gone by. Keep up the good work.

**Dr M.H.Sheriff**  
Dar es Salaam.

Dear brother,

## Talaq article requested for

I am interested in receiving by e-mail a copy of "Sigha of Talaq" which was carried in a recent issue of the *Federation Samachar*. Thank you.

**S. Pierson**  
Virginia  
USA.

e-mail: slp2t@virginia.edu

The article requested for will be e-mailed to you.

Editor



## LETTERS



Dear Brother,

### We need to spread out...

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, and Most Merciful. *"And verily this ummah of you're is a single Ummah and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me. But people have cut off their affair (of unity). Between them, into sects: Each party rejoices in that which is with itself. But leave them in their confused ignorance for a time."* The Qur'an 23:52-54.

In the Editorial of the January 1999 issue of *Federation Samachar* it was nice to see your concern about the disunity between The World Federation and Africa Federation. It is highly imperative that our leaders shelve their differences for the sake of the community at large.

Brother, may I meanwhile point out that we Khojas may be well organised in running our institutions but do we remind ourselves enough of our brothers in India who sleep on the footpaths. Brother, I was in India and visited one of our schools where the teacher pointed out a student who had dust all over his clothes and body.

Brother, look at our love for Prophets, Ahlul Bait and Qur'an. While our Prophets, Messengers, Imams and their family gave their lives for Islam we Khojas preach inside the four walls of our centers.

Please look at our publication of Qur'an and books on Islam you can hardly find them. Prophet Muhammad (as) lived in a stone age, yet he managed to publish Qur'an on stones, animal skins, leaves etc, and we leave in 20th century cannot publish Qur'an in Swahili, Gujrati, French and English these are main languages. Imagine if we were leaving in the stone age what would have happened to us?

Aunali Khalfan  
P.O. Box 731115, Elmhurst  
NY 11373, USA.

*Federation Samachar*

Dear brother,

### What happened to our Archives?

Some twelve years back a resolution at the Conference of the Federation of Africa Jamaats was passed to establish an archives of all our important documents, newspapers, reports, periodicals, Jamaat documents and important letters etc. It was gratifying to note that immediate action to implement this resolution was taken by the secretariat. There was overwhelming support from all Jamaats and a lot of material poured in from Jamaats and individuals. Dar es Salaam Jamaat provided a premise to store the material free of any rent. It seemed then that the work of microfilming the documents, classifying and storing them would be done in a record time frame.

I personally sent some historical documents from Mwanza to the Council office. A long time has passed since anything on the subject has been heard from the Council Office. Can the office bearers throw some light on the subject and explain the lack of progress. Now that a new technology is available to store the documents on a CD-ROM through scanning and that too at a fraction of the cost of micro-filming, this very important work must proceed immediately.

Baqir Alloo  
Richmond Hill,  
Ontario L4S 1J1  
Canada.

Dear brother,

### Editorial was right to seek a reconciliation

I read the Editors Desk in the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* (Jan 99, Volume 31, No.2). Indeed the confrontation between the Africa Federation and World Federation has existed for a very long time. More serious is the fact that because our leaders are not ready to resolve this problem it can lead to disharmony among members of these organisation to the extent of compelling them to be disloyal to their leaders.

The responsibility of leaders is to put aside their political thoughts and save our communities at large. I believe that the Africa Federation is in the right position to call a meeting to reconcile this problem. By reconciling, our leaders can win the confidence of community members world-wide.

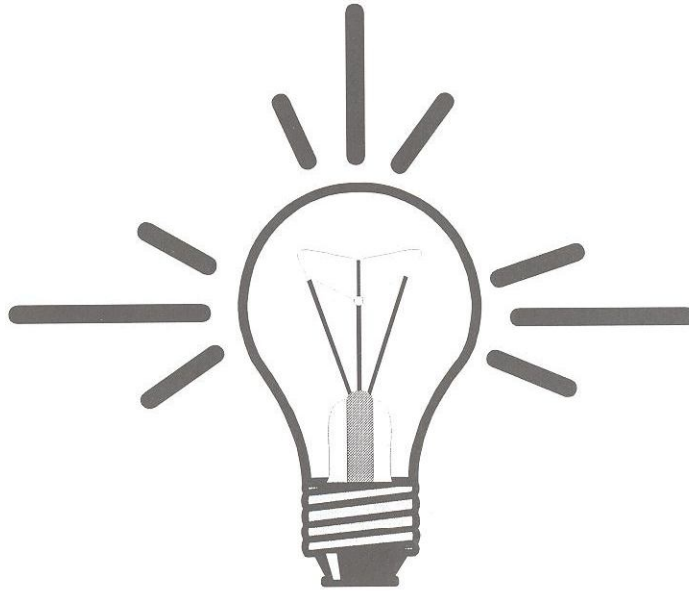
M.H. MOHAMED.  
Nakuru.  
Kenya.

The two Federations settled their differences in the first week of March, 1999 following which a Joint Communique was released by the World and Africa Federation attesting to this. This Communique is carried in this issue of the *Samachar*

Editor.



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# LETTERS

Dear brother,

## Pre-marital HIV testing is a step in the right direction but.....

I read the article on Pre-marital HIV testing in the last issue of *Federation Samachar* with interest. I have a few comments to make, and hope it will help all of us.

First of all, it is a great concern for our community. HIV has affected almost all strata of the community, and is unfortunately on the increase. There is this wrong notion that it is those who have been unaware previously who are now surfacing, and it is not an absolute increase. The prevalence among the community from various extrapolations, and in concurrence with the statistics also from the Haidery Jamaat (UK), is at about 3%. Thus, 3 out of every 100 healthy persons in the community are expected to have the virus for AIDS.

Second, ours is a closed community, and marriages are bound to occur within. There are some which occur outside the community, but these will occur anyway. If this East African community will not have the marriage, then we have Indian brides ever ready for us!!

Third, please bear in mind, that HIV is the responsibility of all. I repeat, it is a responsibility of all concerned and not only the JAMAAT. Therefore, each one should wake up from the slumber of considering oneself the purest. Finally, the question of premarital HIV testing is very controversial and is of great concern, but should not be discarded, rather it should be actively pursued. Therefore, herewith my comments.

Dr. Dhalla has pointed out with concern that bribery is rampant in our community, and this is even if it costs someone his/her life. Which I must say is a very shameful thing indeed. Therefore results can be forged and obtained with bribes. This will also mean the the provider of the result is

equally corrupt, which means the medical officer concerned.

The premarital HIV testing is actually overdue, and should be taken up seriously. As agreed unanimously that pre and post test counselling is extremely important. My concern is that, is the Jamaat in a position to provide this service to our community members, or is this task left for the medical officers concerned? Please note that counselling is not a simple task, and involves several sittings, for a measurable time, and needs to assess the attitude of the concerned. At the same time it has to be confidential, and should have the necessary back-up needed. Counselling provides all the possible options, and the choice is left for the individual, thus, the final say will still be of the receiver. Most medical officers, and the "resolutions" itself, discuss about pre and post test counselling but fail to understand the meaning of counselling all together. They are rather imposing in nature. The question of false negative, false positive and the types of tests and their accuracy is always discussed during counselling.

The question of medico-legal issues....well, the community has to wake up to realise their responsibilities. We have several members who are ready to screen a housegirl for the virus, but when it comes for the marriage, it faces a lot of resistance. Yes, those who are intrinsically guilty of the crime, will definitely shy out, instead of being bold and taking up the test for the sake of the community, for the sake of the spouse...if really he/she is concerned about it!! The doctor should not be made a middle man. Individuals should go for voluntary screening before even thinking of marriage. Those virgin boys/girls will fear nothing about this.

The results are entirely the right of the individual.

About ethics in medicine, yes, confidentiality is extremely important, however, there are clear cut lines, when the doctor is allowed to breach such confidentiality. For instance, if you advise an individual that he/she is HIV positive, and should not embark on a marriage, but despite this, he or she goes ahead to propose, then it is the moral responsibility of the doctor (if he /she is aware) to inform the opposite party. The question of families being involved does not apply, as this is a matter of an individual. Thus he/she will undertake the test alone, and only when sure of his/her status, will ask his/her parents to go ahead and look for a spouse. In case of so called love marriages, when they defy the tests, it is entirely their choice!!!

One great advantage of having a test done, is the potential of helping the concerned individual to live fruitfully. With anti-HIV treatment, and prevention of risks which increase opportunistic infections, this is something which should be taken up seriously.

Dr. Fuad pointed out the characteristics of a community where HIV screening should be undertaken viz:

1. High risk ..we are indeed a high risk community because of being an affluent mobile and closed community.
2. All pregnant women..definitely we have many pregnant women. The advantage here, is that knowing the HIV status of a pregnant women will help early administration of a drug which will decrease the chances of transmission from 27% to only 7%!!! to the offspring!!
3. Voluntary testing when the prevalence is more than 1%, while we know that our community has 3% or more.

The reason why we select only HIV among other infections is that it has a lethal consequence on both, the couples and their children. (please

(continued on page 10)



# LETTERS

(...from page 9)

note, some Jamaats recommend a genetic blood screening - thalassaemia, but here, couples do not transmit the infection to each other and the disease has no lethal effect on them. There can also be possibilities of getting a normal child using the IVF methods, so although important, it does not hold the same urgency as HIV. The other infectious diseases are either curable such as TB, or at least immunizable..such as Hepatitis B.

May I now comment on the question of Marriage being *Ibadat* and thus probably protective, as *Ibadat* is expected to be protective. Yes, absolutely, *Ibadat* is protective and there is no doubt about it. But should we consider marriage (*Ibadat*) protective for HIV/AIDS individuals? Lets not fool ourselves. Let me quote , Ayat number 2 and 3 of Sura An-Nur. Ayat 2 states: *"The fornicatress and fornicator scourge ye each of them (with) a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them keep you away from enforcing the sentence of God, if ye believe in God and the Last Day; and let their chastisement be witnessed by a party of the believers."*

Ayat 3 states: *"The fornicator marrieth not but a fornicatress or an idolatress, and the fornicatress marrieth not but a fornicator or an idolator; and it is forbidden unto the believers."*

These verses tell us that we should not marry believing man/woman to those found guilty of adultery/fornication. Let them marry the unbelievers..., because HIV infection does come from sexual intercourse (97%), and this means there is some sort of adultery/fornication( usually) and in wake of this we must protect our children. This vice which has profound effects, medically, socially, psychologically, and whatever *cally!!!* We cannot afford to be naive about it.

In a similar way we cannot allow an HIV positive individual to marry in order to save his face, he/she should be given a chance to live positively, but not of perpetuating HIV in the community.

*Federation Samachar*

Pre-marital screening should not give our community a false sense of security, if they realise that HIV is an ongoing problem and needs to be kept in the forefront at all times. It is a time bomb.

Please remember, that two individuals, when both HIV positive can marry and have sexual relations, however, the risk is when deciding to have a baby. They can have what is termed "safe sex", and be together. They could then be mutually understanding to each other.

The AF resolution says that there should be production of a "satisfactory evidence" of HIV negative status..what it means as satisfactory evidence has to be ironed out. There is a need of professional counselling bodies for the pre and post test counselling and back-up services. The Jamaat has to hold seminars with the youths, and public on this regard before imposingsuch resolutions/rules, and make the whole community aware about this. (This itself will act as a deterring factor for some to indulge in immoral sexual activities).

In conclusion may I say that pre-marital HIV screening is a way forward to protect this community from extirpation. However, it has been done in great haste. There is no proper counselling, both pre and post test. There are no back-up and supportive services, and there is no widespread awareness required for combating this malady. The endeavour is highly controversial, but should be pursued, with all the pros and cons in mind, and should involve the target population..the youths!!!

Please note, that institutes such as the AMREF, WAMATA, PASADA, EMAU (Muhimbili), and the organisation called WHY (which exists in shadows within the Khoja Shia Community of Dar-es salaam) are capable of providing professional help in this regard.

**Dr. Karim P. Manji,**  
Senior Lecturer, Muhimbili  
University College of Health  
Sciences, Dar-es-Salaam.

Dear brother,

## The bribery aspect of HIV tests need to be considered

I have read with keen interest all the responses on the pre-marital HIV test, introduced by the Africa Federation. Although I am for it, as I have previously mentioned, there are some points one has to ponder.

For example in this country a doctor in a government hospital can be bribed by a mere 10,000/- to write a a false test result and so can a Lab. Technician. Will the Africa Federation appoint their own honest doctors/technicians? So first we have to discuss not about ELISA or other methods of HIV testing but about who is going to conduct these tests!

Another point is that we have to use Majalis and other platforms to well enlighten our youths about HIV so that we change ourselves and become honest. Unfortunately there are no norms set out in AIDS and we cannot know for sure who the carriers are particularly because in this advanced era most people prefer to remain discreet.

Taking into consideration the possibility of the virus emerging after the test, maybe the only solution, if not honesty and fear of Allah [swt], should be that the test be taken one hour before the Nikah ceremony.

**Muhammad Ladak**  
Box 36, Moshi  
Tanzania.



# LETTERS

Dear brother,

## A word from Iceland....

My name is Alper Dalyan and I'm a 25 years old Turkish Shia Muslim living in Iceland. As a coincidence while surfing through the Web on the Internet, I found the Africa Federation homepage and I congratulate you for your attempt to keep brothers informed round the world.

The reason I contacted you is I'd like to improve my knowledge of Islam by undertaking courses, attending meetings, lectures and by receiving religious materials. Besides I also would like to spread Islam by introducing and explaining to the other people.

I can speak Turkish, English, German, Italian, French and Icelandic and I'm currently learning Persian. I wonder if you can also recommend me some Persian language courses in Iran. I meanwhile wish all success in your works from Allah.

**Alper Dalyan**  
PO Box 5397  
IS-125 REYKJAVIK  
ICELAND  
Fax: +354 551 5332

**We call upon the Tabligh sections of our Jamaats and the Bilal Muslim Mission to send Alper the material he requires.**

Editor.

Dear brother,

## A great magazine....

I would like to congratulate you and your team for producing, in my opinion and shared by thousands around the world, a fantastic magazine, both in terms of its contents and ease of reading.

Aesthetically it is simple but with impact. Mashallah and Inshallah Allah (s.w.t.) will grant you all Tawfik to keep up with the sterling work.

**Salim Somji.**  
Hon. Secretary, KSIJ - Hyderi Islamic Centre, London.  
*Federation Samachar*

Dear brother,

## HIV--- those about to undertake the test should seek insurance

It was with interest that I read Dr K. Dhalla's and Dr. F. Sheriff's letters in the *Federation Samachar*. I had written a letter on similar grounds in the Jan/Feb/March issue of Stanmore Newsletter and therefore I was informed of the above letter in the *Federation Samachar*. When browsing through the Africa Federation Web page on the Internet I also found this discussion on the dialogue section.

I do not intend to discuss the merits of pre-marital in this letter (an opinion of which I aired in the Stanmore newsletters). I would instead like to comment on the method the Jamaat has organised to get HIV free certificates. I believe there is no confidentiality whatsoever and I don't think I can trust the brothers/sisters in the office to keep things to themselves (my opinion).

I am not sure if ethically the doctor can send results straight to the Jamaat or whatever the arrangement is. It may work in East Africa but it would not work in a country where patient confidentiality comes first.

And are our Jamaats advising youngsters to cover themselves with mortgages, life insurance or health insurance before embarking on this test because if they test positive they would not be able to take advantage of any of these schemes.

**Dr Munir M Datoo**  
London

Dear brother,

## After all, life on earth is temporary

A temporary loss of health is one of the great blessings Allah Almighty enables his servants to experience. When one falls ill, all worldly engagements involuntarily come to a standstill — engagements about which man normally imagines that they are unavoidable.

Man comes to realise that after all he is not indispensable for the world, nor the world is indispensable for him. While a person is ill, he doesn't enjoy the food and the drinks he normally does as a healthy person. It gives him a reason to thank Allah for the numerous blessings He has made available to him, as also the accompanying abilities with which he can properly benefit from.

When illness gets more acute, one gets a real feeling of rubbing one's shoulders with death. This is when one realises that death is a serious possibility. It is this experience that actually enables one to genuinely realise the folly of one's over-involvement in unnecessary worldly pursuits.

The weakness of one's body and the acuteness of illness all help to make one realise that when our time for departure from this world comes, no one will be able to come to the rescue of our departing soul. This near-death experience is indeed needed by all of us. And indeed it comes to our service on a fairly regular basis.

How very unfortunate then that despite going through as thorough an experience as that of illness, we still find our worldly life so absorbing that we do not spare time to ponder seriously about our life-after-death?

**S. Murad**  
Dar es Salaam.



# LETTERS

Dear Brother,

## Dar had a tragic Ramadhan--- was it a month of fasting or feasting?

In the previous issue of the *Federation Samachar*, I read about the activities of the newly acquired Sports Complex of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat during the month of Ramadhan. Being a resident of Dar es Salaam, I took a keen interest in the happenings at the Complex during this holy month. The article in your issue mentioned that there had never been a Ramadhan in Dar es Salaam as the one just gone by. I pray that the residents of Dar es Salaam should never again experience another Ramadhan as the one gone by.

All the activities undertaken at the complex were indeed praiseworthy and appreciable. There has been a very conspicuous vacuum in the sports section for the ladies and the Complex has by and large managed to fill this vacuum. My concern is that, out of the 12 God-given months, why was it necessary to conduct these games in the Holy month of Ramadhan? Your article stated that this Ramadhan the ladies had an avenue for recreation and families too had a different avenue other than the Oyster Bay beach. I wonder why there's a need for an 'avenue' of 'recreation' in the very month in which we are meant to humble ourselves in the avenue of The Creator? Sure, the Jamaat did not shelve priorities as the writer was quick to point out that the Complex was opened only after Qurankhani, Dua and majlis.

But the Jamaat should have been there on the following occasion: Razia Bai Janmohamed was giving an excellent 10 minutes tafsir of Sura Rahman and requested the girls to give her 5 extra minutes. There was a big NO from the young audience. I had yet to meet a group of youngsters who had the audacity to say "no" to the legendary Razia Bai. In their eagerness to go

play their games, they gladly gave up the extra 5 minutes of tafsir – even though the Complex was not due to open in another half-hour. This was but one example of exactly what was uppermost in these youths/youngsters mind during Qurankhani, Dua and lectures. And in any case, isn't there more to Ramadhan than the standard Qurankhani-Dua-Majlis ritual after which we are free to while away the night in food, fun and entertainment?

Though we may not consciously realize it, but we get so caught up in the day to day materialism of life that we tend to lose our connection with the Creator of life and our souls get suffocated with our sins. And so Allah (SWT) in His wisdom and mercy gifted us with the Holy month of Ramadhan. Like a breath of fresh air it is meant to revive the soul. It is the chance Allah (SWT) gives us to once again get connected to Him. It is the Spiritual anchor, which we can hold onto before we get lost in the sea of materialism. The spirituality of Ramadhan is meant to counterattack materialism and release the soul from its grip. However, this victory of spirituality over materialism can only be achieved with a conscious effort on the individual's part. One washes away one's sins through tears of repentance in the solitude of after midnight supplications, namaaze Shab and a sea of rich duas taught by our Aamma (AS). These spiritually elevating acts of worship can only be done when one is free of exhaustion. This is hardly possible for those who return in the early hours of the morning and whose only thought after so much physical exertion is a cool shower and a comfortable bed with a quick reassurance that they never miss their Subh namaaz. But poor souls don't realize that this is not the month

of not missing wajib namaaz, it is the month of not missing Mustahab namaaz! Some have been honest enough to admit that they sometimes do in fact miss even this wajib morning namaaz due to the late hours. Who is to blame for this sordid situation – the individual participant? The parents? The organizers? The leaders who gave their nod of approval or the entire community who sat back and watched while their fellow brothers and sisters, children and youths wasted the entire holy month in food, fashion and fun – the very materialist tendencies that Ramadhan is meant to burn away? Yes, the Complex may have rejuvenated hidden talents, it may have achieved the objectives of the Complex but sadly, I dare say even tragically, it completely defeated the objective and the very essence of Ramadhan. The very same Complex could have been used to attract the youths with discussions and debates, congressional Dua's and Namaaze Shab. It could have been used to instill in them the essence of Fasting through lectures - and we had a gem of a lecturer this Ramadhan in Dr. Murtaza Alidina whom the youths like and listen to. Occasional rounds of games (not tournaments that grip players the whole month through), quizzes and other light entertainment could have been conducted to keep the youths from getting distracted. It could have been something of a Ramadhan 'Semi-Camp' not much different from the Nakuru and Nairobi Summer Camps (minus the buffalo!). I'm still baffled at the authority's seal of approval to the activities conducted at the Complex in Ramadhan. Can we know the reasons behind the approval?

**Mrs. Akila S. Manji**  
Dar es Salaam



# LETTERS



Dear brother,

## In defence of the HIV Resolution

The letter in the January, 1999 issue of *Federation Samachar* written by Dr. Kazim Dhalla with reference to HIV Testing is well thought of and with obvious concern for the community and its members. The points he has mentioned have to be carefully considered and a solution introduced, where available. Such detailed and critical articles are required in the long run to bring about the best possible solution to a very difficult problem. However there are a few points which I would like to enlighten Dr. Dhalla of. These are:

The question of false positives and negatives: The HIV testing carried out at the moment is the ELISA. In order to reduce the risk of false results, the test is carried out twice, prior to engagement and again prior to marriage. This markedly reduces the chance of false reporting. The International Insurance companies insist on one ELISA test for Life Insurance Coverage for sub-Saharan Africa. Hence the Africa Federation's insistence on testing twice is a one better step. I hope the Insurance companies do not get a wind of this.

Regarding the forged negative testing, the Africa Federation has, in order to curb this practise, put in selected doctors who are allowed to carry out the tests. The doctors have to verify the identity of the person and ensure that blood is taken away from the laboratory so that the technicians cannot be influenced. In order to prevent a sort of monopoly in prices of the test, the price per test is regulated by the Jamaat. Furthermore the certificates are sent to the Jamaat's Office directly by the doctor.

Regarding the window period, the twice testing helps to cut down on this. However interestingly, I had raised the same point with the Africa Federation Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani before the testing was introduced. His reply

was "For an unscrupulous person and a person with such habits, there is no window period. He may indulge in such habits a day prior to marriage, and even may continue to do so after. We have to come up with the best possible solution for a difficult problem and shall correct the problems as they arise." He has expressed this very well.

The confidentiality of the test result is enforced as far as possible. Where the result is negative, a certificate is issued. However, if it is positive, the person concerned is contacted, and the test is repeated. If God forbid, the test is positive the second time, no certificate is issued. The concerned person is then contacted and handled as other HIV patients we come across in our daily practise. The family's concern and psychological stress is also handled in the same way. We however must always remember that most people contract AIDS through pre or extra-marital affairs. The family cannot just come into the picture after a person has AIDS. They should have been more watchful over their offspring's habits, where possible, before he or she contracted AIDS in the first place. You cannot lament over a problem which could have been avoided.

Years ago, Dr Kazim Dhalla himself had related to me an incident where he had found a young boy in a car with a street girl. He had the courage to go and report this to the father of the teenager. The father's reply was "Mashallah! I did not know that my son has become Baligh!" Such attitudes have to change. That such fathers may have to cry eventually is a secondary issue. However not in every instance are the parents or the spouses to blame.

The other diseases like Hepatitis and Thalassaemia also need to be tested. It has taken years of hard work before

HIV Testing came into effect. Even then the Africa Federation remains the only one which has enforced it. Not that the other Institutions are not intrested, but there are so many different aspects, all valid, that require looking into.

Where one person is positive and the other person is not, the Jamaat has a duty to educate the negative party about the implications of such a consumation of marriage. Marriages cannot be prevented for it is a contract between two people. Jamaats come in only as facilitators by providing the place and the appropriate surrounding for the occasion. The use of these facilities is at the discretion of the Jamaat. If after adequate counselling the Jamaat Office Bearers feel that the use of facility be provided to two people having AIDS, the existing regulation as far as I am aware, does not prevent such an eventuality.

**Dr Mahmood Hameer**  
**Dar es Salaam.**

Dear brother,

## HIV -- we cannot be complacent

Dr Fuad Sheriff's points are valid. However as ours is a small community, the problems he has mentioned will not arise in the near future. However we have to be ever vigilant and not be satisfied with what we have. AIDS education has to continue. The community must be so well educated about the disease that the members themselves would wish to make sure that each one of them does not get AIDS. Once we are in such a state, and this should not be difficult, mandatory testing as suggested by Dr Sheriff should be introduced and this will be readily accepted by educated people. This would of course be an ideal state for the community to be in. At the moment HIV and Hepatitis screening from blood donors is compulsory in East Africa.

**Dr Mahmood Hameer**  
**Dar es Salaam**



# LETTERS

Dear brother,

## Have we forgotten the meaning of Ramadhan?

It started few weeks prior to Ramadhan. The Korean Complex purchased by the Jamaat was going to be open for ladies in Ramadhan. Great. Women were excited, they would have some place to go to, while their husbands were at the boarding house. The schools were closed, so the children could be occupied with different activities. It all began with pomp and grandeur, with a formal opening, organizers in uniforms etc. Flyers were distributed, women were encouraged to sign up forms. Very nominal fees were kept. So far so good. Came Ramadhan and as soon as the duas finished, women and girls were seen rushing out of Mosque to go to the Complex. Wait. Wasn't it announced that the games would start after lectures or majalis? Yes, but the organisers were at the Complex by 9:00p.m., and people were allowed to enter even as early as 9:30p.m.. There were two kinds of crowds out there, I was explained -- the registered ones, and the unregistered ones. You had to rush up and be there before 10:00p.m. to get a chance to play games. Why were the ladies encouraged to come so early? Why were the gates open before 10:00 p.m.?

Prophet Mohammed (S) said: *"When there comes the month of Ramadhan, the gates of mercy are opened and the gates of hell are locked and the devils chained."*

Did we forget that it was Ramadhan, the month of *Ibaadah*? We had such a great scholar as Murtaza Alidina amongst us this time to share his wealth of knowledge in a language clearly understood by young girls who however complained of getting late for their games immediately the routine sessions at the Mosque were complete. Did not the community leaders

notice all this happening?

In the Complex, things were quite organised, keeping in mind that this was the first time. But the sad thing was it was a chance for ladies to sit and gossip in month in which Allah tells us to ask for forgiveness and pray for taqwa as His doors are open for us. Of this month the Holy Prophet said: *"O people! Your back is breaking under the heavy load of sins, so prostrate yourself before Him for long intervals and make it lighter."* Instead we were making our load of sins heavier. There were quite a few fights, which the organisers were unable to prevent, when to the shock and disbelief of bystanders, foul language and words were used.

The youngsters had a nice time. There was plenty of food, candies, and tit bits, if you had the money to spend everyday. But not all members of our community are rich and the not well off had to suffer in silence. There were a variety of both indoor and outdoor games. Even the elderly ladies enjoyed themselves. Some of the lectures held were very good and beneficial. Unfortunately during the lecture days, nothing special was set for children and young girls.

It was a good idea for the Jamaat to come up with sports for ladies. But there should have been some rules laid down. Ramadhan being a month of prayers and blessings, this should have been of foremost importance to women. It was not a month to think of making money. There were variety of stalls, selling from pins to clothes. What was the purpose? It was not restricted exclusively to those in need of business. Ironically most of the stall holders could not be included in that category. This was one way for the

organisers to make money. Why was the concentration deviated from sports to business?

Ironically, in the ladies section where a fair amount of money was being generated everyday, stall keepers had to pay a minimum five thousand per night plus entrance fees, commission from food sold etc. Yet when the Gents Union kept free *sehri*, the Ladies Union sold *sehri*. In whose coffers did all the money go?

I will now deviate slightly from the subject. I have had the chance to stay in England. What strikes me is the vast difference in the thinking of elders in the West and here in Dar es Salaam. In the West utmost importance is given to the religious teachings of the children, through organising special Ramadhan programs for them. Each child is also encouraged to recite the Quran and duas. Separate programs are held for young girls and boys in English. While at the same time lectures in Urdu are held for adults.

In Dar, Mehfil-e-abbas is used for boys in Ramadhan with their own programs, quiz etc. In the Ladies Section a section of the Mosque was used for girls. But considering the population of our Jamaat, it was not enough, and only selected girls whose Quran is good were chosen to recite. The rest could only go for dua. What about the girls who needed more practice in Quran, or girls below Class 4 whose Quran is very good? My respect to the organizers and the effort they put in holding *Darasa* every year. Rushing to mosque right after Iftaar is really commendable. Their dedication and enthusiasm is remarkable.

What I am trying to point here is that

(continued on page 15)





(...from page 14)

up to now lack of space has been a great hindrance is organising separate activities for young girls. Being the month of Ramadhan, why was the Korean Complex not used for special activities in English or Gujrati for girls. For all Madressa students it should have been kept compulsory to attend, and it was an ideal place to hold workshops and seminars on the Holy month.

Secondly, like our ladies showed such great enthusiasm and excitement in organising sports for women by putting in so much of their time and making it their priority, they would also have not backed out from helping in activities related to religious and educational purposes. And they would have gained *thawaab* in return.

I am not against sports or recreation for women. From 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. the Complex could have been used for religious purposes specially aimed at young girls. Thereafter games and sports could have been held. Women would not have rushed from mosque knowing that no recreational activities will be there before 10:15 - 10:30 p.m.

It was a pity that we have amidst us such educated scholars both among men and women, who have the ability and knowledge to reach the younger generation. But alas we do not take enough advantage of them. Why don't we remember, today's younger generation are going to be parents of tomorrow's kids, and they are going to hand over the same religious morals and ideals that we hand them today. Do we want our children to have concept of Ramadhan as a rush to the mosque for half-an-hour dua and pass time in social gatherings and playing till 2:00 a.m. to be too tired to wake up for namaaz and sleep till 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon? The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Our young girls are going to be mothers of sons whom we want to be soldiers of Imam-

e-zamana. Let us give them a proper perspective of religious values, especially on the importance of Ramadhan which is the best of all the months. A month in which all our sins are

forgiven, and the doors of heaven are open.

**Observer**  
**Dar es Salaam**

Dear brother,

## A request for the *Samachar*

I Kanneez - Fatima JINA from Bombay, married in Majunga, Madagascar. The reason for my introduction is that our local language over here is French and though I have learn't speaking and writing this language, I don't enjoy reading the French books.

The other day a copy of the *Federation Samachar* had come in our Jamaat, which I borrowed and read. I liked it very much, so please can you send me this book monthly and let me know if there is any *Hadya*.

**Kanneez-Fatima JINA.**  
**E-mail: jina@online.mg**  
**Post-box: 353**  
**401 Majunga MADAGASCAR.**

Copies of the *Samachar* are regularly sent to Madagascar. We can mail you a copy or alternatively will advise the Madagascar Jamaat to arrange for you to receive copies promptly.

**Editor.**

Dear Brother,

## Complex article gave a false image

I read the news in your *Federation Samachar* Issue of January, 1999 about the Dar Union Complex.

I went to the Complex on regular basis and the image that you have given in your article is completely false. All the excitement and enthusiasm with which we started on in the beginning was soon gone. There was lost of favouritism, plenty of fights, foul language and passivity. Children and relatives of members and volunteers were favoured in games and in competitions there was no fair play. Many of those in charge of games did not know the rules and regulations of the games. It was a great disappointment for those who were at the receiving end of this all. There was no one to listen to complains. My daughter was the victim of favouritism, her enthusiasm and eagerness was all dampened by such attitude. I implore to those who take responsibilities not to misuse their position, and if unintentionally some wrong or harm has been done, to take steps to rectify them.

**Disillusioned victim**  
**Dar es Salaam.**

The *Samachar* article covered the new facility and general organisation of the events at the Sports Complex. In public events, wrong things do happen at individual level which lead to grievances. If your grievances are true they could be food for thought for the organisers to correct upon in future.

**Editor.**





Dear brother,

## The Prophet had warned us about AIDS

I saw a article on AIDS which appeared in the Indian Magazine 'Gentleman' of October '98. This sent a chill up my spine and I believe that excerpts from it would be of interest to readers of the *Federation Samachar*.

The letter states, "Many believe that "it happens only to someone else and nothing will happen to me." We have to take all precautions because India is the No.1 AIDS country in the World. Those who HAVE CHILDREN WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW THE KERALA EXAMPLE ASKING FOR AN AIDS NEGATIVE CERTIFICATE FROM A GOVERNMENT RECOGNISED INSTITUTE FROM THE BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM. THIS RULE IS ALSO IN FORCE IN MALAYSIA.

I want to take this opportunity to inform you that the concept "never mind with whom you have sex but have safe sex - use condom" is nothing but nonsense. It is immoral advice. No religion talks of safe sex and unsafe sex outside wedlock. All religions talk only of legitimate sex within the rules of religion and nothing outside. So what is this nonsense "have sex but have safe sex". To act on such advice will lead to moral condemnation for life. How will those who give such advice approve, if their own husband or wife, son or daughter, son-in-law or daughter-in-law act on their advice? Will they approve of it? Naturally the answer is NO. If that is the case why are they giving such advice to others? Is it not hypocrisy? Many a mighty nation in the past have been wiped out of existence because of such decadence. The Holy Quran itself gives example of the Tribe of Lut and Aad.

Apart from the immoral aspect of the advice of saying "Never mind with whom you have sex but use a condom" what guarantee is there that the advice

is 100% safe. If there is no 100% guarantee, the advice is not only immoral it is also sinful. A Muslim must remember his accountability to Allah (swt) before he gives any advice or acts on any advice.

What is required in a Muslim home today is proper Islamic education and a proper Islamic environment. This alone will save the future generation from ailments such as AIDS. We definitely can implement Islam in our lives provided we have the will to do so. Should we not then for our own peace of mind and happiness and for the sake of our children put a stop to sins in our lives? If we don't we will be answerable to Allah (swt) for all the misery and diseases that will engulf the future generation. To follow bad sex advice is, to quote Pope John Paul (Hindu newspaper dtd.17.10.98) "stumble through life to the very edge of the abyss without knowing where they are going". Therefore it is very necessary that religious rules regarding sex must be driven home.

Our Rasulullah (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) has already warned in a Hadith, "If lewdness exists among people and then appears as a common and open practice, plagues and NEW DISEASES which did not exist before will spread among them." That warning of the Rasulullah (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) has now come true in the form of AIDS. We Muslims can not afford to ignore this warning given by Rasulullah (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) over fourteen hundred years ago. It is our duty to educate our fellow Muslims and our children about Islamic values and Islamic morals. In this the Muslim doctors especially have a very great responsibility and accountability to Allah (swt). No Muslim should dare give safe sex advice to unmarried people because it is against the Holy Quran. It is Adultery. Now one should realise why in Islam there is such strict punishment

for adultery - 100 lashes for fornication and death for adultery. "And that there should be among you a group who call (mankind) unto virtue and enjoin what is good and forbid wrong; and these are they who shall be successful." Al-e- Imran, Verse 104.

With the above excerpts, let me conclude this letter with the following words: *Woh waqt bhee dek he hain tareeq ki ghadiyan, Lamhon ne khata kee thee, sadiyon ne saza paayee.* Translation: "Historical epochs have borne witness to such phases of time when the momentary lapses boomeranged into centuries of retribution." May Allah (swt) be with us and save us from this calamity.

M. Irshad  
Karachi.

Dear Brother,

## Anon's opinion on the Majmuo is incorrect

I disagree with Mr. Anon whose article on the Majmuo appeared in the *Federation Samachar* of January 1999.

He is suggesting to us to be modern in reciting duas rather than reciting lengthy duas from Majmuo. I understand duas in Majmuo have been translated from "Mafatihul Jinan" a book which is the most reliable source of all Duas which was compiled by a scholar Sheikh Abbas Qummi. Does he want us to abandon all dua Books including Mafatihul Jinan in which there are lengthy duas?

Finally Mr. Anon should be bold enough to publish his name rather than remaining anon.

Habib H. Haji  
Tanga.

The writer did not intend to dissuade anyone from reciting duas. Rather he emphasised on the need for reciters to understand the actual and indepth meaning of the duas they recite. Editor.





## First multi-faith school approved

The Department of Education and Employment (DEE) has approved the first multi-faith school in Britain. The school in the Granby area of Liverpool, which will be predominantly Muslim because of the high percentage of Muslims living in the area, will maintain a multi-faith ethos which, according to Paul Clein, Chairman of Liverpool City Council Education Committee, will "incorporate an Islamic ethos". The move was welcomed by the Muslim community in Liverpool. The Imam of Liverpool's Al-Rahma Mosque, Shaykh Mohammed Al-Khateeb, said: "Muslim parents have accepted the challenge to reassure others that all children will be safe and secure within this Islamic learning environment."

The idea for this unique project was launched in March 1998, after a two-year consultation period between the Local Education Authority (LEA) and members of faith communities resolved to open a multi-faith school. The LEA will close two Primary schools, which have over 80% Muslim pupils, and build the new multi-faith school, which will cater for pupils aged five to 11. The new school will open in September 1999. The school will be sensitive to all faiths and therefore those who do not want to participate in the morning worship, which will be Islamic, will be able to get an exemption. The Education Committee decided at a meeting on February 16, 1999 that four temporary governors will be appointed, "at least two of whom can represent the Muslim Community". The temporary Governing Body will co-opt governors "who can represent other major community groups whose children will attend the new school". This is the first time in Britain that Muslims will be running a State community non-denominational school.

## Six Workers fired for refusing to remove the hijab

Five female Muslim workers at Dulles International Airport (serving Washington, DC) filed an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) complaint alleging they were fired because they refused to remove their religiously-mandated head scarves.

The complaint states that the women, who were employed by Argenbright Security Inc. as security personnel, were told they were fired at the request of United Air Lines. An Argenbright supervisor allegedly told the women, "United Air Lines asked [Argenbright Inc.] to tell you to remove the scarf." This demand was refused on religious grounds. One woman told CAIR: "God won't forget us even if we lose our jobs." The complaint called Argenbright's demand "an insulting and demeaning labor employment practice."

The EEOC complaint, drafted by CAIR attorney Martin McMahon, stated that the demand to remove the scarves violates the 1964 Civil Rights Act and is "obviously an act of religious discrimination." It called for the workers' immediate reinstatement, an award of back pay and compensation for emotional pain, embarrassment and suffering.

## Khatami calls on the US and Europe to regard Islam in a fair vein

Iranian leader President Mohammad Khatami has called on the US and Europe to regard Islam as an equal partner if they want to establish world peace, justice and security. During his visit to Italy in March, 1999 he said Islam and the West must get to know one another better, and then move on to improve their political, culture and economic relations.

Earlier, during a meeting with the Italian Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, President Khatami said it was vital to install democracy around the world and to end violence and terrorism. Mr D'Alema said Italy hoped to bring about a more balanced relationship between Iran and Europe. This was the first visit by an Iranian leader to western Europe since the Islamic Revolution 20 years ago.

Italy regards Iran as key to Middle East stability and has long tried to serve as a bridge between it and the West. In March, 1999 the Italian oil company, ENI joined France's Elf Aquitaine in signing a \$500m deal with Iran, flouting the United States' long-standing threat of sanctions.

But the Rome visit was not without some tensions, though. A spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Minister refuted comments by Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini in which he said Khatami was trying to overcome Iran's international isolation.

"Nobody can isolate Iran," the spokesman was quoted as saying in Neshat daily. "Khatami's visit to Italy and the invitations he has received to



## Toronto's First Young Professionals Network's Event is a remarkable success

With tickets sold out, and excitement building, the stage was set for a fabulous evening of motivation, networking, dinner, and of course, fun.....etc.

The Young Professionals Network's first event, proudly sponsored by **JIBA Ontario**, was held on Saturday February 20, 1999 at Sangam Restaurant and Banquet Hall, and what a great event it was!! With a record turnout of almost 100 enthused youth, and executives, one could feel the energy in the room! The event began with networking amongst the many who came. Old friends met, and new friendships were made. Then, it was time for the formal part of the event to begin.

Led through the evening by MC Ruwaida Dhala, the audience waited in anticipation of the first speaker, Mr. Mohammed Jiwan. In his address, titled "Personal Excellence", Mr. Jiwan motivated the crowd to better themselves, both at work, and in their lives. Efforts to define success at the beginning came to the conclusion that success is a personal matter. Through an entertaining speech with stories of Michael Jordan, Colonel Sanders and Soshira Honda's experiences, many enlightening concepts were put forth. Ideas such as "no problem is permanent, and no problem affects your entire life", "Allah's delays are not Allah's denials" and "ultimately it is our decisions, not the conditions of our lives that determine our destiny", taught all who attended that the material covered was "not rocket

science" but "just common sense". Everyone discovered that it is possible to tap into our personal energy, and succeed, whatever one's definition of success may be!

After an introduction of all executives by YPN Chair Shazia Damji, and a break for dinner and more networking, it was time to continue with the second part of the evening.

The second speaker, Mr. Sibthain Akbar, carried forth the theme of the evening, and explained how to put Mr. Jiwan's ideas into practice. In his talk, "The Road to Success", the audience learned how to be "cool", and how to avoid being "losers". Using various youth lingo, and relating with the audience, Mr. Akbar had the participants hanging onto each and every word! He explained the dramatic change in his life from his younger years, in the corporate world, to his later years as an entrepreneur. The audience was stunned with his revelation of reaching the office before the sun is up, each and every day, since the productivity during those early hours is much greater than later in the day. Mr. Akbar emphasized the importance of having a goal, and working towards it, and illustrated this fact with examples from his life. Networking, he explained, is very important, something which he has done plenty of in his role as President of the North York Chamber of Commerce. The current vacuum of leadership in corporations and institutions was explained in great depth as well, and Mr.

Akbar's encouraging words gave many motivation to pursue such positions.

Finally, he ended off with a question and answer period. Upon learning of the many diverse businesses that Mr. Akbar is involved in, all went away with an honest feeling that such magnitude of success is possible, through perseverance and dedication to your goals.

Mr. Jiwan and Mr. Akbar certainly captivated and motivated all who attended, and everyone went away with a feeling of satisfaction.

The final part of the evening was a distribution of a fleet of door prizes. The highlights were a pair of designer sunglasses donated by Aliraza Rajani, a Roots gift certificate donated by Zahida Nazarali, a \$200 certificate for Mind Tech Montessori and Computer Schools and a \$200 certificate for Academy of Learning, among others.

To sum up, the first ever YPN event was a profound success!! Many thanks go to the JIBA Ontario Chamber of Commerce for their sponsorship of the event, both speakers, Mohammed Jiwan and Sibthain Akbar, for their excellent presentations, the many executives and recruiters for gracing the event with their presence, and bringing literature on their companies, and finally, the YPN Committee for their hard work and dedication in making such an event possible. We look forward to the next YPN event with anticipation!!

(...from page 17)

go to other countries are a demonstration that we are not isolated and never have been by the Islamic revolution," he said.

His comments were echoed by the head of the parliamentary association for Iran-Italy friendship in an interview in 'Iran daily'.

Mohsen Yahyavi said Dini's remarks "derive from a false interpretation of reality and the international position of the Iranian government." He said, "I can say that Iran is not isolated and is an active force in the region and in the world. It's special status is recognized by all countries except those which deny the truth."

The Italian Government has defended the visit, saying that Mr Khatami's moderate policies should be supported by Europe. Supporters of the Iranian President are pleased that Italy is the first European country to provide such a vital international stage for him. This could be reciprocated by lucrative business opportunities for Italy in the huge Iranian market.





## DATELINE TORONTO

from Baqir Alloo in Toronto

**Out of the Cold Program:** Our Jamaat participated in this program with full zest and the service provided by our volunteers was superb. Lady volunteers came in good numbers in the afternoon to prepare meals for the homeless and to help in setting up beds and beddings. Our gent volunteers turned out in equal good numbers and some stayed throughout the night at 9000 Bathurst premises where the homeless were sheltered. The program was supervised by Maulana Sayed Muhammad Rizvi, Captain of the Volunteers Sajjad Haji and Chairlady Sikina Bakar Mehdi. The impact on the local government circles and the public was great and demonstrated that with a little organization our community can provide valuable physical support to the needy and the less fortunate members of our society.

**Jiba-Ontario** Joined hands with IBAPA (Ismaili Business & Professionals Association) to organise a dinner meeting on 26th February, 1999. Mr. Bahadur Madhani, appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees, United Way of Greater Toronto, Board Member of the Toronto 2008 Summer Olympics Bid Company and who also sits on the Executive Committee of the Chair Volunteers and Special Events Committee spoke on **Networking, A Pool of Resources**. He explained in detail the state of the art way by which voluntary work is organized and provided statistics of huge voluntary work being accomplished in Canada. He suggested that the Jubilee and Crescent Housing Complexes could network their volunteer resources as an experiment and gauge the result. Mr. John Anderson, a well-known public speaker and expert in building personal communication skills necessary to prosper in the global information age who is also the President of Achievement Communication Training, spoke on **Technique of Networking** which was very educative. Interesting questions and answers followed with lively discussion.

**Jamaat Election Date** was announced on Thursday 4th March by the Speaker Shabbir Jaffer. Nomination closed on 21st March and elections will be held on 11th April. On March 25th, a Candidates Forum will be held when candidates for the posts of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Mukhi and Chairlady will present their manifesto and answer questions. As the incumbents have served two terms they cease to be eligible for re-election. Election here takes a whole day through balloting when there is a contest.

**Eid Party at Parliament Building** was held on 3rd February. The party was hosted by the Association of Progressive Muslims of Ontario and was attended by a number of Federal Government Ministers, Senators and members of Parliament. In an eloquent keynote address on behalf of the Muslim Community Ms Nurjehan Mawani, Chair of Immigration Refugee Board of Canada, outlined a number of issues of concern to the Muslim community. Among the speakers from the various political parties were Hon. Senator Marcel Prud'Homme and Hon. Paul Martin, P.C., M.P., Minister of Finance. Hon. Senator Prud'Homme complemented the Muslim community for having integrated with the Canadian society and contributing their time to voluntary work. He said that the Muslim Community must at no time feel to be second class citizens and assured them that their concerns will receive all the attention from the Government of Canada. He also had high praise for Hon. Rahim Jaffer, M.P. who has made a good impression in the Parliament despite his relatively young age.

**Revised Constitution of Toronto Jamaat** has now reached an advance stage and will be out for consideration by the members in three months time. In a synopsis paper, the Constitution Revision Sub-committee Chairman Raza Sumar

(continued on adjacent column)

says that their main aim is to introduce elements which, if approved, could change the Jamaat's "modus operandi" by changing the present mode of being "reactive" to a "proactive" community in which "we would expect needs of our growing and aging community and plan to meet the needs." Changes will be proposed which will ensure that "Seat Warming" is no longer a function.

**Spiritual Parenting** symposium was held at Al-Sadiq School on February 26th. when a number of parents attended to hear Maulana Sayed Mohamed Rizvi and sister Jameela Devjee propound the strategy of bringing up our children in a way to ensure that our spiritual values are inculcated in them at an early age.

### AMERICAN MUSLIMS MEET WITH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

*--- Discussion focuses on  
foreign policy, Islamophobia  
and religious rights*

In February, 1999, The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group joined with other national Muslim organizations at the first in a series of roundtable discussions organized by the State Department in Washington, D.C.

The meeting, called by the Secretary's Special Representative for Religious Freedom Abroad Dr. Robert A. Seiple, focused on issues such as American foreign policy in the Muslim world, the negative impact of Islamophobia stereotyping and terminology, governmental attitudes toward Islamization, discrimination against Muslims in Western countries, and freedom of religion in Muslim-majority countries. Seiple was joined by several other top State Department officials.

CAIR Research Director Dr. Mohamed Nimer, said the attendees reached a consensus that eligible Muslims should be considered for senior level positions within the State Department. Demographers say Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in America.



## NASIMCO and WF meet and issue a communique

We enclose herewith a copy of the Joint Communiqué from Nasimco and the World Federation after their meeting at the office of NASIMCO located on 9000 Bathurst Street, Toronto on January 30, 1999.

The Vice President of the World Federation, Hasnain Walji represented the World Federation while Nasimco was represented by Ghulamabbas Sajan, President, Asghar Naqvi-Secretary General, Sadique Jaffer-Executive Councillor, Razaali Kaba-Executive Councillor, Ally Hemani-Executive Councillor, Javed Iqbal Qureshi-Executive Councillor and Dr. Takim-Chairman IEB NASIMCO

### Summary of deliberations

The Chair acknowledged Ally Hemani's role and contribution in initiating this meeting and the Executive Council was grateful to him. Credit was also given to Br. Hasnain Walji who agreed to meet with NASIMCO Executives as soon as he received the letter from the Secretary General of NASIMCO inviting him to attend the meeting at Toronto. The circular was issued to all the Executive Councillors on January 5, 1999 inviting them to attend the meeting.

The agenda included several items such as the review of current relationship, co-operation between NASIMCO and WF in different fields such as MAB, IEB, ZCSS and other activities of both these organizations.

The meeting lasted for almost five hours. There were open discussions in the meeting and both sides presented their own version of the relationship and cooperation with each other. Br. Sajan was candid in providing the detailed history of relationship between the two organizations. Br. Hasnain Walji appropriately responded to all the issues.

Following detailed discussion on the working arrangements between the two organizations, both parties agreed that the bottom line was to serve the cause of Islam and the community as

best as possible without taking any conflicting positions. Both parties unanimously agreed that it was in the best interest of the whole Shia community to join hands and work in close relationship without any friction and hindrance and by making the best use of the limited resources available.

It was agreed to issue the following joint communiqué reflecting that both organizations would respect each other, work together, help the community as far as possible, produce the best results as possible and serve Islam with total devotion and sincerity. This should not be taken to mean the two organizations have not been functioning with devotion and sincerity but the purpose of the dialogue was to create a better working relationship and team spirit in order to achieve better results.

### JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ:

It is hereby agreed that NASIMCO and WORLD FEDERATION would enhance joint communication in order to improve the working relationship, maximize the resources and avoid duplication of activities.

Whereas NASIMCO understands and agrees that the WORLD FEDERATION has the responsibility of serving the community all over the world, at the same time WORLD FEDERATION understands and agrees that NASIMCO being the regional body of North America has the responsibility of serving our communities particularly the community of North America, therefore there will be close liaison and cooperation between these two organizations for all projects undertaken in North America.

NASIMCO AND WORLD FEDERATION would endeavor to promote each other in order to achieve better results in all the activities around the world.

**SIGNED**  
**GHULAMABBAS SAJAN**  
**PRESIDENT OF NASIMCO**  
**HASNAIN WALJI**  
**VICE-PRESIDENT OF**  
**WORLD FEDERATION**

## TV Reverend questioned on alleged accusations against Islam

We hereunder carry a self-explanatory letter written to a Reverend who offers sermons on American TV.

Rev. Frederick Price  
Crenshaw Christian Church  
7901 South Vermont Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90044  
VIA FAX: 323-778-5545

Dear Rev. Price,

Peace to those who follow God's guidance. It is my unfortunate duty to bring to your attention a number of complaints our office has received from concerned Muslims who have seen your ongoing series of televised sermons on Islam. These viewers allege that you do not offer an accurate portrayal of Islam or Muslim beliefs. Many people are also concerned that you confuse Nation of Islam beliefs with Islam.

The dissemination of distorted or inaccurate information has a negative impact on the lives of ordinary American Muslims and serves to mislead people of other faiths. It is for this reason that CAIR respectfully requests the following:

1. We ask that you supply our office with videotapes of your sermons dealing with Islam so that we may offer you a detailed analysis of their content.
2. We ask that you consider meeting with representatives of the Muslim community to discuss this analysis.

No faith is served by misrepresenting that of others. We respect your right to have opinions about Islam, but these views should be based on fact, not distortions and anti-Muslim propaganda.

I await your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Nihad Awad  
Executive Director (CAIR)

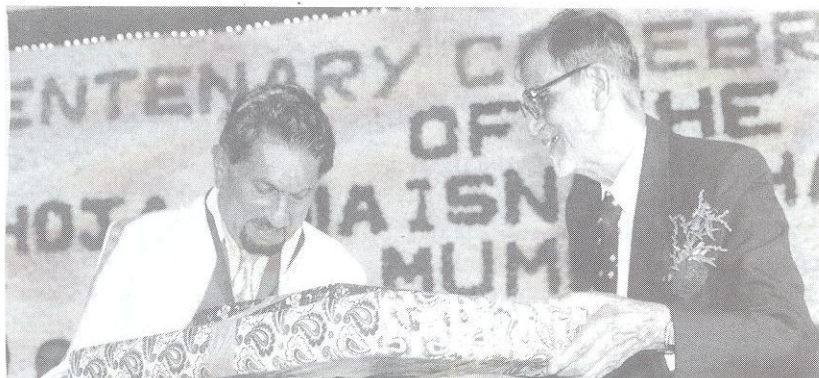
To the time we went to press there had been no response from the Reverend. Editor.



# Mumbai Centenary in pictures

The Centenary of the KSI Jamaat of Mumbai was commemorated from Friday 30th October, 1998 to 1st November, 1998. In the previous issue of the *Federation Samachar* we carried a coverage of the event. Here we provide readers with some photographs of the occasion.

Alhaj Roshanali Dawood Haji Nasser, Chairman Mumbai Masjid and Imambara Trust presenting Mohamedbhai Dhirani, Chairman Africa Federation with a shawl and gift.



Alhaj Mohib Ali Nasser, President, KSI Jamaat Mumbai displaying a souvenir made to for the Centenary celebrations.



The lustrous ballons brought an air of radiance to the celebrations. These were left to blow away into the sky after the foundation laying ceremony of the jamaat's Sports Complex.



Visitors came from far and wide. Pictured from left to right are: Alhaj Hussein Chacha Paryani, Sajjadia Trust, Toronto, Alhaj Abdul Karim Kassamali, Chairman Dubai Jamaat, a guest from Yemen, Alhaj Ramzan Mulla Nanji, Trustee of the Supreme Council in Nairobi.





## Muslim World News

Guests from Africa. From right, in the first row: Alhaj Ramzanali Bhojani, Dar es Salaam, Mr. Hemani, Dubai, Alhaj Abdul Moamin Ramji, Bilal Muslim Mission, Madagascar, Alhaj Ebrahim Kassam, Supreme Council Trustee, Kampala, Alhaj Hussein Walji, Mombasa and Alhaj Gulamabbas Khimji, Nairobi.



Standing for prayers to grace the occasion. From left to right: Alhaj Mustafa Kanji, President Kampala Jamaat, Alhaj Asgher Bharwani, President Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Dr. Amir Lakha, President Stanmore Jamaat, Alhaj Mohib Ali Nasser, President Mumbai Jamaat, Mohamedbhai Dhirani, Chairman Africa Federation and H.E. Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai,



At the graveside of Shahid Killo Khatou. From left to right: Mohib Ali Nasser, Mohamedbhai Dhirani, Husein Chacha Paryani and Shaukat Mewawala.



Commencement of the Centenary Programme with recitation from the Holy Qur'an.



The Mumbai Jamaat President, Mohib Ali Nasser and the Africa Federation Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani in a jovial mood while Stanmore's Dr. Amir Lakha eyes something more serious.





## Strengthening relationship between Islam and the West....

*... the first ever Eid al-Fitr message from the British  
Government to British Muslims*

We reprint the first ever 'Id al-Fitr message by Derek Fatchett, Foreign Office Minister in the British Government to British Muslims which was first availed as an exclusive to The Muslim News.

"As Ramadhan draws to a close, and the festivities of the Eid al-Fitr begin, I want to take a moment to reflect on the state of relations between Islam and the West.

It is a question of immense urgency and importance. If we are to prosper and grow together in a peaceful and diverse world, then we must understand each other better.

If we do not, the price will be high. Suspicion and stereotype feed upon themselves. The absence of trust can quickly turn into hostility or even outright conflict. Some people think that conflict between Islam and the West is inevitable. One of our key priorities is to prove them wrong.

The first step must be to fight the misconception and prejudice. We need to show the people of the West that Islam is not about extremism or the terrorists who abuse its name. Far from being something to be afraid of – it is a tradition of great beauty and wisdom. We owe much to Islam. Islamic art, science and philosophy have enriched our lives in a multitude of ways. From the numerals we use to count to the systems of algebra and astronomy we use to understand our world, much of who we are and how we think is rooted in Islamic learning.

Even the university system that became the powerhouse for intellectual progress in the Western world was modelled on the Islamic centres of learning that were beacons of enlightenment for the whole world.

And as the West searches for alternatives to the unbridled materialism that threatens the very future of our planet, we need to learn from Islam's spirituality. As the West struggles with a loss of faith, it could learn much from a culture that suffuses

everything it does with deep spirituality.

There is a remarkable ignorance in the West about the true nature of Islam, and it will need a massive effort to replace that ignorance with the knowledge that must be the basis for genuine understanding.

But the education needs to be in both directions. Just as we need to shatter Western stereotypes of Islam, so we need to fight suspicion in the Muslim world of the West and its motives. We need to convince Muslims that the West does not seek to corrupt their values or undermine their independence. We need to persuade them that our values are richer than an all-corroding obsession with wealth, and that our support for human rights and democracy is a genuine expression of our deeply held beliefs.

Breaking down this mutual mistrust will be a big task. It is not a job just for theologians and specialists. It needs clear and determined action from our governments and community leaders, based on mutual respect for each other's values. It needs our schools to teach the truth about each other's culture. It needs our media to tear down stereotypes rather than strengthen them.

Above all, it needs a new dialogue between us. Our governments need to talk. There are many issues on which we need to work together to tackle common problems. There is much we have to talk about, from drugs and global warming to the Middle East Peace Process and terrorism. A young life lost to heroin is as tragic in Cairo as it is in London. And terrorism is a curse on our societies – a heinous crime both in Western law and Islamic law.

That is why we have proposed we build a dialogue between the European Union and the Organisation of Islamic Conference. It is an idea enthusiastically supported by Dr. Kharazi, Foreign Minister of Iran – which chairs the OIC – and by the OIC

Secretary-General. Between us, we want to build a bond that can help underpin the political relationship between the West and Islam. But dialogue between Ministers and diplomats can never be enough. If we are to build real trust between the West and Muslim world then we need to build a dialogue between our people as well. We need our opinion formers to break the circle of mistrust. We need our teachers and philosophers, artists and historians to sit down with one another and talk.

In this dialogue the Muslim communities in the West have a crucial role, as a bridge between us. They contribute to the countries and societies in which they live, while staying true to Islamic tradition and heritage. It is not always an easy balance to strike – avoiding the twin dangers of over-assimilation and isolation. But I believe in the UK we are getting it right, to the benefit of both the Muslim communities and the rest of British society.

The UK's Muslim communities are flourishing. There are over nine hundred mosques in Britain. Some Islamic schools are now getting government funding. And well over a million British Muslims are playing a bigger and bigger role in the life of the country – from the economy, where hundreds of thousands of jobs depend on their entrepreneurial skills; to Britain's professions, where Islam's respect for learning is giving them an impressive presence; to the high street of every town in Britain, where Muslim cuisine has made a profound impression on all our people's lives.

The Foreign Secretary has tried to improve the British Foreign Office's own sensitivity to the needs and concerns of Britain's Muslim communities. I hold regular meetings with the leaders of Britain's Muslim communities. We re sponsoring student exchanges and conferences designed to break down barriers. And we are determined to recruit bright young British Muslims into the Diplomatic Service. By joining, they will help us ensure that we get our relations with the Muslim world right.

Since the last Ramadan, we have made  
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(...from page 23)

a concerted effort to solve some of the long-standing difficulties between us. We have given relations between Iran and Europe a fresh start, by finding a way forward over the fatwah on Salman Rushdie. We have opened up the possibility of normalising relations with Libya, by offering the third country trial of the Lockerbie suspects that the OIC itself called for. But there have been difficult moments as well. Just before Ramadan we launched air strikes on the regime of Saddam Hussain. It was an action we did not want to take. We earnestly sought a peaceful outcome. We accepted Saddam Hussain's promises on numerous occasion, each time to have been renege upon them. Our case is well known, and I do not want to rehearse it here. But one point must be made. Saddam Hussain has tried to make out that this was a case of the West bullying Islam. He could not be more wrong. We acted because of the threat his chemical and biological weapons posed to the Gulf and the whole Middle East. We acted because he has a history of aggression against his neighbours and of brutal repression against his own people. We acted not against the Islamic world, but because Saddam Hussain is a clear threat to that world.

Saddam Hussain has called for a jihad against the West. Jihad is one of the few Islamic words with which most people in the West are familiar. It conjures up the stereotypical image of Islam they know, abused by unscrupulous dictators and lazy Hollywood script-writers.

What the need to know is that there is a higher jihad – not a holy war against the unbelievers, but a struggle inside man to be righteous and just. And that Ramadan is the time when the Holy Koran calls believer to contemplation on the struggle. The holiest month in the Islamic calendar – and the only month mentioned in the Holy Koran – is therefore a good time to think about the relationship between Islam and the West, and to commit ourselves to doing everything in our power to strengthen that relationship.

## National Radio personality, Paul Harvey apologises On-Air for remarks about Islam

WASHINGTON D.C. - National radio personality Paul Harvey, the most listened-to broadcaster in America issued an on-air apology on 27 January, 1999 to Muslims for recent remarks suggesting that Islam was a "fraudulent religion." The apology came after hundreds of concerned Muslims called, faxed and e-mailed both Harvey's office and that of the ABC Radio Network, his program's syndicator.

Muslims world-wide were informed of Harvey's remarks by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group. In a phone call yesterday to CAIR, Harvey said he was "much moved" by the outpour of concern from the Muslim community. "Nothing moved me as much as the simple letters [from Muslims]," said Harvey.

In today's broadcast, he said: "Partly personal, I've had an interesting professional experience and an enlightening one. Last January 4, I mentioned [several events related to violence in the Muslim world]...

"...But juxtaposed between those stories, I added these words: 'Fraudulent religions should be recognized by what they stand for and by what they won't stand for.' I believe everything I said, but I would never say it again that way. Terrorists are the enemy. Terrorists presumed to justify their terrorism by identifying themselves with a religion. And they are in every religion. But when my broadcast inadvertently implied that the Muslim faith was fraudulent it understandably offended personal friends, and I have letters from scores of others, and I have read every letter.

"Their essence is distilled in this one: 'I urge you Mr. Harvey to distinguish between Islam the religion and some of the fraudulent practices of some of its followers. Even as we believers in Islam do not blame Christianity for the misbehavior of misleaders who profess to be Christians.'

"So, followers of Islam, please excuse this imprecise wordsmith for his unintentional slur, and know that I will continue to applaud the good fruits of your faith."

"We thank Mr. Harvey for his apology and for his statement of respect for the faith of Islam. By his willingness to listen to Muslim concerns, he has turned a negative incident into a positive learning experience," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad. "This episode shows that members of the Muslim community can have a positive impact when they help educate opinion leaders about their faith," said Awad.

In a related incident, National Public Radio (NPR) "Performance Today" host Martin Goldsmith issued an on-air apology on January 23rd for remarks he made about the alleged illicit sexual activity of the Prophet Muhammad. There are an estimated six million Muslims in America and some 1.2 billion world-wide.



## Press Release of the 5th Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation at London on Saturday 6 March, 1999.

On Saturday 6th March 1999, Councillors from many parts of the World gathered at Hujjat Imambada, Stanmore, London to transact the proceedings of 5th Executive Council meeting of the World Federation.

Stanmore venue changed from Birmingham, at a short notice, was chosen so as to allow the President of the World Federation, who was arriving from Dar es salaam the same day, to attend the meeting.

The meeting was well attended with representatives of Jamaats from United Kingdom, Paris, Karachi and New Zealand. Nasimco was represented by its President Haji Gulam Sajan and Councillor Sadiq Jaffer.

The President of the World Federation, Alhaj Mulla Asgerali M M Jaffer welcomed one and all to the meeting and thanked the councillors for their time, personal sacrifices and services rendered to the community. He personally thanked the management committee's of both Birmingham and London Jamaats for being understanding and accommodating to the change of venue.

The President began his report by conveying the salaams from the Marja Ayatullah Seestani. By the grace of Allah s w a , he enjoys good health. He cautioned the councillors that the prevailing situation in Iraq is not helpful to our religious scholars as they have to carry out religious obligations under considerable constraints imposed by the Iraqi government. With deep regret, the President once again had

to inform the house of the assassination of Ayatullah Mohammed Sadik-Al-Sadr and his two sons in Iraq. He was a deeply sincere man who assisted many fellow Iraqis out of their troubles. Courageously, he encouraged Juma prayers to be established in Iraq through which many young Iraqis are now coming back to the fold of religion.

The President then paid glowing tributes to Marhum Haji Ali Haji Mohamedjaffer Sheriff, Marhum Haji Huseinbhai Haji and Marhum Jaffer Ali Asil enumerating their diverse services.

On a happier note, the Council learnt of the successful election of Haji Jaffer Dharamsi as the President of the Council of European Jamaats. On behalf of the World Federation, the President of the World Federation congratulated and welcomed him to the meeting and expressed his hope that Council of European Jamaats will work in close liaison with the World Federation to fulfil the needs of Europe.

### VISIT TO NORTH AMERICA

The President explained that on his visit to North America in October 1998, he was able to observe closely the functioning of many Jamaats in North America. He expressed his desire to make our community a friendly and wholesome place in which to live and bring up our children. He was particularly pleased to have had the opportunity to open the madressa building at Minneapolis. The World Federation congratulates the Anjumane Asghari - Minnesota, Minneapolis for the

completion of this worthwhile project that will provide a firm Islamic foundation for the children of our community.

### TRIP TO DAR ES SALAAM

The President of the World Federation travelled to Dar es salaam on 2nd of March 1999 to meet with the Chairman of Africa Federation to discuss and resolve the differences between the two organisations. He was happy to report that the differences are now resolved amicably. The Chairman of Africa Federation was invited to attend this meeting but due to short notice and his recent operation, he was unable to attend. Africa Federation is holding its Supreme Council meeting at Easter in Zanzibar. The President informed the Council that he is invited to attend.

At the request of Councillor Sadiq Jaffer, the President read out the communiqué on the meeting in Dar es salaam issued by the Africa Federation. The President of the World Federation thanked one and all who assisted in the process of reconciliation.

### GOVANDI AND PATNA

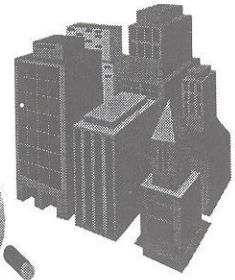
In a moving report, Dr Mohammedtaki Walji - the Chairman of Medical Advisory Board- presented the account of the real benefit of our primary health project to the down trodden community in Govandi.

Govandi, he informed the Council, is one of the largest slum in the city

(continued on page 27)



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**OUR BUSINESS IS TO MAXIMISE  
YOUR BUSINESS.**



## Muslim World News

(...from page 25)

of Mumbai. The slum has a population which varies from 3-500,000 people of which Shia population is about 25,000, majority of them being Sadaat. The World Federation works in the area of Baiganwadi where there are 2000 Shia houses with nearly 10,000 people.

Soon after the survey, the World Federation embarked upon a revolutionary project of preventive health promotion where the disease is alleviated by educating the community on how to avoid or prevent health misery, there by making the community self reliant. Our work strives to provide essential preventive services such as health education to every patient who attend the clinic, immunisation to every child within our area, diet supplements, cheap and subsidised medicines, family planning services and diagnostic and treatment services by a medical doctor with referrals to hospital, if necessary. More particularly, we are running a nursery school to prepare children to enable them to obtain a place in government school.

After nearly 10 years of our services, while no grand buildings of the World Federation are to be seen in Govandi, we can point to the enduring changes brought about within the local Shia community. To-day, all mothers in Baiganwadi know of the immunisation they and their children need. They also know of the treatment of common diseases like diarrhoea and vomiting. They know the value of cleanliness. These are the changes among many that has made the community self reliant in health care and as result the need for our health care project is now over.

A poor and relatively inaccessible state of Bihar has a large population of Muslims. Patna, the capital city, has 10,000 Shias. 95% of them live

in abject poverty. In the heart of this poverty where diseases and deprivations are rife, the World Federation has opened the preventive health clinic, similar to the one in Govandi. Ours is the only agency working there providing a much needed health care support to the community.

### CENTRALISATION OF PROJECTS

The President of the World Federation explained that this subject was put in the agenda in order to remove the misunderstanding existing within the membership regarding the workings of the World Federation to carry out its project. He emphasised that the World Federation, being the World body, should be able to carry out the activities without the constraints from its members. The President clarified that the World Federation is not seeking confrontation but co-operation from its members who after all are the beneficiaries. He informed the council that the World Federation is seeking to embark upon beneficial projects within our own community and will look for support and keen sense of participation from the members of the World Federation. He reminded the council that members should not toll the bell of 'Geographical Boundary' and 'Sovereignty' which are unhelpful concepts when we are all working for the future of our community at large.

### MOONSIGHTING

In view of division, once again, within our members in Europe on moon sighting of Mahe Mubarak Ramadhan and Idul Fitr this year and to prevent acrimonious atmosphere developing in the future, the Executive Council resolved to rescind the resolution on moon sighting which obliges members in Europe to be informed to follow the dates on moon sighting announced

by the World Federation and member Jamaats to follow the announcement. The World Federation, however, will continue to announce the date of the new moon as usual.

### LUNCHEON WITH THE HOME SECRETARY - UK

The World Federation was invited at the luncheon meeting held in November 1998 with the Home Secretary Rt. Hon. Jack Straw of UK. The meeting was organised by the Muslim Council Of Britain (MCB) where over 200 representatives from many Muslim organisations attended. On behalf of the World Federation, Haji Muhsin Jaffer -Chairman of Islamic Education Board- attended the meeting. The Secretary General of MCB, Iqbal Sacranie, on behalf of the Muslim community thanked the Home Secretary for his readiness to address the Muslim concerns as well as positive response of the UK government. The Home Secretary acknowledge the case for law against religious discrimination but admitted that amending the crime and disorder bill was 'a more complicated matter'. The MCB will continue to press for legislation on outlawing religious discrimination.

### COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN JAMAATS

Haji Gulam Sajjan, the President of Nasimco, appealed to European Jamaats to seek membership of the World Federation as a Federation, as Council Of European Jamaats now is well established to cater for the needs of Europe.

Invitees from New Zealand presented their project, and appealed for funds. Similar presentation was made by Leeds and Leicester Jamaats.

The Council decided to meet in Birmingham for its forthcoming sessions on 10th of July 1999.

**Secretariat**

**16 March 1999, 27 Zilkaad 1419.**



# DATELINE IRAN

## Khatami meets the Pope

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami and Pope John Paul II held a historic meeting at the Vatican on 11 March, 1999. Khatami is Iran's most senior religious leader to visit the Pontiff. He is also the first President of the Islamic Conference - a pan-Muslim organisation uniting 55 Islamic countries - to visit the Vatican.

The two men met for 25 minutes in the Pope's private library. The Pontiff said it had been "an important, promising day". Khatami said: "The hope is for the final victory of monotheism, morality, peace and reconciliation." Christianity and Islam together account for more than three billion believers - over half of the world's population.

Both the Pope and Khatami publicly expressed a desire for better mutual understanding among their followers. They appeared relaxed as they exchanged gifts afterwards. The Pope gave the Iranian leader a painting of the Saints Peter and Paul, while Khatami presented John Paul with a Persian rug depicting St. Mark's Basilica in Venice.

However a visit to Turin, in northern Italy by British Indian-born author Salman Rushdie, caused consternation in Italy and Iran. Rushdie was there to receive an honorary degree from Turin university.

Khatami said he was "deeply disappointed" that Rushdie's visit to Italy had coincided with his own. Iranian newspapers lambasted Italy for hosting Rushdie during the Presidential state visit. The English-language daily, Iran News said: "The Italian Foreign Ministry must be held accountable for not informing its Iranian counterpart of its intention to grant a visa to the apostate Rushdie concurrent with the visit of President Khatami."

### Religious ties

On the eve of his audience with the Pope, Mr Khatami had emphasised common ground among the world's religions, declaring that there were no

"quintessential differences" among faiths.

The Vatican's Tehran envoy, Archbishop Romeo Panciroli, said the meeting between the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and the head of the Islamic Conference was of "primary importance for dialogue between Islam and Christianity".

Earlier on his three-day visit to Italy, Khatami called on the United States and Europe to regard Islam as an equal partner if they wanted to establish world peace. He said Islam and the West had to get to know one another better, and then move on to improve their political, cultural and economic relations.

The Iranian leader plans to travel to France in April. Since his election two years ago, Mr Khatami has visited the West just once - on a trip to the United Nations in September.

Meanwhile the Iranian media gave prominence to the first state visit by an Iranian leader to a Western country since the 1979 Islamic revolution. President Khatami's meeting with the Pope was described by Tehran radio as "historic" and one which could help provide common solutions to such issues as "piety, ethics, the defence of family values and the struggle against poverty".

A radio commentary said: "Experts believe that President Khatami's talks with Pope John Paul II will strengthen and increase co-operation between the two religions."

Khatami's visit could be "a positive point of strength for Christians", the radio said, as Iran had built a bond between religion and democracy, which had never existed in Europe and the West.

"The meeting can seriously question the wrong assumption about the confrontation between religion and democracy, which has become a dominating hypothesis in Europe today.

"Moreover, during President

### How they measure up

**Christians 1.96bn**  
(33% world population)

**Catholics 986m**  
(49% of Christians)

**Muslims 1.13bn**  
(19.4% world population)

**Shi'a 180m**  
(16% of Muslims)

Source:  
Encyclopaedia Britannica

Khatami's visit, the Islamic Republic of Iran is sending another message to the West, and that is, that the religious system of the Islamic Republic in its constitution has recognised the rights of all its religious minorities which believe in monotheism.

All religious minorities now have representatives in parliament - a right denied to millions of Muslims in Europe today.

Not all Iranian coverage, however, focused on the positive aspects of the visit. The English-language daily, Tehran Times criticised Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema for allegedly saying that Italy did not believe Iran to be a democracy. The paper said D'Alema had told students in the US last week that, these considerations notwithstanding, Italy thought dialogue to be the "right approach".

"Such remarks indicate that the Italian PM is influenced by the US administration's rhetoric and propaganda against Iran, charging the Islamic Republic with sponsoring terrorism, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and violating human rights," the paper said in an editorial.

"Therefore, political analysts believe that the Italian PM should not have echoed such unfounded accusations and made such undiplomatic remarks about Iran at a time when the Italian Government was preparing the ground for President Khatami's visit to Rome."

The editorial added: "When a common Iranian hears the remarks made by D'Alema, he naturally wonders whether this is what is meant by 'dialogue between civilisations' or a 'new era of detente'.



## New USA Nationwide directory provides valuable 'contact' information....

..the revised seventh edition now includes a listing of Halal Restaurants across the USA

The Seventh Edition of the Nationwide Directory of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community of USA is now in circulation. The first edition was published in 1986. The current edition has been dedicated to Al -Hajj Jaffer Mohamed Taki Mulla Abdulhusein, a Businessman-Cum-Philanthropist.

In a continuous effort to improve and better serve the members, the new directory has a list of Halal Restaurants and Meat Markets across the USA. E-mail addresses, spouse full maiden names, and ex-U.S residents have also been added in order to enable people to maintain contact with their old friends.

The directory, which is the brain-child of Gulamabbas Dhala was scheduled to be aired as a link on the World Federation Internet site. Dhala has produced all the editions of the directory since he launched it in 1986.

### A Dedication carried in the US KSI Directory

**Jaffer Mohamed-Taqi  
Mulla Abdulhusein  
Businessman-Cum-Philanthropist**

"Born in Zanzibar, Tanzania, on April 11, 1942, Jaffer lost his father at the age of six and came under the loving care of his grandfather Mulla Abdulhusein. Mulla Abdulhusein was among the few individuals in the Khoja community who knew Persian language. In fact, he acted as a translator of the majlises of Agha Seyyed Hussein Shustari. The Seyyed would seat on the top stage of the minber and Mulla on the first, carefully translating majlises from Farsi to Kutchi for the Khoja community.

Taqi, his father, served as a headmaster, teacher and finally the principal of the Government School in Zanzibar. It was his services in the field of education and his reputation

as a good educator that earned him his well known title as Taki-teacher." Like father like son, Jaffer followed his father's example and taught at various Government schools in Zanzibar. He also served on the mainland of Tanzania, in Mwanza on the shore of river Nile. His mother, Fatima, was from a family well-known for their piety and education in religion, namely, Jaffer Dewji of Mombasa.. In Nov. 1965 he married Mumta Pyarali Dewji of Singida, and they have been blessed with two sons, one daughter and four grandchildren.

### First Hijra

With the unfavorable political and degenerating economic conditions of the post-independent Tanzania, Jaffer decided to migrate to New York in January, 1977. New York, as its reputation goes, is no place for lazy bugs. It is a place where one works hard a living or perishes. Jaffer was determined to make a living. He worked long hours at the White Castle. It was one such day after working for long hours that he decided never to work for others. He established an import/export company that started importing Tanzanian produce like beeswax, cardamom, & gum copal and exporting metal scrap to Tanzania. The business failed, and without getting disheartened Jaffer opened a small shop selling secondhand computers and parts. Within a few years the business flourished and soon he expanded it in a large corporation, providing jobs for some 50 employees.

### Second Hijra

There comes a time in a life of a successful businessman when all the wealth appears to have lost its glitter because of the loss of a loving and caring life partner. This happened in the August of 1995 when Mumtaz, Jaffer's wife bid farewell to this world to meet her Lord, the Almighty God. Jaffer was devastated because it meant the deprivation of a long term friend and companion in all moments of

failure and success in his life. He could not bear to continue living in the house by himself which he had actually built for her. Under those circumstances a search began to find consolation in a different home. Thus came the decision to relocate the business and life in Orlando, Florida.

Orlando has become an important business city and with Jaffer's experience he did not wait too long to invest \$2.5m in a large warehouse in Sanford, Florida, to house his business of wholesale in computers. His relocation with 90% of his staff and their families from New York has been a blessing to the small community, because it has tripled membership of the Khojas in Orlando. More KSI members are attracted to follow that route of success and people from as far as Canada and Tanzania have joined the community in Orlando. It is estimated that by the year 2005, due to the good climate and business opportunities as well as a new vision in providing for the spiritual and cultural well-being of the people, the community is expected to grow to become the largest KSI Community in USA.

### IN LOVING MEMORY OF MUMTAZ

Jaffer's dedication to the memory of his beloved spouse, Mumtaz, has been the main driving force in his philanthropic projects for the past few years. In her memory, Jaffer has acquired a large piece of land in Lake Merry (Orlando) for a community development center, which will include 15000 sq.ft. auditorium for all occasions (religious as well as cultural), playground, library, gymnasium with pool, Gusal-Khana and around 30+ housing units.

In addition, Jaffer has donated a building in Port of Spain in Trinidad, South America for the first Shia Center in memory of Mumtaz. In India he has built a Girls School in a town known

(continued on page 31)





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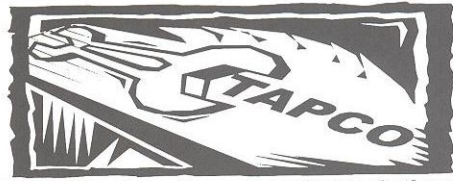
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(...from page 29)

as "Ek Roti" in northern India and named it "Mumtaz Girls School."

Working under the "Mumtaz Charitable Trust" Jaffer has begun the process of donating a Chair in Islamic Studies at the University of Centra; Florida in the Department of Religious Studies.

Jaffer is a patron and founder of the Bilal Muslim Mission of America. During his years in New York he served the community in different capacities, as a President of the Jamaat and in various committees.

We pray to God, the Almighty, the Compassionate to bless Jaffer and his family with good health and a peaceful life to continue his charitable and praiseworthy contribution in the existence of our community and humanity at large."

The KSI Muslim Communities of the United States of America Nationwide Directory was first initiated and produced in 1986 through the efforts of Gulamabbas Dhala. Over the years he has not wavered in his enthusiasm to keep community members in touch. The directory was revised in 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996 and the current one in 1998. The next revision is expected to take place in the year 2000.

In addition to carrying community addresses, the directory also provides the address and telephone numbers of KSI Centers in the USA. These include the Los Angeles Jamaat, Orlando Jamaat, New York Jamaat, Minnesota Jamaat, Allentown Jamaat and the Council of USA Jamaats.

At international level, the contact and where applicable, web site addresses on the Internet, are provided of the World Federation of KSI Muslim Communities, North American Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities (NASIMCO), Federation of KSI Jamaats of Africa, Federation of Kutch KSI Jamaats and the Council of Gujrat KSI Jamaats. In all, the directory certainly is a very handy guide for people to contact their community mates and colleagues.

*Federation Samachar*

## ELECTION ROUND-UP

### ADEN

The Aden Jamaat elected a new managing Committee on 15 January, 1999 during which the following were put into office:

President: Ramzanbhai M. Jaffer  
Vice President: Mustafa Anwer Fazel  
Hon. Secretary: Zulfiqar A. Rashid  
Joint Secretary: Hussein Pyarali  
Hon. Treasurer: Safdar Yousof Jaffer  
Committee Members:  
Shafiq Hussein Suleiman  
Nazir Ali Amir Ali  
Abdul Karim Laljee  
Aqil Ahmed Ali

### ZANZIBAR

The following appointments have been made to run the KSI Hujjatul Islam Jamat of Zanzibar for the term 1999 to 2001:

Chairman: Abbas Mohammed Sheriff  
Vice Chairman: Sajjad Hussein  
Hon. Secretary: Issa Ibrahim  
Hon. Treasurer: Shoaib Moh'dhassan Taki  
Committee Members:  
Bashir Gulamali  
Muslim Rajabali Zawar  
Patron: Zulfikar Habib

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## Death Jottings

**inna lillaahi wa inna  
ilaihi raajjuun**

The following deaths have been reported since the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* which carried death announcements up to 7 January, 1999.

**Marhum Kassimabbas Razahussein** of Dar-es-Salaam, Monday 15th March 1999, 26th Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Noorali Mohammed hussein Gulamhussein (KG)**, London, Sunday 14th March 1999, 25th Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Ayatullah Syed Mohamedjaffer El-Murawwij** of Najaf, Saturday 13th March 1999, 24th Zilkad 1419 A.H.

One of the senior Maraje of the Hawza of Najaf, Iraq, al-Haj Syed Mohamedjaffer al-Murawwij died on Saturday, 13 March 1999, at Qum, Iran. Syed al-Murawwij was acknowledged as a competent and profound scholar from the early days of Ayatullah Syed Mohsin al-Hakim and Ayatullah Syed Abul Qasim El-Khoei.

He had authored many books, but the most famous one is his MUNTAHA EL-DIRAYYAH which is his commentary upon Marhum Akhund's KIFAYAH. This work which runs into eight volumes, not only established his position among the great scholars of USOOL, but also helped the students to understand the otherwise difficult and heavy text of KIFAYAH. He has also written HUDA al-TAALIB which is a commentary on SHAIKH ANSARI'S al-MAKAASIB.

Marhum's brother Syed Mohamed Husein al-Murawwij had been to East Africa on a short visit before 1950. During that stay, he managed to learn Gujarati language. He came again in early fifties to live permanently, serving Mombasa and Zanzibar *Federation Samachar*

Jamats. He died in Zanzibar.

Ayatullah Syed Mohamedjaffer al-Murawwij will be remembered for his humble and unassuming nature, which endeared him to his students and to the general public of AHWAZ and QUM. May his soul rest in blissful peace, showered with Maghferat. Amin.

**Marhum Mohamedshams Abbas Gulamhussein Suleiman Khakoo** - Mombasa, Friday 12 March 1999, 23 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Abdulla Kassam Okera** - Mombasa, Thursday 11 March 1999, 22 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Roshanali Rajabali Merali Dewji** of Mombasa who died in London, Saturday 6 March 1999, 17 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Kulsumbai Juma Sumar** of Dar-es-Salaam, Friday 5 March 1999, 16 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Mujtaba Alihusein Suleman Rattansi**, Toronto, Wednesday 3 March 1999, 14 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Hajee Habibbhai Pirbhai**, Saturday 27th February 1999, 10 Zilkad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Sajjad Dewji** of Dar-es-Salaam who died in London, Friday 26th February 1999, 9 Zilkaad 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Raziabai Abdulrasool**, Morogoro, Saturday 20th February 1999, 03 Zilkaad 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Akber Ali Ramji**, Birmingham, Saturday 13th February 1999, 26 Shawwaal 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Aminabai Hassanali Nasser Virji**, Vancouver, on Wednesday February 3rd 1999, 16 Shawwal 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Mustafa Abdullatif** of Muscat, Oman, on Saturday 30th January, 1999, 12 Shawwaal 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Maalim Mohamed Jivraj (Marumba)**, Dubai, Monday 1 February 1999, 14 Shawwal 1419.

**Marhum Murtaza Noorali** of Toronto, on Friday 29th January, 1999, 11 Shawwaal 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Fidahussein Gulamhussein Mohamed Chagani** on Thursday 28th January 1999, 10 Shawwal 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Fatima Amirali Sajan**, Dallas, on Saturday 23 January 1999, 5 Shawwal 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Hamza Gulamali**, New York, on Friday 22nd January, 1999, 4 Shawwal 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Shirinbai Hassanali Jivraj**, Dar-es-Salaam, on Saturday 23rd January, 1999, 5th Shawwal 1419 A.H.

**Marhum Hussein Hassam**, Moshi, on Saturday 9th January, 1999, 21 Mahe Ramadhan 1419 A.H.

**Marhuma Aminabai Bharwani**, Birmingham, on Sunday 10th January, 1999, 21st Mahe Ramadhan 1419 A.H.

### Marhum Jaffer Ali 'Asil'

The world-wide community recently received the sad news of the passing away of Janab Jaffer Ali 'ASIL'. Marhum was a prolific writer and dynamic speaker. He had several books and tracts to his credit.

In 1979, when the World Federation was contemplating to establish the Gujarat Federation, Marhum Jaffer Ali bhai played a key role in its establishment and in its function. He travelled to Bhavnagar to attend the first Constitutional Conference of the Gujarat Federation.

Marhum was a veritable scholar of Islamic studies, with a good control over Urdu and Arabic languages. As an original thinker, he dealt with many controversial and debatable subjects in his writings. In some instances, it can be safely said that he was ahead of his time.

May Allah bless him with Maghferat, and grant him a chosen place with Masoomen (A.S.).



## INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAAJIUN

### Marhum Hajee Roshan Rajabali Merali Dewji of Mombasa

A well known social worker and a leading philanthropist Alhaj Roshanali Rajabali Merali Dewji of Mombasa, passed away in London on the night of Saturday 6th March, 1999 (17 Zilkad, 1419 A.H.) following a heart attack, at the age of 55 years. Marhum was buried on Monday 8th March, 1999, 19th Zilkaad, 1419 A.H. at Woodcock Hill Cemetary, Northwood, London.

He was noted for his silent social services and economic assistance to the needy for their economic upliftment, for medical assistance, in looking after the ulema and sadaat, and in assisting numerous religious institutions. During the Somalia evacuation exercise, he was a major contributor towards the cost of the seaborne evacuation and a source of great moral and material support to the Community.

Marhum Roshanali always shunned publicity and public recognition. He was content to lend needful support to the Community cause while remaining incognito. In his medical assistance endeavours, his sphere of activities were not restricted to members of our Community only, but he extended his co-operation and assistance to humanity at large and in so doing, set a fine humane example.

Despite spending much of his time in London, Marhum Roshanali took an active interest in the affairs of Mombasa Jamaat and was recently elected as a Trustee of this Jamaat.

Marhum Roshanbhai was also an ardent supporter of World Federation projects, especially under the Islamic Education Board. He provided the property in Northwood that is commonly referred to as Dar al Tabligh, where the Howza classes are conducted and the Islamic Education Board of the World Federation is based. He also provided the property in Birmingham where the Islamic Education Board Madressa is run and

where the Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation is based.

Marhum Roshanbhai is survived by his wife, three sons and two daughters.

We pray for his maghferat, May Allah (s.w.t.) in His mercy place him in high abode in the company of Ahlul Bait (a.s.), and May Allah (s.w.t.) in His mercy, grant patience and courage to his family to sustain the great loss.

### Alhaj Mohamed Ibrahim Jivraj in Dubai

The community was grieved to receive the sad news of the demise of Maalim Mohamed Ibrahim Jivraj who passed away in Dubai on Monday 1st February 1999.

Marhum will be remembered for his distinguished services to the Community in various fields. He was the Editor of "Salsabil" our religious magazine in Gujarati published from Zanzibar, and was its honorary editor till the end. Marhum Maalim was also a teacher at the then Faize-Ithna-Asheri Night School in Zanzibar for many years and also served as the Headmaster. Many elders of our Community were taught by Marhum.

Marhum then moved to Dar-es-Salaam, where he served the Community in many different capacities including being the Administrator in the Jamaat's office.

In Dubai, where he migrated to from Dar es Salaam, he continued to serve and actively participate in many activities of the Madressa.

In this moment of grief, it is our prayers that Allah (s.w.t.) in His blessings rest the soul of Marhum amongst His chosen ones and that He may grant all members of his family solace to sustain this loss.

### AYATULLAH SADIQ MUHAMMAD SADIQ AS-SADR MARTYRED

On Saturday, 3rd of Zilkaad 1419 (20 February, 1999), the Muslim world sadly saw the martyrdom of Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq As-Sadr at Najaf, with his two sons.

Ayatullah As-Sadr was a prominent Shia mujtahid, coming from the illustrious As-Sadr family. He was the brother of Sayyid Musa As-Sadr of Lebanon and a cousin of martyr Sayyid Baqir As-Sadr of Najaf. Many Arabs in central and southern Iraq were his muqallidin. He had supported the uprising of Iraqi Shias in the wake of the Gulf War in 1991; but was later reconciled with realities on the ground. Saddam planned to introduce him as the successor of Ayatullah Al-Khoui as the Supreme Marja of the Shias. As a part of that scheme, his Friday sermons in Najaf were broadcast live on Iraqi TV. But this show of respect could not deceive him, and there are reports that recently he had begun to speak against government policies. Before 15th Shaban he exhorted the faithful to converge to Najaf from all parts of Iraq as they had been doing since time immemorial and which the regime had been trying to stop using tanks and helicopters. One day before his martyrdom he criticised the regime for the strong security presence in Najaf to police the Shias.

It appears that he knew his life was in danger and had sent some members of his family abroad. Reports say that 15 Shia demonstrators died in Baghdad on Saturday following his martyrdom. There were reports of rioting in other mainly Shia suburbs of Baghdad and cities across southern Iran including Najaf. Reportedly the regime lost control of the city of Nassiriya and had to bomb protestors from the air.

Ayatullah As-Sadr's martyrdom is the latest in a series of a sustained campaign to subdue the Shia majority in Iraq. During the last one year, Ayatullah Murtaza Ali Muhammad Ibrahim Borujerdi was martyred in April 1998; then Mirza 'Ali Al-Gharawi was martyred on 18th June, 1998. In the month of Ramadhan, armed hooligans attacked the house of Ayatullah Shaykh Hafiz Bashir Husayn Najafi in which he and many of those around him sustained serious injuries. Ayatullah Bashir Husain Najafi is a respected Marja of Pakistani origin, and is looked upon with reverence by all "ulama".

Now comes this latest outrage. "Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilahi Rajiun."





## Dar Eid Festival attracts over 2700 ladies and gents

The night of Saturday 23 January, 1998 was a grand one for the community. The occasion was the annual Eid Festival at the Al Muntazir Complex in Dar es Salaam. With this Complex now also encompassing the recently purchased former Korean Cultural centre, the ladies too had an opportunity to mark this occasion with their male folk. And surely they did not turn up in few numbers --the long motorcade of cars dropping the womenfolk even caught non-communal city drivers by surprise and as one would expect, traffic police were on the job to assist volunteers in guiding traffic.

With over 2700 tickets sold and a fair number of complimentary passes issued, the ladies, gents and children in attendance made up between 30% to 40% of our community population--by no means a small attendance.

While the men were seated on the football ground and women accommodated in the adjacent ex-Korean building, the children were occupied with their own choice of games. This was unlike many of our other gatherings where young children have to frown and bear it while leaders take to the mike. The childrens' side was this time organised with the Canadian Chuck-E-Cheese

type approach---buy your tokens, play the available games, score as many points as you can and win prizes commensurate to the points won. The games available included video games, golf, darts, toppling the pyramid of tins etc.

On the gents side proceedings began with The Master of Ceremonies, Aunali Khalfan briefly outlining the many advantages of the Complex to the community. Being the Chairman of the Central Health Board (CHB) it was to be expected that his delivery did, and rightly so, touch on the health advantages that accrue from sports involvement.

The Chairman of Union Sports Club, Raza Virjee then took to the mike for his welcome address. He said that youths of the community need to be reached if they are to be made aware of their responsibilities to the community. He said an effective way of getting them together is through sports.

He also called on the sisters of the community to cultivate a sporting spirit. He said the enthusiasm the womenfolk showed during the month of Ramadhan indicated that they had been ignored for long. He called on

them to take full advantage of the new facilities by arranging sporting events within the requirements of the Sharia.

The President of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Asgher Bharwani reiterated the important role of sports in daily lives and outlined the shortcoming on finances facing the Al Muntazir Complex. He called upon community members to pledge more as the Jamaat still has a fair amount to collect to cover the actual cost of about US \$ 2 million.

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohammed Dhirani congratulated the Jamaat and Union on acquiring the new Complex and said it was nice to see youths drawn away from other avenues in the just bygone month of Ramadhan.

Charity pledges were then sought for by Anver Rajpar and Mohamed Hassan Lakha auctioned a few items for the same purpose. A little over US \$100,000 was collected thereby still leaving the Jamaat with a substantial deficit.

All guests were then treated to a sumptuous dinner as the clock ticked to midnight. In all, the occasion was well celebrated but being the first ever communal event that involved the gents and ladies, there were snags which can be corrected upon in future.

There was a problem with the timing of the ladies occasion which ended after the gents event, there were some complaints about the food not being available to some ladies while some, in both the gents and ladies sections, felt that they were unduly pressurised to make donations.

While such shortcomings should not be condoned by the organisers they, at the same time, need not worry them unduly. Apparently many of the 'wrongs' were not directly of their making because in some cases, like on the number of serving tables required, they were let down at the last minute by a company contracted to deliver these tables. The ultimate objective should be to make the next such occasion even better than the bygone one.



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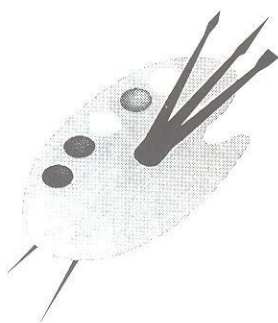
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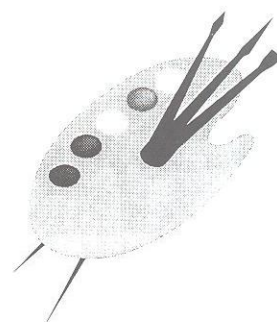
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## Rukaiya Haider Rehmtulla excels

She did it once and she has done it again. Rukaiya Rehmtulla daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Haider Rehmtulla of Dar es Salaam repeated her O' Level examination achievement by once again notching excellent results in her A' Level studies at the Al Muntazir Islamic Seminary in Dar es Salaam.

She stood first in all the terms at Al Muntazir Islamic Seminary during her two years there when she pursued her Form 5 and Form 6 studies. She achieved the highest rank in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.

During the graduation ceremony which was held after she successfully completed her studies, she was honoured for Islamic studies, Advance Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics. She was the only one to achieve the top grade in the Tanzania Advance Level National Examinations from Al Muntazir Seminary.

Prior to undertaking the Advanced level examinations, Rukaiya also did very well in her National Form IV Examinations. Her results were so good that she had to climb the stage seven times to receive seven trophies she was awarded during the Graduation ceremony.

Responding to an offer of a computer course, she has accepted and started the course on 1 February 1999. Going by her results we know she will not rest on her laurels and will once again vie for excellent results. We wish her good luck in her studies and hope to also hear from other students who make their parents proud by their great academic achievements.

## Murji wins Parliamentary seat

The National Electoral Commission (NEC) officially declared the Tanzania ruling Party (CCM) contestant for Mitema Parliamentary by-election, Hasnain Mohamed Murji, the winner.

Murji garnered 89.2 per cent of the votes. He got 37,594 votes while his opponent got 4,538 votes. The by-election was held on 14 March, 1999.

# DATELINE NAIROBI

from Munir A. Chagpar

**NEW PROGRAMME:** Ramadhan in Nairobi was a great treat this year as a new style programme was introduced. In previous years, the evening programme began at Maghrebain and continued to 8 p.m. when Dua-e-Iftitah would be read. This time the programme itself began at 8 p.m. and ran on until 9.30 p.m.

The daily programme began with the Isha namaaz in Jama'ah followed by Quran Khwani, Dua-e-Iftitah, selected translation of this Dua and lectures. We were graced with two respected scholars from Qum. They were Sheikh Shabir Maisami, who was in Nairobi for the first 15 days of the Holy Month and Dr. Murtaza Alidina who presented his talks during the period of Qadr. The lectures given by these two scholars were no doubt informative, philosophical and informative enough to attract a large audience and keep them attentive to the very end.

**I'TIKAAAF - debut in Nairobi:** For the first time ever I'tikaaf was introduced in Nairobi this year, pioneered by Sheikh Shabir Maisami. It was the first event in Nairobi in the beginning of the solar year. The programme took place from 12th to 14th of Mahe- Ramadhan (1st - 3rd January, 99'). There were over 40 participants among who were a few girls. The age group ranged from 9-10 years to a bit over 40. All of them gathered for one and only one cause - to worship the Almighty Creator and get closer to Him.

There were lecturers who presented simple topics about health to more complex ones on philosophy. The lecturers included Murtaza Jaffer, Naushad Moledina, Mujahid Sheriff and Sheikh Maisami himself. Apart from these already activities various others programmes were held including Quran recitation, an open fora, various duas, Salaat-e-Tahajjud etc.

At the end of the programme there was an official closing ceremony during which gifts were presented to all participants and Quran memorization reciters.

**QUR'AN RECITERS STUN ALL:** On the eve of 16th January, 1999 ex-President Zulfikar Khinji co-ordinated a Quran competition where more than 25 Madrassah boys went up front and recited the Holy Quran in front of community members. The students had been attending Sheikh Mumtaz Sheriffee's (resident Alim) classes on Quran recitation. Sheikh Sheriffee is well known throughout Pakistan as a Kari.

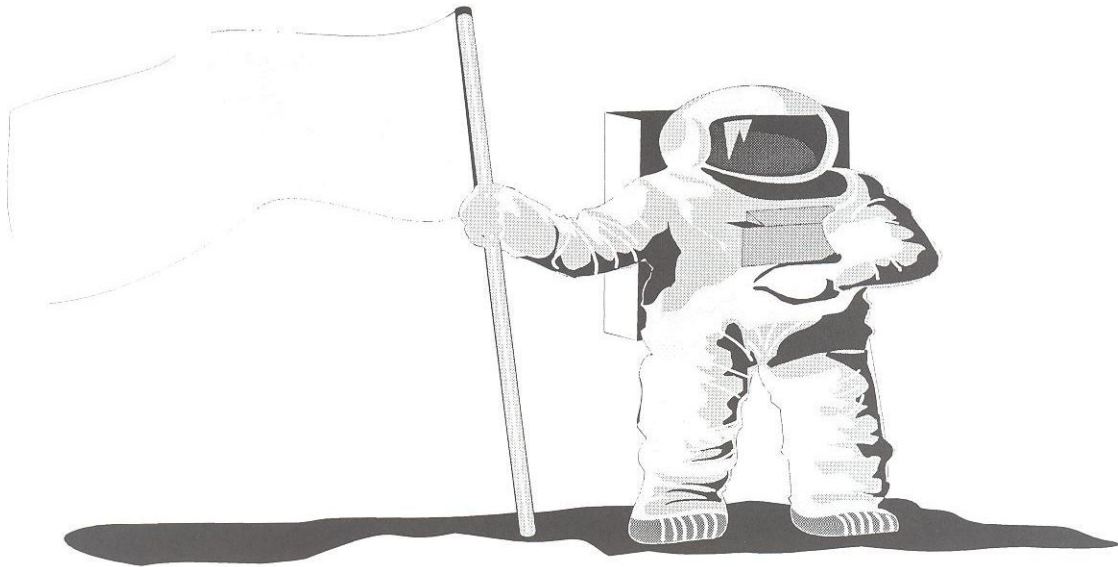
This program was held as part of the Madrassah's Annual Prize giving day Ceremony. One by one the reciters approached the prepared podium and beautifully recited, in their voices, verses from the holy Quran.

Afterwards, the Madrassah took over the podium, and Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, the MRC and Asst. Headmaster of the Madrassah addressed the audience. In his speech he remembered Marhum Rizwan Yusuf - a young student of the Haydari Madrassah. He also praised the teachers and cautioned the parents that their children should not decline in the recitation of the Holy Quran as they were already a step ahead in Sheikh Sheriffee's class. Among the other things stressed were Madrassah discipline and parent-teacher co-operation.

The Guest of Honour for the event was former Vice president of the World Federation, Manzoor Kanani who was introduced by the Madrassah administrator, Anverbhai Manji.



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## Jottings from the Bilal Muslim Mission (T) Desk...

*We provide readers with news jottings from the Bilal Muslim Mission (Tanzania) Desk compiled in January, 1999.*

### EDUCATION

#### 1. MADRASATU AHLUL-BAYT (A.S.)

Now that one full academic year has passed since the introduction of the new syllabus in the Hawzah, we think it is high time the community is given full details. At the outset the following three items should be highlighted:

1. The syllabus now in force is the one prescribed by *Sazman-e-Madaris wa Hawzaha Kharij az Kishwar* (Organisation of Madrasas and Hawzahs outside Iran). It is a wing of *Sazman-e-Farhang wa Irtebatate Islami*. This is a four years course and if one year is added for preparatory class the total duration would be 5 years.

2. Candidates for this course must have passed their secondary examination; final examinations are expected to be held under the auspices of the Tehran University, and successful students will be awarded a B.A. degree.

3. It has been decided to run a parallel stream for non-Secondary students if they prove good in Arabic and religious subjects — but such students will not get a degree.

The Hawzah is the back-bone of Tablighi activities. Its students serve in the hawza itself as well as in Bilal Mission's up-country branches. And almost all Tablighi institutions which have come on the scene in the recent past are benefitting from our ex-students.

In 1986, the syllabus was revised with Arabic being made the medium of instruction. We arranged with Sazman-e-Tablighat to send us good Principals. For some time the system worked

smoothly, then difficulties ensued because the Iraqi, Iranian or Lebanese scholars' material needs were much higher than the resources of the Mission.

Then Sazman then advised us to invite Qum-educated scholars of Indo-Pakistan origin but they did not prove very successful as Principals. Then for 2-3 years we tried to run the hawza with local principals only. However every African Principal complained that the staff did not cooperate with him.

For a religious hawza, a Boarding House is required because day-students can not get practical training, in various *a'mal*, *nawha* and *marthiya*, Islamic ethics and other such things during normal class time. It was necessary for a successful Boarding programme that the Boarders should be provided meals by the Mission, but this too was beyond our resources. So the Boarding had to be closed.

After a trial and error period of ten years, the Mission in 1997, wrote to the World Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) Assembly (Tehran) that they should take full responsibility of the teachers (including their cars and drivers), and that if they wanted to initiate any new programme, they would have to bear its expenses, because Bilal Muslim Mission's financial restraints did not allow it to spend on the hawza and the boarding more than it was doing at present.

By a fortunate coincidence, Ayatullah Taskhiri, Chairman of the World Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) Assembly came to Tanzania in July, 1997. On visiting our Temeke Centre, he was highly impressed and wrote in the Visitors Book that this Centre can be a beacon of light whose graduates could fulfil the Tablighi needs of all countries in Southern, Central and Eastern Africa. Then he went on to specifically direct the Iranian Cultural Centre, Jihad-e-Sazindagi and the Organisation for

Hawzahs and Educational Institutions in Foreign Countries to accept the responsibility as outlined in the Mission's letter and to face-lift the buildings, lay out the grounds and the garden.

On the educational side, he directed the Organisation for Hawzahs to enforce its own syllabus; admit enough boarders and provide them with food and other necessities.

A Board of Governors was formed with 6 members (3 from the Mission, 3 from the Cultural Centre) with Allamah Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi as its Chairman. Thereafter, almost all his directives concerning physical improvements have been implemented. Renovations were done in the Masjid, Husainiyah, Hawzah, Teachers' two flats, & Boarding House.

The year 1998 began with 74 students in the Boarding House. But at the time examinations were held in November only 47 had remained, divided in 2 classes, Tamhidi and Awwal. Ten passed clearly and 27 were promoted.

The Boarding students are now given breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner. In addition, each receives Shs. 5,000/- per month for pocket money.

The Library has received hundreds of books from Iran and is now located inside the Boarding in a bigger hall, with a paid librarian to manage it. Students are required to visit the library daily.

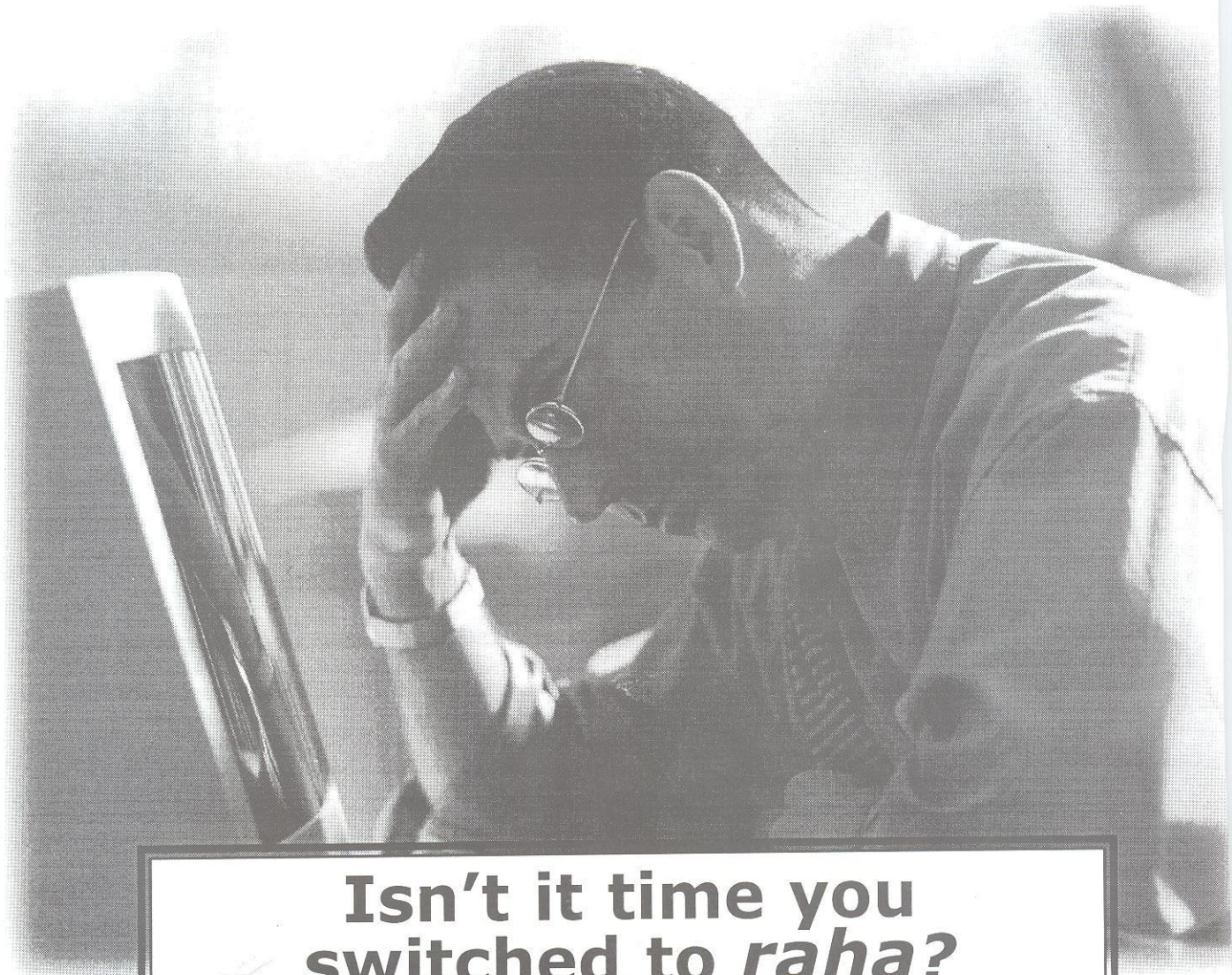
There are three teachers from Iran in the Hawzah: H. I. Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Tabataba'i, H. I. Shaykh Mohammad Raza Badi'i and H. I. Shaykh Ka'bi Nasab.

#### 2. ENGLISH MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOL:

The Primary School at our Temeke Centre has made a good progress in the four years since its inception. In 1998, there were 288 students divided in four classes. With reorganisation of the Hawzah and shifting of the printing department to the head-office in the city centre, it was possible to reserve the whole double storey block for the Primary and Nursery School,

(continued on page 41)





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**57th Supreme Council Session  
2-4 April, 1999**



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERATION OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI JAMAATS OF AFRICA



More than a century back our forefathers came down to Zanzibar from the Indian Sub-Continent to take their first plunge into the unknown continent of Africa. This Island was hospitable then as much as it is now. The warmth of the Island is a reflection of the warmth of its people.

The soil of this Island has produced the famous and the intellectuals, the ulemas and the students of the theology of international fame. This was the country where our first Mosque and Imambara were built in Africa having overtaken Mumbai which was built later.

The last meeting of the Africa Federation took place in Zanzibar in 1952. We had to wait for 47 long years and once again Zanzibar is hosting the Supreme Council's 57th Session during Easter holidays of 1999 - the last meeting of this millennium.

We shall be meeting inshallah in Zanzibar to deliberate the next step our Community should take in the field of Tabligh, Education, Health, Youth and Ladies. Let us pray that from this place it would give us the aspiration to think and plan how best we can achieve the spiritual and worldly upliftment in life and how best we can be of service not only to Islam but to humanity in general.

The Supreme Council is grateful to the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat and specially its Chairman Alhaj MohamedRaza Hassanali for hosting the meeting and to all the workers who have worked tirelessly to make a success of this Session. Let us wish the deliberation well and hope the participants would have a pleasant stay in Zanzibar.

**MOHAMED G.M. DHIRANI**  
**CHAIRMAN**

April, 1999



## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES



The Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Jamats of Africa is having its 57th Annual Council Session in Zanzibar. As far as I can recollect, Zanzibar was its venue for the Conference in 1952; and so, it will be indeed very significant to meet there after a lapse of 47 years.

Though it will not be possible for me to be physically present at the Session, my goodwill coupled with prayers for its success will always be there.

Under the wise and sincere leadership of Haji Mohamed Dhirani and his colleagues, I have every hope for the forward stride of the Africa Federation into the coming millenium. The Africa Federation has a glittering history of services to our Community in Africa, and the coming years, in spite of the expected changes in the world order, should see happy and smoother times.

I wish all a successful Session.

With Salaams and Duas,

**ASGHARALI M.M. JAFFER**  
**PRESIDENT**  
April, 1999



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE KUWWATUL ISLAM JAMAAT OF ZANZIBAR



First of all I thank Allah (s.w.t.) for providing us this opportunity to host the 57th Session of the Supreme Council of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa for the second time in the history of Zanzibar. The last such Session was held here in 1952. Similarly, my Jamaat is grateful to the Chairman, Alhaj Mohamedbhai Dhirani and the Managing Committee of the Africa Federation for accepting our invitation to host this Session in Zanzibar.

Zanzibar Island which is known as Unguja in Kiswahili is located in the Indian Ocean about 35 kilometres off the coast of Mainland Tanzania at a longitude of 30 degrees East and latitude of 60 degrees South of the Equator. Zanzibar Island is 50 miles long and 24 miles wide. It has a surface area of 995 square miles and has a population of about 800,000 including the island of Pemba.

Zanzibar has a rich and exciting history. The island played an important role in propagating Islam in mainly the East Coast of Africa and other neighbouring countries in Africa. It is not surprising too that one can trace back the early history of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri in Zanzibar since the 1870s when our forefathers resolved to adopting the true Faith of Ahlul Bait (a.s.) by breaking away from the main stream of Khojas. Historically, the first ever Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Jamaat in the world was established in Zanzibar in 1882.

Therefore, on this occasion it is appropriate to remember and pray for those 'Mujahids' who risked their lives and endured untold hardships but were committed and unshaken against all odds and forces of the time in adopting the true faith (Mazhab-e-Jaffaria) openly, the foundation of which we follow to this day. Let us pray for their 'Maghferaj' and may Allah (s.w.t.) in His mercy place them in a high abode in the company of Ahlul Bait (a.s.). Ameen.

I am pleased to welcome the Councilors and Invitees who have assembled here for the 57th Session. This Session will hopefully provide them an opportunity to refresh past memories and history of our Jamaat and of our ancestors. In the same spirit, we must renew our resolve and commit towards strengthening our Faith to serve Islam, the less fortunate and humanity at large.

On behalf of the Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat and on my behalf, once again I say KARIBU UNGUJA and wish you all an enjoyable stay and a successful meeting.

**MOH'DRAZA H. DHARAMSI**

**PRESIDENT**

April, 1999



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Organising Committee, I have the honour and pleasure to welcome you all to the 57th Session of the Supreme Council of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa which is being hosted by Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat in Zanzibar from 2nd to 4th April, 1999.

Zanzibar as a state, though small geographically, has a pivotal place in the history of economical, social and cultural development of East Africa as a whole. In addition, Zanzibar is renowned for its rich Islamic cultural heritage, simplicity and warm hospitality to visitors. With this background and the additional attraction of the splendid and scenic beach resorts and the historical sites in the Stone Town of Zanzibar, the choice of Zanzibar for the Supreme Council Session is ideal and timely.

Similarly, the community in Zanzibar too has a glorious history of its own dating from the first arrivals of Khojas as early as 18th century from India. Therefore, Zanzibar once upon a time had a strong and vibrant community of Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri and produced renowned personalities of religious scholars, academicians as well as prominent businessmen. The migration in the 1960s left a big vacuum in the community.

It is heartening to mention that, inspite of meager resources, the Zanzibar Jamaat has played a key role in continuing to maintain upto this moment the religious functions and other social activities as has been the tradition for a century now. The upholding of our customs, traditions and Islamic cultural values are important ingredients for the identity and unity of our community through succession of generations.

My Committee thanks the host, Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat for their full co-operation to the Committee. My thanks are also to the Organising Committee Members, the Ithna-asheri Union Volunteer Corps, the 5th DSM Shia Boys Scouts from Dar Es Salaam and the Zanzibar Volunteers for their tireless services in putting up all the preparations for this meeting.

The host Jamaat has set aside one day for the visit to the historical sites in the Stone Town of Zanzibar and a drive to the scenic beach resorts of the Indian Ocean in the outskirts of the town. Councillors and Invitees are all welcome to avail themselves of this trip.

All efforts have been made to make your stay in Zanzibar most enjoyable. In case of any shortcomings in our services, please excuse us. In case of any assistance required during your stay, please feel free to contact any member of the Organising Committee who will be at your service.

Lastly, I pray for the successful achievement of the objectives of this Session.

**AUNALI K. KHALFAN**  
**CHAIRMAN - ORGANISING COMMITTEE**  
April, 1999



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE KHOJA SHIA ISNAASHARI JAMAAT OF MUMBAI



We are very happy to learn that the Supreme Council of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa are holding their 57th Session in Zanzibar from 2nd to 4th April, 1999.

It is indeed heartening to know that this Session is being held in Zanzibar after a lapse of four and a half decades. I am sure there are very few amongst us who had the privilege of attending this Session when it was last hosted in Zanzibar.

I am sure that this occasion will be a useful opportunity for members of our community to come together and deliberate as well as chart out a plan to take advantage of the opportunities which the community can take advantage of. This occasion is also the right time to discuss problems faced by the community. In fact this annual Session of the Supreme Council is amongst the most important gatherings of the year.

On this historic occasion, on behalf of the K.S.I. Jamaat, Mumbai, I offer my felicitations to all the members of our community in Africa and pray to Allah (s.w.t.) to further increase the bond of brotherhood amongst our Khoja brothers in Africa and India through the medium of this Session.

**MOHIB ALI NASSER**  
**PRESIDENT**  
April, 1999



## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

### MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL OF GUJARAT KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI JAMAT

On behalf of the Executive Councillors of the Council of Gujarat K.S.I. Jamat, its member Jamats and myself, we congratulate the K.S.I. Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat – Zanzibar for being the host Jamat of the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of The Supreme Council of the Federation of K.S.I. Jamaats of Africa.

No doubt, it is an historic occasion after a lapse of 47 years since the last Session was held in Zanzibar in 1952. Being together for the affairs of the community at large will definitely benefit us religiously, socially and economically. We wish all participants a successful meeting.

I am unable to attend the above said Session as there is an opening ceremony of the “K.S.I. Orphanage” at Mahuva and a Foundation stone laying ceremony of a Housing Project at Ahmadabad. There also is an opening ceremony function of the “Haji-Naji Housing Project” at Bhavnagar, a project which will solve the housing problem of 72 needy families.

We are with you in serving Islam and all noble deeds for the betterment of our community. I pray to Almighty Allah (s.w.t.) to give you good health, wealth and inclination to serve Islam more and more.

Again I congratulate you all and wish all the programmes of the Session a success. My best wishes and salaams to all participants and members of Zanzibar Jamat.

**HASSANALI J. MERCHANT**  
**PRESIDENT**

April, 1999

### MESSAGE FROM THE MEHFIL-E-MURTAZA KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI JAMAT

We are pleased to learn that Zanzibar Jamaat is hosting the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Supreme Council from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1999.

The occasion will be a useful opportunity to discuss the gamut of issues confronting the community at large in this challenging era of fast paced technological, economic and social changes.

We wish Zanzibar Jamat and the Africa Federation all the success in organising the conference.

**HASSAN ABDULHUSSEIN**  
**HON. SECRETARY**

April, 1999



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

57th Session of the Supreme Council from 2nd to 4th April, 1999

Hosted by Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat – Zanzibar

## ORGANISING COMMITTEE

	Name	Title/Service	Tel Res.	Mobile Tel.
1	Aunali K. Khalfan	Chairman	051-137996	0812 782 519
2	Razahusein Janmohamed	ViceChairman/Finance & Accomodation	051-126902	
3	Amin Shivji	Znz. Secretary/Admin.	054-30146	0811 602 744
4	Gulamabbas M. A. Saleh	Znz. Transport/Tours.	054-32029	0811 327 293
5	Hasnain M. Dharamsi	Znz. Food, Beverages & Catering	054-30044	0811 609 961
6	Murtaza R. Jivraj	Video Recording, Photographs & PA system	051-112307	
7	Khalil Khaku	I.U.V.C./Refreshments & Services	051-138630	0811 605 585
8	Nazim Jaffer	I.U.V.C./Conference Set-up & Services	051-114711 051-170870	
9	Jaffer Mussa	SCOUTS/Registration & Services	051-136976	0812 780 699
10	Aliasgher Kassam	SCOUTS/Registration & Service	051-133372	0811 660 784
11	Hassan Raza	Member/Medical	051-110345	0811 602 413
12	Naushad Ladha	Member/Transport Dsm.	051-16876	0812 786 220
13	Abbas Manji	Member/Decoration & publicity	051-137208	
14	Hasnain Khalfan	Member/Publications	051-126019	



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## ZANZIBAR --- SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

### Location

Zanzibar consists of two large islands, plus several smaller ones, about 40 kilometres (25 miles) off the coast of East Africa, in the Indian Ocean, about 6 degrees south of the Equator. The two large islands are Unguja (usually called Zanzibar Island) and Pemba.

### Size

Zanzibar Island is about 85km long and between 20km and 30km wide, with an area of just under 1500 square kilometres (640 square miles). Pemba Island is about 75km long and between 15km and 20km wide, with an area around 850 square kilometres (380 square miles).

### Topography

The islands of Zanzibar are generally flat and low lying. The western and central parts of Zanzibar Island have some low hills, where the highest point is about 120 metres (390 feet) above sea level. Pemba Island has a central ridge, cut by several small valleys, and appears more hilly than Zanzibar Island, although the highest point on Pemba is only 95 metres (310 feet) above sea level. The islands of Zanzibar are surrounded by coasts of rocky inlets or sandy beaches, with lagoons and mangrove swamps, and coral reefs beyond the shoreline particularly on the eastern side of the main islands.

### Vegetation and Agriculture

The islands were originally forested, but human habitation has resulted in widespread clearing, although a few isolated pockets of indigenous forest remain. The main crops grown in Zanzibar are coconuts and cloves. Bananas, citrus fruits and other spices are also grown commercially. Maize, cassava and other vegetables and cereals are grown for local consumption.

### Wildlife

There are no large wild animals on Zanzibar, as found on the African mainland. Forest areas are inhabited by monkeys and small antelopes. Civets and various species of mongoose are found all over the islands. Birdlife is varied and interesting, with over 100 species being recorded, although bird populations are not as high as in other parts of the East African region. The marine wildlife, in the coral reefs that surround the islands, is particularly rich.

### Population and Settlement

The population of Zanzibar is around 800,000. Most people live in small villages, and are engaged in farming or fishing. The largest settlement is Zanzibar Town (sometimes called Zanzibar City), on Zanzibar Island, with about 100,000 inhabitants. Other towns (which are only slightly larger than the villages) on Zanzibar Island include Chaani, Bambi and Makunduchi. The overall settlement pattern is similar on Pemba. The largest town is Chake Chake, with a population of about 10,000; other smaller towns are Wete and Mkoani.

### Language

The language of Zanzibar is Swahili (called Kiswahili locally), and visitors with a basic grasp of this language will be understood anywhere, although there are many forms and dialects found in different areas. Arabic is also spoken. English is widely used in the towns and tourist areas.

### Religion

Islam is the dominant religion, and practised by most Zanzibaris. All towns and villages have mosques. In Zanzibar Town there are also churches and temples for the small population of Christians and Hindus.

### Economy

For the people of Zanzibar, fishing and farming are the main economic activities. From the beginning of the 19th Century to the mid-1970s Zanzibar exported a large proportion of the world's supply of cloves, and the islands' economy was based largely on this commodity. Some diversification has occurred in the last 10 to 15 years, but cloves are still a major export, along with coconut products and other spices. In recent years, seaweed has also become an important export commodity. The potential for tourism to be a major earner of foreign currency has been recognised, and this is being developed. The number of tourists visiting Zanzibar is still very small, but increasing every year.

### Currency and Exchange Rates

As part of Tanzania, Zanzibar's unit of currency is the Tanzanian Shilling (TSh). Visitors (non-Tanzanians) to Zanzibar must pay for some items, such as air flights, ship tickets and hotels, in foreign ('hard') currency, usually US dollars. Inflation is high and many other items, such as tours or rental cars are quoted in dollars, although these are payable in hard currency or in TSh at the going rate. This situation means the US dollar is an official second currency in Zanzibar. Prices in TShs. are likely to vary considerably in the future, but prices in US\$ will remain more constant.

### Official bank exchange rates:

1 US dollar = 688 TSh approx.  
1 UK pound = 1137 TSh approx.  
Private bureaux de change (or forex bureaux) exchange at 'free market' rates, generally offer about 2% to 10% more than the banks.



## THE PAST ULEMA, AMONG OTHERS, OF KUWWATUL ISLAM JAMAAT IN ZANZIBAR



Marhum Sayeid Abdulhusain Jawad Marashi Musawi - The first resident Alim of Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat in Zanzibar. He passed away in Mecca in 1905.

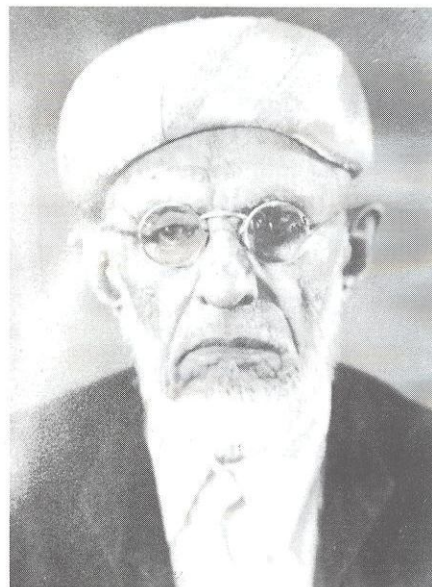


Marhum Agha Sayeid Hussain Habibullah Shushtari Musawi (son-in-law of Sayeid Abdulhusain Jawad Marashi Musawi). He remained the resident Alim for 40 years. He died in Zanzibar in 1945.

## THE PAST LEADERS, AMONG OTHERS, OF KUWWATUL ISLAM JAMAAT



The first President of Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat - Marhum Haji Pira Walli who began his term in 1882.



Marhum Alibhai Nathoo succeeded Haji Pira Walli and remained in the helm for a record period of 23 years.



## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

# A SHORT HISTORY OF ZANZIBAR KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERIES

By Abdulrazak Sheriff Fazal, Dar es salaam

The spontaneous invitation of Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat of Zanzibar has brought the Supreme Council Session this year to Zanzibar. Indeed it is a historic occasion as Zanzibar itself abounds in the history of the community. It was here that our forefathers had first landed in the mid nineteenth century abandoning the shores of 'Cutch' and 'Kathiawad' in look out for greener pastures, and a new home, and in their own lingo proclaiming Zanzibar as 'Jangbar'.

As the delegates, councillors and invitees from all over the world alight from the ship they will be carrying with them weighty emotions and hoping to get glimpse of their ancestral houses in the stone town, the schools where they had studied and the narrow streets and corners where they had played as children. Some may wander at *Forodhani*, *Mnazimoja* or even take a drive to *Chwaka* or *Jambiani* where many an evening of olden days had been leisured out.

On landing the ghost stonetown is imbued with nostalgia and traversing through *Malindi's* narrow lanes Kiponda Road is reached where the small 'Sabil' monument built by Janmohamed Chattu in commemoration of Imam Husain's 1300 birth anniversary becomes evident. Opposite it stands the new *Faize* School building (Ithna-asheri School) which was built in 1958 by Husain Dharamsi Gangji replacing the old *Faize* School across the narrow passage, and it is this old *Faize* School Building which takes one down the memory lane. Today it may not seem of any significance

but it was here sometime in the 1870s, away from the *Jamaatkhana*, that our reverend elders used to gather and resolve decisive issues. Eventually their religious zealot paved the way to dissidence from the main *Khoja* group leader at that time was Tharia Topan (later knighted and a street named after him).

It must be noted here that prior to the dissident movement our ancestry had enjoyed the right of adapting itself to all the normal Islamic precedence such as *namaaz*, *rozah*, *kissas (majlis)*, *niyaz* etcetera. It was only later when restrictive measures were imposed and the faithfuls debarred from performing normal traditions and rituals that the dissidence within the *Khojas* erupted, both in Zanzibar and other towns along the coast as well as in India.

The likes of Dewji Jamal invited the faithfuls to the old *Fayze* School Building where they prayed *namaaz*, recited *majlis* and served *niyaz*. Leading among the dissidents were the two Walji Rawji brothers, Mohammedjaffer and Jhanmohamed.

Heedless of any threats, after receiving moral support from the British Resident in 1880 Mohammedjaffer built the mosque adjoining the old *Faize* School Building while the other brother Jhanmohamed procured the *Kabrastan* Plot at *Rahaleo*. Obviously the predecessors lie buried at the *Khoja* Ismaili *Kabrastan* at *Mnazimoja* beside the Coopers Golf ground. Incidentally Mohammedjaffer Rawji was buried

at the mosque and his grave still lies there. The Sheriff Dewji family went on to avail a plot at *Mkunazini*, converted it into *bustan* where they buried their family members and even held *majilises* on Sundays.

According to the history published by Federation in 1960 – and reported by Haji Karim Allarkhia, the Kuwwat mosque and early *Imambara* were built by donations from among the original (founding) members of the community which numbered 250 souls in 1880. The donations included about Rs. 8,000 which Dewji Jamal and Allarkhia Walli both formerly of Mumbai had mobilised from Mumbai – and other large donors were Mohamed Walji Rawji and Walli Nazerali. During this period Mohamed Walji Rawji also bought a piece of land for burial.

By the year 1882 the mosque was completed and even the *Imambara* (ground floor level) was built by its side. The plot for the *Imambara* could be availed through the good office of Kalbe Aly Khan who was one of the *wazirs* of Sultan Majid Bin Said. Also it was he who had initiated the inclusion of *Ashhaduanna Aliyun Waliyullah* in the *azan* from the mosque. The *Imambara* was partly financed by Rhemtulla Tejani and carpeted by Mohamed Walli Dharsi. The stage was thus set in 1882 for the formation of the *Khoja Shia Ithnaashri Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat* in Zanzibar with Pira Walli as its first President. This was historically the first ever *Khoja Shia*

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## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

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*Ithna-asheri Jamaat* in the *Khoja* world.

The *Marja* of the time Sheikh Zainul Abedin Mazindaranin in Iraq was contacted and Agha Sayed Abdulhusain Jawaad Marshi Musawi dispatched to Zanzibar as Resident *Alim*. He inculcated upon the faithfuls the true version of the *mazhab Shiaism* and thus giving momentum to the faith.

There goes an interesting anecdote that once sometime in 1900 Zanzibar was hit by a severe drought. All the communities were called upon to pray for the rains. Sayed Abdulhusain assembled all the *Ithnaashries* at 4:00.a.m. in the *sahan* of the mosque where they said their *Fajar* prayers and then were led to *Mnazimoja* where in the open *Namaze Istiska* was said. As soon as the prayers were over the skies opened and it rained incessantly. Sultan Humud was impressed and wanted to meet in person Sayed Abdulhusain who had to be collected from his residence. The Sultan became so overwhelmed by the presence of the impeccable *alim* that he accompanied him back all the way to his residence in the chariot ridden by two horses. Such was the grandeur of the old *ulema*.

Also around 1890 a leading ulema from Hyderabad, Aqa Sayad Ghulamhussein, paid a visit to Zanzibar. His sermons, eloquence and charisma drifted away a section of the community who formed their own *Jamaat (Khoja Shia Ithnaashri Hujjatul Islam Jamaat)*. They went on to build their own mosque, a huge *Imambara* and even availed a *Kabrastan* plot across *Mwembeladu*.

The cynosure of the *Hujjat*

Mosque is its minaret built by Mohamed Rhemtulla Merali (Mamu Hariri). The *Hujjat Jamaat* also benefited a lot from the generous Dato Hemani and Nassar Noor Mohamed whose immense property was entrusted to it. The Dato Hemani Kanyashara was the school for girls while Nassar Noor Mohamed Dispensary provided medical facilities for all *Khojas*. The dispensary building was a huge architectural monument but sadly its trusteeship was taken over by the government from the community. The Dispensary ceased to operate as the object of the Trust and has since been leased for other purposes. There were recreational sports too, *Saun Bagh* at *Sateni* and *Kursum Bagh* at *Kilimangu*, where often a large gathering met, recited *majlises* and held feasts.

Interestingly the Zanzibarians refer to *Kuwwat* as *Junni* (old) and *Hujjat* as *Nai* (new). Those keen on history may know that while the members of the *Kuwwat Jamaat* consisted mainly of *Cutchis* with the interlinking of few *Kathiawadis* those of *Hujjat Jamaat* comprised mainly *Kathiawadis* with few interlinking *Cutchis*. One of those *Cutchis* was a youthful and enterprising Ali Nathoo who had emerged on the Zanzibar scene in 1886 from the remote Nagalpur. He went on to succeed Pira Walli as the President of *Kuwwat Jamaat* and reigned the presidency for a record 23 years. He amassed wealth from his business and his charity knew no bounds. The *Kuwwat imambara* built upon the old one was fully financed by him and it was done on a grand scale.

Ali Nathoo's charity after the First World War and during the famine in Zanzibar was unsurpassable for which the British Resident offered him knighthood but he declined the title 'Sir'. The Resident was so much impressed by his nobility and

selfless-ness that he enquired of him if he could be of service to him. The great man requested for public holidays for *10th Muharram* and *21st Ramadhan*. His wishes were granted and these two sacred days were marked as public holidays for 45 years from 1920 to 1964. In fact Zanzibar had been the only place besides Iran where *21st Ramadhan* used to be observed as public holiday. Even today Zanzibar has a street known as *Kwa Ali Nathoo*.

Another notable President of the *Kuwwat jamaat* was Husain Allarakhia Rahim, the Public Prosecutor with the Zanzibar Government and hence referred to as PP. He went on to become judge. Husain Rahim was dedicated to serving Islam and the community. After the Second World War he introduced the *Ithnaashri Voluntary Corps* with Ibrahim Husain Shariff as its Chairman, Ali Jivraj its Secretary and Abbas Tejani its Treasurer. There were other Presidents too of the *Kuwwat jamaat* and these include M.D.Kermali, M.A.Saleh, Husain Nazarali, Abdulrasul Khakoo, Sherali Ladha and Mohamedali Ismail Dharamsi.

In regard to Resident *Alims* Agha Sayed Abdulhusain who passed away in Mecca in 1905 was succeeded by his son in law, Agha Sayed Husain Habibullah Shustari Musawi. Sayed Husain was a very pious and humble man. He was also the most popular having remained the Resident *Alim* for 40 years till his death in Zanzibar in 1945. Thereafter it was Agha Sayed Mohamedhusain Nashirul Islam Musawi followed by Sayed Jabir Hassan, Tahzibul Hassan and few others.

Agha Husain and Agha Abdulhusain had built up big families. The household of Agha in Zanzibar was their progeny and

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## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

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held in very high esteem by the *Khoja Ithnashries*. Also there were *Shia Bahrainis*. They had a *mehfil* known as *Matemni* at *Kiponda*. Their *Alim* was Sayad Abbas who was famous for his Kiswahili idiolect.

Zanzibar as compared to other towns in Africa had the highest population of *Khoja Ithna-ashries* and they numbered almost 5000, as a result from further conversion and the influx of more arrivals from *Cutch* and *Kathiawad*. Such had been the impact of Zanzibar on the community that eventually Kiswahili became the mother tongue (not necessarily the ancestral language but the language one speaks and thinks in) of most of them though with its typical dialect and intermixing of *Cutchi* words here and there.

In fact the settlement on the mainland Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda took place much later on, sometime after 1920s though the Coastal towns of Bagamoyo, Tanga, Mombasa and Lamu had small settlements earlier. The Zanzibarians were well known for their *imandari*, *azadari* and *khatardari*. The building referred to as old *Faize* School Building was transformed into school in 1928 after seeking the consent of Sayed Abdul Hassan Isfahani. To begin with it had three tutors in M.M.Jaffer (Mulla Asgher's father), H.M.Rashid and Hassanali Rashid who themselves had earlier been sent to Luknow by a sponsor, Husain Rashid Nathan for *dini talim*. The *Faize* then became a full-fledged night school with besides *dinyat* the languages *Arabic*, *Farsi* and *Urdu* were taught. Abdulrasul Alidina Saleh became its first principal followed by Gulamhusain Sachu Lalji, Mohamed Jivraj and

Mohamedhusain Sachu Lalji. It had some highly knowledgeable *maalims* such as Agha Mehdi Shustari (grandson of Agha Husain), Mohamedjaffer Nathani (Malim Miya), Gulamhusain Peera, Najaf Tejani, Ahmed Issa and many more. During daytime Malim Maulidi, Malim Rajabali (Malim Rajabu), Agha Abdulu and Mulla Suleman (Mulla Karo) rendered selfless service providing koranic lessons to the children.

The publication of *dinyat* and various *mazhabi kitaabs* by Mohammedjaffer Sheriff Dewji and the periodical *Salsabil* by Gulamhusain Mohmed Walli Dharsi and Mohamed Jivraj enlightened Zanzibarians and enhanced their *imandari*. As a matter of fact it was the writing in *Salsabil* which provided impetus to the concept of Federation by inviting articles on it and offering prizes.

*Azadari* in Zanzibar was second to none. People from outside travelled to Zanzibar during the months of *Ramazan*, *Muharram* and *Saffar* specifically to participate in the *azadari*. The Zanzibar *shabihs* and *julus* assumed a pattern of its own and later adopted by almost all other Africa *jamaats*, some of which even emulated the staging of 'Hussain Day' that used to be an annual event observed with solemnity at Old Fort (Portuguese Fort) at night and attended by a mass cosmopolitan public, among the dignitaries who attended including the Sultan and the British Resident.

The *majlises* by Mulla Abdulhusein, Hassanali Dori, Ali Khakoo Rajpar, Fateh Ali, Abdulrasul Dewji, Husain Rahim, Ahmed Lakha, Ahmed Datoo, Mohamed Sheriff, Gulamhusain Peera, Raza Panju and the *bandh* (rhythmic) reciting three generations of Mulla Raza Kasam, Hassanali Raza and Jaffer Hassanali Raza were heard

rendering. The Koran and dua recitals by Malim Abdulrasul Bandali, Sheni Juma and Murtaza Bandali were ethereal.

The *majlises* resounded on microphone from various *mehfils*. It was at *Taziakhana* under the watchful supervision of the fervent Kassamali Mohamed Walli Dharsi (Bha Kassamali) that *azadari* was at its most stimulant. Another ardent *azadar* was Abdulla Saleh of Mehfile *Shahe Khurasan* (*Kiwanjani*) where *saf matam* continued till late after midnight.

The *mehfil* at *Mtendenii* run by Abdulrasul Peera and frequented by the members of the other sect joining their dissident counterpart came to acquire the name *Mehfile Private*. Interestingly the *Hazrat Abbas' ladu* occasion that we observe annually is an event that dates back to the *Khoja Ismaili* days (*Abbasali ja laddu*) and to date given lot of sanctity by them. Likewise the official positions *Mukhi* and *Kamrio* are traditionally *Khoja* designations to which we adhere even today.

It was the British Resident who inaugurated the opening of Haji Rhemtulla Tejani *Dharamsara* (guesthouse) in the year 1900. The *dharamsara* was meant for the guests visiting Zanzibar. The *dharamsara* in usage today was in fact the *Bewakhana* (house for widows) built in 1932 by Mohamed Allarakhia Shivji (Mamu Chiku).

When it came to *khatardari* the *mahemangiri* (hospitality) of the Zanzibarians was exemplary and their *khana* (food) sumptuous. The *imambara* kitchen catered by Gulla Dawood whose delicious *Khoja* cuisine of *kalio pau* (aab ghosh) and *khichro* (haleem) still gets talked about. The pavement outside the *Imambara* was the famous *barza* *Imamwaro*, and the road

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# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

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alongside converted into 'Khushali Bankro' (spreaded over with wooden benches and chairs) on the occasion of Khushalis.

Even in the field of sports the community did not lag behind. Husain Allarakhia Rahim was a respected member of Zanzibar Sports Control Board and made Chairman of its Cricket Sub Committee in 1933. Zanzibar Ithna-asheri Gymkhana was supposed to exist long back and had a formidable cricket team. Mulla Raza Nathani, Maalim Mohamedjaffer Nathani, Sherali Megji, Gulamali Kermali (Kabana), Noorali Jessa, Gulamhusain Ismail Dharamsi and lately, Baker Tejani, Akbar Gulamhusain and Bashir Nasar featured prominently in cricket. Even the mainland stalwarts like Amir Yusuf, Yusuf Kermali, Amir Gulamhusain, Bashir Tejani and Mohamed Nathoo had learnt and begun their cricket careers from Zanzibar. The Gymkhana also had a football as well as a volleyball team.

The history of Zanzibarians is littered with emotions. They were simple, peace loving and God fearing people. There was immense brotherhood and people cared for each other. The standard of education was extremely high and the community boasted of a number of intellectuals. Economically people were contented and mostly *Ithna-asheries* worked in Government Offices where administration was par excellent. Those who had business retained minimum margin of profit resulting in very high purchasing power and generally a good standard of living. The *Ithna-ashries* mostly resided at *Malindi* and *Kiponda* though a sizable number also occupied the *Hurumzi*, *Mkunazini* and *Gambo* areas. There was no fear of theft or hoodliganism and ladies could walk all

alone even after midnight.

The dream of peace always beckons and never remains forever. The sad events of 1960s led to the exodus of the community and its members dispersed here and there. Mohamedali Ismail Dharamsi and Hassanali Husain Ali Nathoo despite tiny *jamaat* and hardship endeavored to preserve the legacy and traditions of *Kuwwat jamaat*. Likewise today's bench of officials is also doing their needful but the glorious Zanzibar is mere history now.

The majority immigrants of the 19th century and their descendants having settled in the towns of Zanzibar, Tanganyika, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Mozambique and Madagascar adopted these countries as their home. They lost all the traces of relatives and other contacts in India after three generations. They staked their future for good or worse in the countries, which they had adopted as home.

It was the hospitable nature of the indigenous people and the cosmopolitan policy of the government of the day, a legacy which still continues, which gave the community the confidence of staking its future for itself in these countries and cultivate loyalty towards them.

Of the former Zanzibaris who have since settled in U.K., U.S.A., and Canada still find themselves attached to Zanzibar culturally. They speak Kiswahili among themselves when they meet in the mosque for prayers and *Imambara* for *majlises*. The photo albums fattened by the old photos taken in Zanzibar are one of their precious possessions with sentimental attachment.

It is said that one belongs to where one's pleasant memories are and these are childhood ones. Those who have settled abroad from Zan-

zibar find that they still belong to Zanzibar. Those with means do visit the Islands to refresh the memories while continue to cherish them.

It need be stated that in the absence of any record or archives it was not easy to compile a definitive list of events or to construct a logical coherence narration for what must be the most extraordinary Khoja Shia Ithna-ashri Jamaat. It has its paradoxes and surprises as well as moments of glory and despair. Its contents have been based on personal experiences and interviews with a few elders of Zanzibar origin. Here mention must be made of Maalim Najaf Tejani who was of immense help furnishing information, availing photographs and also clarifying certain intricacies. We thank all of them.

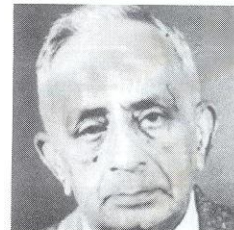
## ON RECORD...



**Marhum Mohamed Ebrahim Jivraj**  
His obituary has been carried in the obituaries section of this issue.

## ON RECORD...

**Marhum Alhaj Mulla Hussein Allarakhia Rahim**



Due to a constraint of space we are not able to carry details of his service to the community here. Inshallah we will do so in our forth coming issue. There may also be others who deserve to be put on record and we would be willing to feature such personalities in the next issue. **Edito:.**



# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

## THE HISTORIC NASSER NOORMOHAMED CHARITABLE DISPENSARY BUILDING - ZANZIBAR

### The Present Fate

There was no member of the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri community in Zanzibar who had not regularly visited the once popular waqf dispensary for medical treatment while it operated successfully for about 60 years until 1966, following the take-over of the Waqf trusteeship by the government from the community's trusteeship.



The Waqf building (see the picture) has a fascinating history of exactly one hundred years this year and so did the Waqf - donor (Waqif), Khoja Nasser Noormohamed Kasmani who died in about the year 1901.

The history of the building has lately become a subject of twist and turn and the building itself a cause of a trial of conscience.

The huge building is three-storeyed (a high-rise of the time) with an open terrace on the roof and ornate balconies and facade in the prime area of the prestigious sea front of the Zanzibar town. It was palatial and magnificent by any worldly standard when it was built with a meticulous eye on architecture in 1899 - reportedly to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee.

It stands magnificently even now in a row of other houses including the Peoples' Palace (formerly Sultan's Place and the House of Wonder (built by sultan Said Barghash in 1883) along the Sea Front.

The building known as the Nasser Noormohamed Charitable Dispensary Waqf Building housed a Dispensary on the spacious ground

floor for use by Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheries and Ismails, and the upper floors had rentable residential units for income to finance the running of the free dispensary.

Khoja Nasser Noormohamed Kasmani was a devout and benevolent member of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Hujjatul Islam Jamaat of Zanzibar, there having been two Ithna-Asheri Jamaats, the other known as Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat.

Nasserbhai was engaged in business in Zanzibar with branches in Madagascar. He died in about the year 1901 leaving behind vast estates in Zanzibar, Madagascar and Jamnagar (India). His estates at death is estimated having valued at about a half million Rupees - a staggering amount then. He was survived by his wife, his only offspring, a son, died of illness earlier at a young age.

A good part of Nasserbhai's estates were made waqf and its rental income was applied for religious purposes. The houses which were later purchased and added to the Waqf totalled about 100.

He also directed his Trustees to build a Musafirkhana in Kerbala, Iraq for use by Khoja pilgrims

which was built with 22 rooms near Bab Taqi and still stands.

At the time of Nasserbhai's death, there were large doubtful and bad debts in Madagascar owing to him with slim prospects of recovery after his death and none at all when one major debtor too died.

However, after great efforts by the Trustees and pressure from the French authorities then ruling Madagascar, one entire major debt of Rupees 125,000 was recovered over a period by regular instalments.

It was from these proceeds that the Trustees purchased this magnificent building for Rupees 25,000 at auction which was held to sell off the property of Sir Tharia Topan, a Khoja businessman.

A dispensary which was already in existence in the name of Nasser Noormohamed in the memory of his deceased son was shifted to this building as a continuation of the fulfilment of the wish of the deceased.

The dispensary continued to operate with the Trustees of the two

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# KARIBU ZANZIBAR

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Ithna-Asheri Jamaats as Trustees for this Waqf until 1966 when the Zanzibar Government by a Presidential Decree vested the trusteeship of all waqf property in Zanzibar with the Waqf Commission of the Government.

The Waqf Commission of the government failed to continue to operate the dispensary as required in the trust condition. This was despite the huge income (rents) collected by the Commission from the residential units in the same Waqf building for the designated purpose.

It would appear that no portion of the income was even applied to the maintenance of the building, which even the government later on declared as a historical building nationally worthy of preservation.

So this historic building like other hundreds of other Waqf buildings became neglected and in want of massive repairs. Some of the said buildings which have not yet collapsed, have been declared hazardous for occupation.

The Supreme Council of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa based in Dar es Salaam had made an offer in 1988 to the Government of Zanzibar to rehabilitate this building and resume the services of the dispensary for public benefit if the original Trustees but nothing came out of the offer.

The Zanzibar government has now leased the Waqf building on a 60 years term to the Agakhan Cultural Services for the purpose of converting it to a cultural centre after refurbishing it for the purpose the work has since been completed.

When the community came to know of the proposed for leasing through the newspapers, it as the former trustees and beneficiaries of the Waqf expressed its concern

over the subversion of the object of the waqf and use of the building, in the legal and Sharia context and also expressed fear if the such activities might take place in the centre as were in conflict with the Sharia.

The community therefore beseeched the government to reconsider the proposal for a cultural centre, and, instead, return the Waqf building to the original trusteeship in the community so that the Dispensary is re-established after a massive rehabilitation at a cost to be borne by the community.

Sadly nothing came out of this despite repeated representations to the government dating from as early as 1988.

However, after the government having confirmed its commitment to a lease with the Agakhan Cultural Centre, the community implored the government at least to ensure that a dispensary of whatever size deemed suitable and worthy was operated some where in the building under the name of Nasser Noormohamed and the building which continues to be Waqf under the Islamic Waqf rules is used for activities which are agreeable in the Islamic Sharia a condition which is anyway obligatory on all Muslims and their institutions.

Again in the absence of any results from the government, the Supreme Council of the community in desperation took the liberty to invite the attention of H.H. Prince Karim Agakhan in France by a letter in June and then again in September, 1992 to the true situation regarding the Waqf of which he personally may have been unaware but there is no any favour of an acknowledgement so far.

It is only fair that following the erection of the lease, the government of Zanzibar as the lessor as-

signs the lease to the original Trusteeship so that the consideration derived from the Lease are applied to the fulfilment of the wishes of the donor of Waqf (Waqif) by establishing and operating a public dispensary in the name of the Waqf donor.

Yes the building itself continues to appear magnificent. However, the magnificence itself also appears to be turning out to be a jinx for the beneficiaries and the donor as for now.

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## ON RECORD...

### Marhum Ahmed A.M. Lakha

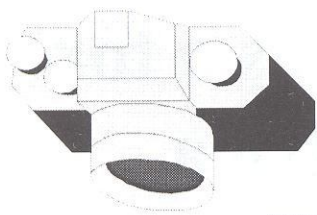
Alhaj Ahmed A.M. Lakha was born in Zanzibar in 1901. He attained a very high level of education specialising in Arabic and Persian languages. He was a linguist with fluency in seven languages.

He was a kind hearted philanthropist, Zakir-e-Hussein and a powerful orator. With his oratory gift and knowledge of many languages, he earned fame as a renowned Zakir over several decades. He also served on the management Committee of Sir Evan Smith Madressa for about twelve years during which he encouraged our less fortunate brothers to acquire admission in the Primary School.

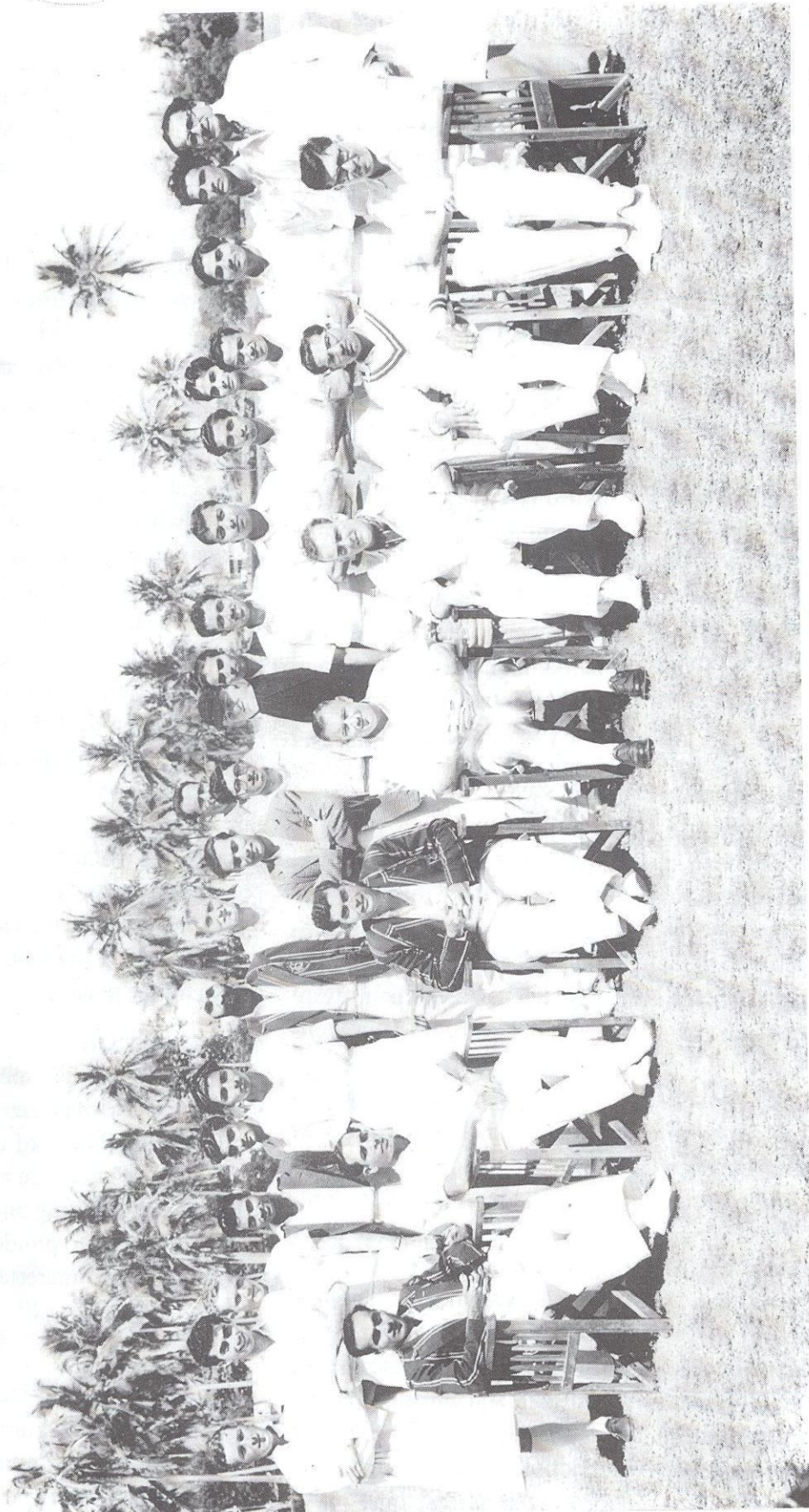
His many achievements and recognitions include a decoration by the Sultan of Zanzibar to the Order of the Silver Jubilee Medal in 1936. He had served as an Honourable Member of the Legislative Council and several other government and non-government bodies. In recognition of his voluntary services, Her Majesty the Queen decorated him with an order of M.B.E. in the year 1952.

He served the community in different positions having served as President of the Hujjat-ul-Islam Jamaat for many years. He was an ardent supporter of the Africa Federation having served as Vice Chairman, councillor and delegate for many years. In appreciation of his dedicated services to the Africa Federation and the community, he was awarded a Huseini medal. He passed away on 24 June, 1989 in London, UK.





## DOWN MEMORY LANE



The Pardhan Ladak Memorial Cricket Shield was contested between the Zanzibar XI and Dar es Salaam XI. Zanzibar held the championship for three years in a row, one of which was in 1954. Pictured in this photograph of Saturday, 13 November, 1954 are:

Standing L. to R.: Risley (Umpire), H. Kalyan, R. Bresler, A. Fernandes, Y.H. Juma, S. Patel, M. Singh, R. Meredew, Dharamsi, Bulsara (Manager, Zanzibar team), R.R. Jaffer (Dar, Committee Member), K. Harris, Moh'dhusein Mansoor, Suchak, K. Shah, Y. Sachoo, Harji Mawji, Gajendra Ibrahim, Jaffer Rahim (Zanzibar Umpire).

Seated L. to R.: M. Kassam, G.H. Ismail, G. Kalyan (Dar, Captain), Duly (President, Dar. Cricket Association), G.P. Bowler (Zanzibar Captain), Rajani and P.S. Talati.



## Zanzibar Jamaats served as a torch for new Jamaats in Africa

The annual session of the Supreme Council of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaats of Africa is hosted this year by a Zanzibar Jamaat, the Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat after decades.

It is essential that on this occasion we recall the history of the two Jamaats in Zanzibar because they were the first ever to be established - Kuwwatul Jamaat in 1880 and Hujjat Jamaat in 1890 - in the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri world, after the historic secession (split) of the nascent community from the main stream of the Khoja sect. The Karachi Jamaat was established in 1892 and the Mumbai Jamaat in 1899.

With the assumption of a new identity as a sect which became formalized by the establishment of the first Jamaat in Zanzibar in 1880, the Jamaat served as torch to other members of the new community which were affected by the secession and scattered in urban settlements across East Africa.

The vision and the direction towards it set by the Zanzibar Jamaat was followed by members of the community in other towns in the attempt to secure a relocation of the new community in a history which was in the making.

Only 50 years later, it became evident that the attempt proved successful and this is when history witnessed the formation of a federation of some 50 Jamaats

spread far and wide in Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Mozambique, Madagascar, Somalia, Mauritius and Re-Union Islands. The Federation itself is now more than 50 years old catering for the collective needs of some 18,000 souls.

There have since been some new Jamaats established in this decade: Morogoro (Tanzania), Nakuru (Kenya) and Nampula (Mozambique) in pursuit of the same legacy set by the Zanzibar Jamaats - that is, however small the number of families may be, establishment of a Mosque and an Imambara for congregational prayers and azadari is a priority for a Jamaat to come into being.

It is essential in terms of our religious faith that we recall the history of the "*origin*" of our community in "*every*" generation, so that we all the time remain aware that history accords to our identity a spiritual dimension attained by struggle and sacrifice, which were demanded of us in order to continue to uphold, profess and practise our faith - as did our forefathers for a century or more while they were even in the main stream of the Khoja community. This will make us and the succeeding generations emulate the examples of the struggle and sacrifice, if need be, to sustain the right to faith and conviction, whatever the challenges of the age and time.

Every community has a history of the origin of its identity and every identity is related to the values and faith the community professes and practices. No community can much long sustain its commitments to its values and faith if it loses the awareness of its history. It may continue to have its identity but may lose the sense of direction and the vision of goals. Our community is no exception.

The focal point in the lesson of our history which makes it unique in comparison to others is that our forefathers who had traversed the Indian Ocean to secure the security and permanency of settlement in material terms in these shores after all the initial challenges and sacrifices, were willing to risk and sacrifice the very material gains of this world through social and trade boycott and isolation in order to profess and practise its religion for a worthier abode in the Hereafter in preference. This is no small a lesson for the posterity.

It is no wonder therefore that the Holy Qur'an too has shown the importance of narrating and recalling histories. Those of the past prophets and nations are meant to serve us as a warning and some as lessons for us to ponder on. I would refer those interested to the Verses: 7:176; 11:120; 12:111 and 20:99.

If such admirable is the identity of the community, who among us would not want to remember its origin, defend it and perpetuate it?



## KARIBU ZANZIBAR WINDOW TO THE PAST



The two Jamaats pose for a group photograph in 1954 when visiting preacher, Rashid Turabi visited Zanzibar (Photo courtesy—Murtaza Jivraj).



A Group photograph of Maulana Seyyid Khadim Husein with the Committee members of the Kuwwatul Islam jamat on the eve of Maulana's departure on 2nd September, 1967. 1st Row: Left to Right - M. Baker M. Taki, Haji Gulamali Haji Ali Chandoo, Hon-Secretary - G.S. Allarakhia, President - H.M. Nazarali, Maulana Seyyid Khadim Husein, Vice President - Sherali A. Ladha, Mukhi - Mohamedali I Dharamsi and Hon. Treasurer - M.E. Jivraj. 2nd Row: Left to Right - Ebrahim H. Manji Haji (Kamadiya), Yusuf Rashid Nathani, Rajabali Juma, Gulammehdi Abdulla Lalji.

### ON RECORD...

#### Marhum Haji Mohamedjaffer Sheriff Dewji

Among those who have served the cause of Islam according to the madhab of Ahlul- Bait (A.S.), the name of Marhum Haji Mohammed Jaffer Sheriff Dewji stands prominent. Born in 1888 in Zanzibar, he migrated to Mombasa where he established a successful business under the name of Sheriff Dewji & Sons.

Marhum Haji Mohammed Jaffer has nearly 20 books to his credit, some of which still remain in demand. In 1928, he wrote SHAHID-E-ISLAM, in which he submitted a strong rebuttal to the opposing school of thought which ridiculed AZADARI of Imam Hussein (A.S.). He also reinstated the institution of the commemoration of the martyrdom firmly. Among the topics he dealt with are, RU'YATE HILAL, IMAME ZAMANA (A.S.), TOHFAE RAZAVIYYA, AL MUSAWAT. Perhaps the most blessed work by him is SHAM-E-HIDAYAT which became a household name and served as a guidebook in madressas.

Marhum was a lucid and fluent Zakir who delivered his majlises in Gujrati in various East African Jamaats. In 1940, he established the Huseini Night School in Mombasa, from which hundreds of students benefited. At the age of 72, he died in 1961, and was buried in Zanzibar where he lived his last 15 years.





## KARIBU ZANZIBAR

# From our files....

*....address by the British Resident of Zanzibar during the 3rd Supreme Council Conference held in Zanzibar in 1952 which outlines three reasons why the Government eyed the Africa Federation with respect.*

We quote below an address by the British Resident of Zanzibar, His Excellency, J.D. Rankine, C.M.G. at the opening of the 3rd Conference of the Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamats of Africa, held in Zanzibar from 10th to 12th August, 1952.

Sayyid Abdallah, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen.

I am grateful to you for the compliment which you have paid me in asking me to open this Conference. I am glad to have been able to come here this afternoon and to have this opportunity of extending a welcome, on behalf of His Highness's Government, to the delegates, who, I understand, have come from all parts of East Africa. I hope you will have not only a most successful Conference but also a pleasant stay in Zanzibar.

I am glad to hear that you regard East Africa as your homeland, because I know something of how much your community has done through its industry and enterprise, to help to build up the commerce and industry on which our prosperity is based. Members of your community are also playing their part in Public affairs and in the Public service.

We have naturally heard with a great deal of interest of the very worthy aims and objects of your Federation and of the matters which this Conference has to discuss. All of them are of great importance, but three in particular appear to me to deserve special mention at the Present time.

We live in a strange world; in difficult and changing times. Many of the beliefs and institutions to which we attach values are being swept away in the surging tide of progress. In times of stupendous advances in the material and scientific world, such as the development of atomic energy, it is disappointing to find that we are unable to keep pace in the management of the affairs of men and have not yet reached the stage at which the peoples of the world can live together in peace and amity with each other.

We see many signs of demoralisation and general relaxation of moral standards illustrated by the increase in crime. All serious and responsible people are turning their attention to this problem and many have reached the conclusion that religion is the foundation on which adequate moral standards can be re-established. It is encouraging therefore to know that your community will be available to assist in seeking a solution on these lines.

Secondly, I am glad to see the attention which you are giving to education and especially to secondary and technical education, for, there can be no surer foundation for our future prosperity. I am particularly glad to hear that you propose to make a contribution to the Muslim Institute in Mombasa, because Zanzibar has a special interest in that Foundation, from which we hope to draw an ever increasing stream of graduates with the skills and knowledge required to

expand our economy. We too are indebted to Sir Philip Mitchell for the wisdom and foresight which led to its establishment.

Finally, and above all, I am glad to see the emphasis which you are rightly placing on self-help and the efforts which your community is prepared to make to provide essentials like education. In saying this I do not wish to give the impression that in my view the Government's responsibilities in the matter should in any way be reduced. Far from it, it is rather that the need for education is so great that we must take advantage of all resources, by way of finance, manpower and in good will.

We want to do so much that it can only be done by the Government, the communities and the individuals in partnership. Quite apart from anything else, if everything were to be done by the Government, we should be in danger of destroying that very spirit of sturdy independence and of self-respect and self help which we are so anxious to encourage and which has done so much already to build East Africa. I am confident that if every community takes the same enlightened view of its duties and responsibilities as you are taking, we need have no misgivings about our ability to build here that happy state of harmony and prosperity which is our aim.

I am happy to declare your Conference open and I pray that your deliberations may have a successful and fruitful outcome.



## Around Africa

(... from page 39)

and separate it from the main building with a wall.

### 3. NURSERY SCHOOL:

Last year there were 105 students, divided in 3 classes. The exams were held in November, 1998.

### 4. ARUSHA SHIA CENTRE AND ENGLISH MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOL:

The officials and Committee of the Arusha Shi'a Centre and the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania were delighted to obtain a permission from the government to start an English medium primary school at the Centre. Class rooms have already been built for this purpose and the school was expected to open after the holy month of Ramadhan.

### (B) HELP OF FOOD AND OTHER ITEMS FOR VARIOUS GROUPS INCLUDING PRISONERS:

Like previous years, the Mission sent gifts of food items for Iftar and Sahri (daku) to Muslim prisoners in the following Ukonga, Segerea, Keko, Wazo Hill, Bagamoyo Kigongoni, Kibaha

Sofu and Ubena prisons. The gifts were donated by Dar es Salaam Jamaat and various individual donors.

### (C) OPENING OF IKWIRIRI MOSQUE:

The 26th Sha'ban 1419 (16th December, 1998), was a day of celebration and joy as on that day the opening ceremony of the Masjid Ahlul Bayt of Ikwiriri (Coast Region) was held.

The mosque, which is situated on a very large plot was opened by H.I. Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Tabataba'i, Principal, Madrasatu Ahlil Bayt (A.S.), Temeke, in presence of about 300 local Muslims.

After recitation of the Qur'an, and Qasida, lectures were given by Sheikh Ahmad Said Kihambwe (Imam of the Juma Masjid) — on behalf of all Imams of the 15 mosques of Ikwiriri. Then spoke H.I. Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Tabataba'i, Sheikh Abdallah Seif Linganaweka, and Sheikh Suleiman Juma Mahanaka. The function ended with recital of Du'au Wahdah by Sheikh Ramadhani Idrissa Kwezi in which the entire congregation participated. Then Neyaz was served.

5th January, 1999

## WINDOW TO THE PAST



Late Murabbi Haji Mulla Alhaj Alimohamed Jaffer Sheriff Dewji of Mombasa who passed away on 14 December, 1998 pictured during a Molvis Seminar in Dar es Salaam which he presided. On his left is the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani and on his right is the Chairman of the Madagascar Territorial Council, Alhaj Raza Ali Hiridji.

## NEW BOOKS....

The Tabligh Sub Committee of Dar es salaam Jamaat now has the following books available:

### 1. POLITICAL ASPECTS OF IMAM REZA (A.S.)'S LIFE - T.shs500/-each

By: Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei ( 20 page booklet)

Published by : Group of Islamic Scholars

### 2. THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS (RISALATU'L - HUQUQ) - a seventh century document on various legal and moral rights of human beings.

BY : IMAM ZAYNU'L ABIDIN (the fourth Shi'ite Imam ). This is revised edition published by : Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

Translated by : Allamah Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi - ( 31 page booklet ) T.shs700/-each

### 3. IN DEFENCE OF ISLAMIC LAWS : T.shs 800/-each

Four Memoranda on various Personal Laws of Islam by Allamah Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi - ( 48 page booklet ) contents : a) Memoranda on Matrimonial Laws - submitted before the Kenya Govt's Commission on the laws of Marriage etc...

b) Memoranda on the Laws of Succession - submitted before the Kenya Govt's Commission on the laws of Marriage etc.....

c) Memoranda on Tanzanian White Paper on Uniform Marriage Law - published in the Standard (DSM) Monday 8th Dec 1969

d) Memoranda on Hijab and Succession - submitted to His Excellency al Haj Sh Ali Hasan Mwinyi President, United Rep of Tanzania.

Translation of the circular of the Ministry of Education on Hijab.

### 1. THE PRESENTATION SUBMITTED TO THE MARJA' - 53 PAGES BOOK

#### Contents:

1. View & ideas of Dr Sachedina
2. On the Imamate & Wilayat of Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.)
3. The meeting in Najaf with Ayatullah al - Uzama Sayyid 'Ali al Husayni as-Sistani.

PRICE : T.SHS 600/- EACH

### 2. DAY OF JUDGEMENT- A REVISED EDITION OF THE BILAL MUSLIM MISSION PUBLICATION.

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## Nairobi Youth League formed

Pictured above is a group photo of the Nairobi Youth League which has been formed to directly or indirectly assist the managing Committee of Nairobi Jamaat and the members at large.

The Youth League, among other activities, plans to organise outbound sports, camping and similar other adventures, mountaineering, inter Jamaat matches, educational lectures, medical camps etc.

Chairman Zulfikar Haiderali Khimji said he hoped that youths from other Jamaats would emulate their example and form similar Youth Leagues to assist Jamaats when required.



Pictured above sitting from left to right are: Secretary Zishan Chagpar, Chairman Zulfikar Khimji, Member Zulfikar Nanji.

Standing from left to right are members Mohamedali Khimji, Shabbir Khimji, Zishan Sajan, Murtaza Dhalla and Abbas Nasser. Missing in the above photograph are Kassim Karawalli, Mohamed Raza Nanji, and Shabbir Datoo.

### Zanzibar Mosque requires urgent repair

The KSI Ithna-asheri Hujjatul Islam Mosque in Zanzibar requires serious renovations in view of its dilapidated condition. The repairs are projected at about Tanzania Shillings three million and an appeal has been made to community members from around the world to pledge in their support.

The historical Mosque has been a place for supplication to many thousands of our members in the past. Currently the size of the Jamaat in Zanzibar is small and while community members use the premises for their daily supplication, the continued existence of the Mosque requires that renovations be urgently undertaken.

The upliftment of this building would serve the objective of enabling our community members in Zanzibar or those visiting Zanzibar to use the Mosque for many years to come and would also help preserve the building as a monument of our heritage.

This is an opportunity to earn Thawabe-Jari and Mo'mineen who wish to offer their support can make their contributions to:

**The Treasurer,  
KSI Supreme Council,  
Dar es Salaam.**

*Federation Samachar*

### Ally Nasser and Zainab Gulamhussein declared the best students for 1997

The Education Board of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Supreme Council has awarded Ally M. Nasser of Mombasa who obtained 8 A's and Zainab A. K. Gulamhusein, also of Mombasa who obtained 6A's and 1B in the Ordinary Level Examinations with the "Student of the Year" award for the year 1997.

The Secretariat of the Education Board has also appreciated the results of the following students who achieved outstanding results in their respective Jamaats.

#### ARUSHA:

**Best Boy: Hussein M. Khimji**

**Best Girl: Sakina M.E. Shariff**

#### DAR-ES-SALAAM:

**Best Boy: Syed Murtaza Ali**

**Best Girl: Sajida H. Hasham**

#### NAIROBI:

**Best Boy: Zaheer Abbas Kassam**

**Best Girl: Farhana Hassanali**

#### TANGA:

**Best Boy: Ally M. Manji**

**Best Girl: No applicant**

The Secretariat of the Education Board has meanwhile expressed hope that it will receive more applicants for the 1998 Award, especially from other Jamaats which did not send in any applicants this year.

The 'Student of the Year' Award from the Africa Federation is a glorious award meant to be enthusiastically contested for by students. While modern teaching methods put in less emphasis on examination results, this does in no way undermine the resplendence of this Award. All Jamaats need to publicise this award to all our students so that it encourages them further in their studies.

On behalf of the Chairman of K.S.I. Supreme Council, Alhaj Mohamedbhai Dhirani and on behalf of the Chairman of Education Board Alhaj Asgherbhai Manji together with his Board members, we congratulate the above winners and pray for their success in all future endeavours.



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# World and Africa Federation bury the hatchet



Africa Federation and Dar es salaam Jamaat office-bearers pictured with Mulla Asghar during a private reception held for him during his visit. Pictured from left to right are: Munir Daya, Habib Virani, Mazahair Dhirani, Asgher Bharwani, Mulla Asghar, Naushad Dhanji, Mohamed Panju, Mehboob Fidahusseini, Asgher Dhanji, Yasin Nurmohamed, Mohamed Pirbhai (partly hidden), Murtaza Habib, Aunali Khalfan, Mohamed Dhirani, Mohamed Hassam and Mohamed Lalji.

## JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD FEDERATION, MULLA ASGHARALI M.M. JAFFER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERATION OF K.S.I. JAMAATS OF AFRICA, ALHAJ MOHAMED DHIRANI

This Joint Communique is issued by the leaders of the two Federations after their meeting held at the Secretariat of the Africa Federation on 2nd March, 1999 at Dar es Salaam which was also attended by the following: Alhaj Mohamed Pirbhai (Vice Chairman of Africa Federation), Alhaj Asgherali J. Dhanji (Hon. Secretary), Alhaj Ahmed Alloo (Hon. Treasurer) and from Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Alhaj Asgherali Bharwani (President) and Alhaj Zulfikar Dewji (Vice President).

At the said meeting it was amicably agreed as under:-

1. That the President of the World Federation deeply regrets the unpleasant language and the tone used against the Africa Federation, its Chairman and its delegation at the Conference held in London on 7th June, 1997 and also at the executive Council meeting held on the same day. The president of the World Federation will insha'allah take corrective measures to redress the incident at the next Executive Council meeting.

2. The Secretariat of the World Federation shall propose the following resolutions to be incorporated as bye-laws at the Executive Council meeting.

- a) VOTING: Voting by ballot when requested by any member of the meeting.
- b) CHAIRMANSHIP: Any person chairing the meeting having a vested interest direct or otherwise shall refrain from chairing the meeting.

3. The Secretariat of the World Federation will also propose and table to be incorporated in the constitution at the next conference the following:

BONAFIDE STATUS: Membership to be properly defined according to domicile and by virtue of residence.

Alhaj Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer  
President of the World federation of  
K.S.I.M. Communities

Alhaj Mohamad G.M. Dhirani  
Chairman of the Federation of K.S.I.  
Jamaats of Africa

Dated this 4th day of March, 1999 at Dar es Salaam.

At a meeting held at the Secretariat of the Africa Federation on 2nd March, 1999 at 21.15 hrs between the President of the World Federation Mulla Asgharali M. M. Jaffer and Chairman of Africa Federation Mohamedbhai Dhirani, Vice Chairman Mohamed Pirbhai, Hon Secretary Asgher Dhanji, Hon Treasurer Ahmed Alloo, Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat President Asgher Bharwani and Vice Chairman Zulfikar Dewji, an understanding and agreement was reached to resolve the differences and to solve the problems existing between the two Federations for the benefit of the Community at large.

The issues raised by the Africa Federation were amicably discussed and a joint communique signed by the Presidents of the two Federations was released thereafter. The initiative of the World Federation President to resolve the issue and the co-operation from the Africa Federation to host the meeting brought about a happy end to a sad period which the community would now wish to put a blanket on.

The highlight of the reconciliation comes from the fact that it has taken place during the term in office of the

(continued on page 46)



## Around Africa

(....from page 45)

very leaders who were actually involved. This will go down in history as a mature stance because to err is human but to reconcile is noble.

On the second night of his three day visit, the Africa Federation hosted a dinner for Mulla Asghar which was attended by the office-bearers of the Supreme Council and the Chairmen of its various Boards. Also present were some office-bearers of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat.

During the private reception, a cordial atmosphere prevailed and why not, because the reconciliation had brought about two worthy winners from a situation that just seemed to be going out of control.

We hereunder reproduce the minutes of the meeting which was Chaired to discuss Africa's grievances following which a reconciliation ensued.

### MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING BETWEEN AF AND WF PRESIDENT HELD ON TUESDAY 2nd MARCH, 1999 AT 21.15 HRS AT THE AF SECRETARIAT.

Present:

Mulla Asgherali M. M. Jaffer - President - WF (P-WF)  
 Alhaj Mohamed G. Dhirani - Chairman - AF (CM-AF)  
 Alhaj Mohamed H. Pirbhai - Vice Chairman - AF (VC)  
 Alhaj Asgher J. Dhanji - Hon Secretary - AF (HS)  
 Alhaj Ahmed H. Alloo - Hon Treasurer - AF (HT)  
 Alhaj Asgher Bharwani - President - Dsm Jmt (P-Dsm)  
 Alhaj Zulfikar Dewji - V.Chairman - Dsm Jmt (VC-Dsm)

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Africa Federation, the Chairman welcomed the President of World Federation Mulla Asgher M. M. Jaffer who he said had travelled a long distance from UK to specially meet



Mulla Asghar with the Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Pirbhai, President of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Asgher Bharwani and Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani.



Unity in a goldfish bowl---there's much to gain from it

with the Africa Federation (AF), for which AF was grateful.

CM-AF assured the WF President that AF had all the will, honesty and sincerity to discuss and solve the dispute between the two Federations and said that with the help of the Almighty, the issues would be discussed and solved.

"You on your part Mulla Saheb", CM-AF said "have come all the way and it is hoped that this is with all sincerity and goodwill to discuss and solve problems between us. I am confident that if it is for the pleasure of Allah (s.w.t.) then we will succeed".

CM-AF said that the Community has a lot of respect and honour for Mulla and that he enjoyed a dignified position in the Community. Bearing

this in mind, he vividly recollected Mulla's statement made in the Open Forum in Toronto when addressing Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina that "To humiliate a Moamin biradar is gunae-kabira" and said that as true followers of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) we should abide by this.

Furthermore, CM-AF stated that he was encouraged by the statement made by Mulla in the October 1998 Executive Council meeting at Peterborough, that he would apologise for the 7th June, 1997 occurrences. Furthermore he said that in the telephone conversation on Friday 29th January, 1999 with Mulla Saheb, he had agreed that the four points which were proposed by the Africa Federation would be discussed in the

(continued on page 47)



## Around Africa

(....from page 46)

meeting. "I pray to Allah (s.w.t.) that as we endeavour to achieve a solution to the deadlock in this meeting, peace be restored between our two Federations".

Mulla Saheb in his reply said that, "first of all as I had mentioned in my phone call to you earlier I have come to Dar es Salaam to solve the existing problem and to regain the co-operation enjoyed by our two Federations. I respect you and your personality. In meetings, sometimes things are said, however considering your age, our old friendship and my respect for you, let us leave all the past behind and move forward. In fact we all prayed for your early recovery during your by-pass operation."

Mulla said that all the CM's office bearers are working for the pleasure of Allah (s.w.t.) and in our Community history – lots of things had happened, however the interest of the Community would not be served if WF/AF had strained relations. He said that the two Federations had to get closer and that even if circumstances do change the togetherness of the two Federations is very important.

"I know you felt hurt and insulted during the 7th June Conference. For that I am sorry and apologise to you. We have to set such an example in the Community and I have said before that I will express my regret and apology which I am doing".

"Let us leave behind our mistakes and now I will be honoured if any office bearers, perhaps the VC, can attend the 6th March Executive Council meeting in London".

CM – AF then replied that AF was very hurt and that in no meetings of our Communities in any part of the world had insults been meted out in a manner as that of the Executive Council Meeting of 7th June, 1997. When the CM reminded Mulla Saheb about the remark in the Emergency Conference Meeting of 7th June 1997 of being referred to as an animal, Mulla Saheb replied that it was said in a different context but if it was construed as insulting then he was



### The hand shake says it all

sorry.

CM-AF replied that rather than expressing personal regret for the misfeelings raised, it would be ideal for an apology to be made at the next Executive Council meeting as the insult to the AF delegation was done in public.

Mulla Saheb agreed and added that it would be circularised too.

After that the CM-AF raised the points which the AF had sought answers to. These were:

**SECRET BALLOT:** The CM-AF raised the secret ballot issue to Mulla Saheb. Mulla Saheb agreed to accommodate this so that in future if any member requested for a secret ballot, the chairman would be bound to accept it. He however suggested that this would have to be included in the Constitution which could only be done at the next Conference.

The Dar es Salaam Jamaat President suggested that bye-laws be made at the Executive Council meeting to accommodate this point. Mulla Saheb confirmed and assured that he will support such a move himself and recommend that it be instituted.

HS asked if it was allowed to make bye-laws and effect such changes. Mulla Saheb confirmed that bye-laws to the Constitution have been made and it would be a "safety value" for the future. He said that he did not feel this to be objectionable.

The CM-AF then cited an example when he was the CM of Dar es Salaam Jamaat and a member asked for a secret ballot. He said that he had to give way and allow this. It was also mentioned that an opinion had been obtained from and N.G.O. in London which stated that a secret ballot is a right of any member of an organisation.

CM – AF then asked Mulla Saheb that instead of making bye-laws he should give an undertaking that during his term, he will allow secret ballot to which Mulla refused, but agreed to institute and support the secret ballot clause through bye-laws. He then said that the normal procedure is for voting to be by show of hands and said that this also applied in parliament. He said there are three types of voting, secret ballot, show of hands and proxy.

The CM-AF then asked, "On 7th June, 1997 "you did not allow a secret ballot for reasons which are best known to you"

Mulla replied, "Why did the AF want a secret ballot?"

CM-AF answered, "To defeat Clause 20:1"

Mulla concluded, "We both had an axe to grind!!!"

The VC of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, at this point expressed great happiness that the two renowned leaders of the Community had come face to face. He said they were juniors in the service

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## Around Africa

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of the Community and had a lot to learn from the two great leaders. He suggested that Mulla should agree to give an undertaking that during his reign as President he would always allow a secret ballot if so requested. Again Mulla Saheb refused to give such an undertaking.

Finally it was agreed to make a bye-law which would entitle a secret ballot if any member so requests. Mulla assured that the WF Secretariat will make such a bye-law and present it to the next Executive Council meeting with its full support.

### **BONA FIDE RESIDENT:**

This was the second point. CM-AF said that the WF Circular clearly stated that only bona fide members were entitled to vote. Although half an hour was allowed during the WF June Conference to check names as offered, the CM-AF said that the situation was tense and the Indian delegation had not even been introduced thereby making it difficult to genuinely check whether they were bona fide members.

The CM-AF then mentioned about air tickets offered to the Indian delegation and the issue of Kutch representations for those who could not travel to the UK because of visa problems. He questioned on how the Council of Gujarat could represent them and he also pointed out that voting was allowed to those who claimed they were bona fide from Pakistan and other places while it was fully known that they were residents of the UK for more than 20 years.

Mulla Saheb insisted that time was allowed to do the necessary checking. As for the tickets he said that if travel tickets had been paid for by anyone or any party, the WF did not reimburse them. If not, he queried on how anyone could claim that the tickets were offered by the WF. For those who voted, he said that he had letters from respective Jamaats of their bona fide status! He said that in India a person is allowed 2 or 3 memberships of different Jamaats. As for the Kutch representations, he said that the Kutch

Secretary had given a letter to the WF with the names of five people who voted at the meeting.

CM-AF and President of Dar es Salaam Jamaat challenged Mulla Saheb that he knew very well and truly that they were not bona fide members from where they presented themselves. Mulla Saheb argued that he had letters of their status. Mulla Saheb also reminded them that during past Chairman Habibbhai's time two people from the AF voted in such a manner and he had allowed it.

HT questioned that if any Jamaat does write so to confirm, can it be accepted as a bona fide status without checking the status?

At this point the VC said that the term 'bonafide status' be adequately defined. The Dar es Salaam Jamaat CM suggested that in future the term 'bona fide' be well defined so that only bona fide members of the respective member institutions can attend and vote.

Mulla Saheb agreed and asked to state the proposal. VC replied that: "we define by stating qualifications". Mulla Saheb said that as it is a membership issue – it has to be tabled in the Constitution unlike the secret ballot issue which is a question of "right" and can be done through the bye-law.

Conclusion: The term "bona fide" should be defined by qualifications to establish the correct status of those representing any member institution and that they should have a residence qualification of that member institution.

**POINT OF ORDER:** CM-AF admitted that the P-WF had chaired many more meetings than himself but said that whenever he was interrupted during proceedings, he as a Chairman would politely tell such a person to have patience and then allow him to speak.

The CM-AF asked the P-WF why during the 7th June meeting he, as the Chairman of the AF, was not politely told to sit down or advised that he would be allowed to speak afterwards.

The CM – AF further stated that he had seen the video cassette of the Executive Council Meeting of Peterborough wherein the P-WF stated that for the purpose of discipline in the meeting, he as the Chairman had to order him to sit down. The CM-AF asked if he was regarded as being indisciplined to be insulted and humiliated at the Conference not only as the CM of the AF but also on humanitarian grounds.

It was also pointed out by the CM-AF that in the Executive Council meeting that followed the Emergency Conference at Stanmore after few hours, he was again insulted and was compared with an animal. He mentioned that our Aaima have said that if a person is angry, if he is standing he should sit down and if he is seated he should sleep. The CM-AF said that the Executive Council meeting was some hours after the Emergency Conference and in spite of the time which passed, Mulla Saheb continued to insult and humiliate him.

Mulla Saheb on this issue said that he would not say anything but was however prepared to offer apologies unequivocally for the hurt feelings to the CM-AF.

To this the HS interrupted and asked the CM-AF that if Mulla Saheb has agreed to unequivocally apologise, that meant the apology was given to cover all the hurt feelings at the 7th June, 1997 Conference.

This was accepted.

**CONFERENCE DECISION:** The CM-AF said that the Executive Council cannot supersede a Conference decision, it could only implement decisions of a Conference. The CM-AF said that constitutionally it was wrong to call the 7th June Emergency Conference. Mulla Saheb agreed but wondered as to what kind of notice was to be given if any change was to be made. He said that in the case of the 7th June Conference, two members gave such a notice and proposed an amendment to the Constitution. Hence an emergency meeting was called to propose and

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## Around Africa

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pass the change to be implemented in the Conference.

The CM-AF stated that this was a legal point and since it was not the intention to refer this issue to the Charity Commission, the AF would accept the status quo.

**5. INTERESTED PARTY CHAIRING THE MEETING:** The CM-AF stated that as Mulla Saheb was an interested party he should not have sat as a Chairman of the Emergency Meeting. P-WF replied that he had discussed cordially with the CM-AF in the morning that if there wasn't anyone to steer the WF, then WF should not be handed over to the wrong people. Hence he offered his candidacy.

CM-AF said that with Asgher Bharwani and Asgher Moledina they had discussed that a post could be created as "Rahbar" for Mulla under whom a Chairman could be trained. Mulla Saheb asked what would be the powers and whether the Constitution permitted it. This meant that to initiate such a post, a change had to be made to the Constitution to allow this to happen.

Finally Mulla Saheb said that it has to be defined as to who is an interested party. He said this can be debatable as one can be directly or indirectly involved.

Mulla Saheb said that a bye-law would be drafted and presented to the Executive Council under which interested persons would in future not be allowed to chair a meeting. In this case, he said that the type of interest would need to be defined.

**Conclusion:** In summing up, the CM-AF was thankful and grateful to Allah (s.w.t.) that the meeting ended successfully with frank discussions and with understanding and agreement without prejudice.

The CM-AF also expressed apology if he had hurt the feelings of anyone during the course of the meeting. He then invited Mulla Saheb for the Supreme Council meeting on 2nd April, 99 in Zanzibar.

In his formal remark, Mulla Saheb said he had specifically come to talk and resolve. He said let bygones be bygones, "we are heading for a complex time and new millenium. Unity and cordiality is of paramount importance".

He also invited any O.B. member to join him to the UK to attend the 6th March, 1999 Executive Council meeting, although he understood the time was too short for such a trip.

The CM-AF suggested that if the next Executive Council meeting would be postponed by a month then a delegation from AF could attend. Mulla Saheb said this would not be possible.

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 1999:** The CM-AF informed Mulla Saheb that he should reply Mombasa Jamaat that their invitation to host the Executive Council meeting should be channelled through the AF, which he agreed.

CM-AF further stated that the Executive Council meeting of July 1999 should not be called in Mombasa as AF would prefer it to be held in the UK so that the AF will have the same grounds on which to clarify any other

points or misunderstanding. This was also agreed.

The President of Dar es salaam Jamaat concluded by thanking the President of the WF and the Chairman of the AF for coming to terms. He said it was a great relief to have completed the meeting in two hours – which was hardly anticipated. He prayed that both the Federations will work together and support each other.

The Vice Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamaat stated that with the differences having been resolved, the path into the future is clear and the leaders can look into the future for the benefit of the Community.

Finally the CM-AF voiced his concern over the restructuring of the WF which he said was taking too long. He suggested that the best proposals and resolutions received be chosen and implemented so that the community could move forward.

**COMMUNIQUE:** It was agreed that a joint communiqué signed by both the Federations be issued on the understanding and agreement reached in this historical meeting.

The meeting ended at 23.30 hrs.

## FROM THE NAHJUL BALAGHA

*Sermon 82 of the Nahjul Balagha is called the al-Gharra'. This is one of the most wonderful sermons of Amir al-muminin. We provide an excerpt from this sermon which cautions human beings about our world.*

"You are on test in this world and have to render account about it. Certainly this world is a dirty watering place and a muddy source of drinking.

Its appearance is attractive and its inside is destructive. It is a delible deception, a vanishing reflection and a bent pillar. When its despiser begins to like it and he who is not acquainted with it feels satisfied with it, then it raises and puts down its feet (in joy), entraps him in its trap, makes him the target of its arrows and puts round his neck the rope of death taking him to the narrow grave and fearful abode in order to show him his place of stay and the recompense of his acts. This goes on from generation to generation. Neither death stops from cutting them asunder nor do the survivors keep aloof from committing of sins.



## Around Africa

### Quotable Quotes from Imam Ali (a.s.)

#### Knowledge and Ignorance

In reply to some one who posed Imam Ali (as) a difficult question, Imam Ali (as) said: "Ask in order to understand, and do not ask in order to find fault, for surely the ignorant man who wants to learn resembles a man of knowledge, and surely a man of knowledge who wants to be difficult resembles an ignorant man who wants to find fault."

#### The Men of Knowledge

"The man of knowledge is the one who recognizes that what is known is very little compared to what is not known, and as a result he considers himself ignorant, and accordingly he increases his efforts to know more by going out in search of knowledge."

#### The Nobility of Knowledge

"Do not talk about knowledge with the foolish so that they deny you, nor with the ignorant so that they find you oppressive, but talk about it with those of its people whom you meet who will accept it and understand it."

#### Knowledge and Acting on it

"O you who carry knowledge around with you; are you only carrying it around with you? For surely knowledge belongs to who ever knows and then acts accordingly, so that his action corresponds to his knowledge. There will be a people who will carry knowledge around with them, but it will not pass beyond their shoulders. Their inner most thoughts will contradict what they display in public, and their actions will contradict what they know."

#### The purity of knowledge

"When a dead person is placed in his grave, four kinds of fire will cover him, but then the prayer will come and put one of them out, and the fast will come and put another one of them out, and then charity will come and put another one out, and knowledge will come and put the forth one out, and it will say: 'If I had come sooner, I would have put all of them out, and given you delight for I am with you now, and you'll not see anything else distressing.'"

## Supreme Council proposes the introduction of a standard 'Clearance for Marriage' letter to all Jamaats

In order to streamline the clearance/recommendation issued to members going to other Jamaats to get married, the Africa Federation has proposed a draft for a clearance certificate which, if approved, can be adopted by all Jamaats.

All Jamaats have been requested to adopt the draft enclosed or to propose amendments. Suggestions for amendments should be sent to the Secretariat so that a standard letter can be adopted as soon as possible.

This Clearance letter should be issued on a Jamaat's letterhead.

### Letter of Clearance/Recommendation

Re: Name.....

Phone:.....Fax:.....e-mail:.....

is a bonafide member of our Jamaat since.....and has paid subscription and all the dues of our Jamaat.

His other particulars are as follows:

He is a Bachelor

He is a Divorcee

He was married to.....d/o.....of.....and the divorce took place on.....He has settled all claims and dues against him and his divorce has been formally registered with out Jamaat. As per our record he has since then not married.

He is a Widower

His wife.....d/o.....of.....expired on.....at.....As per our record he has since then not married.

The details of his children are as under:

Name	Sex	Age
------	-----	-----

The above children are under his care and protection.

The above children are under the care and protection of his divorced wife.  
(Give further details as necessary)

To the best of our knowledge and belief, the information given above gives a true and fair view of the above member of our Jamaat. Any assistance given to him to get married/remarried would be highly appreciated.

For the Jamaat.

President/Hon. Secretary(signature)

Date:

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# Why Hijab?

by Hussein A. Walji, Mombasa

## LIBERATION OR SEXPLOITATION

Today in some societies, particularly in the West, a woman can walk seminaked in public, swim topless, patronise bars and clubs, smoke, drink, dance in discos and have sex with anybody she feels like.

She can even serve her boyfriend, like an unpaid prostitute, and be free to murder her unborn baby if she falls pregnant. She can also compete in the business world by using her body to promote commercial commodities.

At the end of the day she will be regarded as a truly 'liberated' woman!

In Islam, however, liberation of women is far more serious, noble and dignified than just the burning of bras as is done in the so-called permissive societies where the fair sex is regarded as no more than a sex object. Today the West is very quick to condemn Islamic laws which protect purity of purpose and the intermingling of the sexes at all levels of society.

Look at the glossy covers of any magazine or advertisements on TV and newspapers, you will find that most of these advertisements have scantily dressed women in alluring poses to attract the attention of men. This proves that the Western society considers woman only as a sex symbol.

The liberation of women in Islam is far superior to Western liberation as it allows women to live with respect, dignity and equality in society.

Equality does not mean aping and behaving like men or dancing to their carnal tunes; that would be an act of inferiority in the face of one's own femininity.

A truly liberated woman always dresses decently and modestly. A true woman will never degrade her body and sell her dignity to the highest bidder. No woman is truly liberated if she

is still the slave of her wayward conscience, bodily lust or infidelity.

However, in Islam, women, whatever their role as mothers, wives, sisters or daughters, command respect and have a constructive role to play in the society. The Hijab itself gives an aura of freedom to the womenkind, facilitating their movement and protecting them from provocation and wanton greed of human wolves. Removal of the Hijab makes a woman vulnerable to the lust of men.

By removing her Hijab, a woman destroys her faith. Islam means submission to Allah (s.w.t.) in all our actions. Those who refuse submission cannot be called Muslims.

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF OBSERVING HIJAB?

1. Confidence in social participation as a human being and not as a sexual commodity.
2. Guarding oneself from the lustful looks of men.
3. Not diverting people's attention from constructive social work.
4. Improving the moral character of society.

In conclusion, women can achieve true dignity and experience true emancipation by observing Hijab.

## HIJAB ALSO FOR MEN:

### Holy Quran Surah 24:30

*"Say to the believing man that they cast down their glance. Allah (s.w.t) is aware of the things they do." Surah 24:30.*

To cast down one's glance, means not to look in a fixed way, not to stare. The sentence means "Tell the believers not to stare at or flirt with women."

### HOLY QURAN Surah 49:13.

Allah (s.w.t) has given equal rights to both men and women. He forbids

either sex to claim supremacy over the other.

Allah (s.w.t.) states in the Quran: *"The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah (s.w.t) is (he who is) the most righteous of you"* Surah 49:13.

Hijab is one of the righteous deeds and it is a sign of honour and equality with men and stands as a shield of protection against evil men.

A woman in Islam is bestowed with respect and honour and a Muslim gives great importance to his wife. Our Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w.) Hadith says 'The best of you are those who are best in treating their wives.'

The status of a wife in Islam is so respectable that she is not bound to do any house-hold work unless she does it willingly and with affection; but if her husband forces her to do any work, he will have to answer to Allah (s.w.t) for his conduct. Also, she is not bound to earn and maintain the house of her husband. Her work shall always conform to the laws of Shariat. Unlike the Western world, a Muslim wife is a queen in her husband's house. The first thing a husband does for his wife is to provide a servant and a cook according to his financial capacity and when she becomes a mother, she receives the greatest respect from her husband. Contrary to this, is considered a sin by Allah (s.w.t.).

## HOW SHOULD WOMEN OBSERVE HIJAB CORRECTLY?

Basically, the dress of ladies should cover the whole body except the face and hands (i.e. palms & fingers). Hair should not be exposed because Islam considers it as half of the total beauty of women. The Hijab could be of any form and colour, a one-piece Chaadar or a three-piece ensemble as long as it is not tight-fitting and does not attract people's attention.

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## Religion

(...from page 51)

### BASELESS OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE HIJAB

**It seeks to imprison women:** Those who feel that Hijab imprisons women should refrain from living in houses because it is nearer to a prison than Hijab.

**It subordinates women:** In fact, culture which promotes nakedness takes people nearer to the culture of animals. Wearing the Hijab, on the contrary, liberates women from the trap of Western fashion and maladies. It gives them greater, rather than less freedom and mobility.

**Why only women?** Science has confirmed that visual stimulation plays a predominant role in the physiology of men compared to women. The fact that the sex-industry in the West is targetted towards the male-market confirms it.

**Victims of Ridicule:** Some of our sisters come up with the excuse that non-believers laugh at them if they observe Hijab and they feel degraded. They may laugh for a little while but after some time, they will have no choice but to respect the Muslim women observing Hijab for their discipline which could not be shaken by their little laughs.

### DISADVANTAGES OF DISCARDING HIJAB

1. Becoming an easy target of anti-social elements.
2. Causing great stress, insecurity and suspicion in the minds of husbands, ultimately disturbing the familial harmony.
3. Instigating young people to deviate towards the path of lust and immorality.
4. Giving rise to cases of divorces, adultery, rape and illegitimate children.

Allah (s.w.t.) states in the Quran Surah 24:31--- "And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty

and ornaments over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands', their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women or the slaves whom their right hand possess or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye Believers! Turn ye all together towards Allah (s.w.t), that ye may attain Bliss." Surah 24:31.

### WHAT IS HIJAB?

There are many sisters who have failed to understand the actual meaning of Hijab. Hijab technically means covering. Islam desires the preservation of social tranquility and family peace. Hence, it asks women to cover themselves in their inter-actions with men, whom they are not related to, according to Islamic norms. And it asks them to lower their gaze and guard their modesty in their inter-actions with men, whom they are not related to.

### WHY IS HIJAB NECESSARY

The dangerous consequences of the Western culture of nakedness and permissiveness are before us. We should think twice before blindly trying to imitate Western life-styles.

### 1,900 Raped every day in America:

Washington - "Nearly 1,900 women are raped every day in America, according to a study released on Thursday that paints a much grimmer picture than US Justice Department figures announced earlier this week.

The National Victim Centre, which promotes the rights of victims of violent crime, said 1.3 adult women are raped every minute and 683,000 US women are raped each year, based on a survey of more than 4,000 women, including 579 rape victims.

One in eight adult American women has been raped, bringing the total or rape victims to at least 12.1 million, it said.

The survey indicated that 61 percent

of all rape cases involve women under 18 and that 29% of all rapes occurred when the victim was less than 11 years old. - Reuter.

Source: Mid-Day Bombay 25-4-92.

We have many Muslim sisters who are more concerned to please themselves and their non-believer friends than Allah (s.w.t.). Let us not forget the purpose of our existence which is to cultivate love and affection for Allah (s.w.t.) in our heart. How can we create that love when we disobey Him. Adoration and affection comes from the heart and those who truly love Allah (s.w.t.) will not do anything contrary to his commandments.

Hijab is one of the commandments of Allah (s.w.t.). The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that those women who do not observe proper Hijab are blatantly defying the commandment of Allah (s.w.t.).

Our Ahlebait (a.s.) suffered hardships and offered unparalleled sacrifices to bring the original Islam to us. Discarding Hijab puts their sacrifices in vain.

The stylish coat can be worn in many different patterns; it loosely falls from the shoulders and reaches the knees.

A loose long coat falling from the shoulders and reaching the ankles can also be worn with a scarf covering all the hair. The scarf can also have a veil attached to it to cover the total face (Nakab).

The Hijab commonly known as the "Chaadar" is a single piece of material which falls from head and is draped on the shoulder. A scarf too can be worn inside it, to cover all the hair.

A scarf covering the hair fully, can be worn along with a loose shirt falling till the knees as trousers. (Hair should not be seen from below the scarf).

Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a.s.) says: "Modesty is the symbol of faith and whoever has no modesty (Hijab), has no religion."

Women, please do observe the Hijab!



# THE DIVINE CHALLENGE

## (PART ONE)

We all know that the Holy Qur'an is an everlasting Miracle which was revealed to our Prophet Seyyidina Muhammad (s.a.w.) who presented it as a proof of his Prophethood and as a true and authentic word of Allah (s.w.t.). One shining aspect of that Miracle is the Divine Challenge the Qur'an contains to bring the like of it. It is an open and universal challenge addressed to all intelligent creation - man and jinn. It is contained in several 'Ayah' of the Holy Book. Let us first look at these Ayah:

In Chapter 11, Verse 13 Allah (s.w.t.) says, "Or do they say: He (Our Messenger) has forged it (The Qur'an). You say to them, "Bring then ten "Surahs (Chapters) like it, forged by you, and call (for help) whomsoever you can, besides Allah, if you are true (in your claim)" Here the challenge is to produce ten "Surahs" (chapters) like those of the Qur'an.

In Chapter 10, Verse 38 Allah (swt) puts the challenge again in which He reduces the number of Chapters to one only. He says, "Or, do they say: he (Our Messenger) has forged it. Then tell them to bring one Chapter like it and call (for help) whomsoever you can besides Allah (s.w.t.) if you are true (in your claim)."

The Challenge is again put more forcefully with a warning in Chapter 2, Verse 23/24. Allah (swt) says, "If you are in doubt about (the Qur'an) which we have revealed to our Messenger (and if you think that he has forged it), then produce one 'Surah' (Chapter) like it and call your witnesses besides Allah (for help) if you are true (in your claim)." And next is the warning "And if (after trying your best), you are not able to produce it, and surely you shall never be able to do so, then fear the Fire, the fuel of which is men and stone idols; the Fire which has been created for those who do not believe (in this Book and its teachings)"

After several repetitions with different emphasis (11:35, 52:34), the tone of the Challenge rises to the peak in Chapter 17, Verse 88 in which Allah (swt) puts it forcefully in these words: "Say! Even

if (all) men and jinn were to come together (with the object) of producing the like of this Qur'an, they would never be able to produce the like of it, even though some of them helped others"

In the above mentioned Verse, the Challenge has been put with utmost certainty and full force that no human or non human being shall ever be able to produce the like of the Qur'an, not even a single Chapter or, by extension, even one Verse! This Challenge is not confined to any age, time or people but stands for all times and all peoples until the end of the world so long as the Qur'an remains in existence. No one even dared answer the Challenge, notwithstanding repeated attempts made by the greatest scholars to produce the like of the Qur'an. Those who attempted to do so made a mockery of themselves by what they produced compared with what the Qur'an contains. History has recorded a few examples of such failed attempts. We shall discuss these in the next part of this article.

### MAIN ASPECTS

The challenge does not only relate to the linguistic aspect of the Holy Qur'an but covers the entire spectrum of the Holy Book comprehensively, as a great work of literature, knowledge and wisdom, apart from its unique attribute as a general guide for humanity as a whole, applicable to all aspects of his life, leading to the life hereafter.

Some past scholars were of the opinion that the challenge lay in the extreme eloquence and matchless rhetorical beauty of the Holy Book, which was beyond man's intellectual and expressive powers. Others scholars considered the Challenge to lie in its prophecies which were all proved true. Still other scholars felt that the Challenge applied to the natural laws and scientific dimensions of the Book. Some scholars believed that the Challenge lay in its fascinating and forceful tone which greatly influenced human mind and heart to the extent that no one dared even think of answering the challenge. But if we look at the Qur'an we find that it has a lot to say about its own miraculous aspects.

The principles of rhetoric (the art of persuasive and impressive speech or writing or language which has been designed to persuade and impress people) require the speaker or the writer to arrange the text or book of his speech in such a manner that he can convey his ideas to the audience or readers impressively and effectively and keep them in a spell. Speakers and writers differ in their approaches to adopt the shortest and cleanest method of expressing their ideas in any language. Therefore, the art of grammar and rhetoric has been developed to convey ideas clearly and impressively.

It is obvious that the language a person would use to convey an idea would differ according to the nature of the idea and the calibre of the person to whom the idea is conveyed. A person with a rhetoric ability will use a language which is suitable to the topic and, at the same time, according to the level of understanding and mental capacity of the people he is addressing. The world has produced several great poets and writers, who through their poetry and prose, expressed their feelings on various aspects of life, excited the emotions of people and influenced their thinking. But with the passage of time and change in conditions, their most famous expressions have died away and are forgotten.

However, there are several rhetorical writings of very high standard which have gone down in history as immortal expressions and have touched the inner most feelings of the human heart. These have been given universal acclamation and have become worthy of quote. They have not withered away with the passage of time and continue to get a wider and lasting recognition. Shakespeare is an example from the Western world and Allamah Iqbal from the Eastern world. But these great literary works are confined to only one or a few aspects of human life. In contrast, the Qur'an commands a unique and a lofty towering status which makes all these human writings appear completely out of class and worthless when compared with the Holy Book.

[What makes the Qur'an unique and wholly different will be the subject of our discussion in the next part of this article.]



## Gujarati---its importance as our mother tongue

by Sajjad Mulla Hassanali Khaki, Vice Chairman, Mombasa Jamaat

Encouraged by the response that I have received from our community members, both young and old, following my appeal on the evening of the 28th of Ramadhan, on the importance of our 'mother tongue,' I take the liberty to throw more light on this subject.

Some seven years back, sensing encroachment of the English language and its adverse effects on our culture, our Supreme Council passed a resolution directing all affiliated Jamats to encourage Gujarati language at all possible levels.

Whilst our Tanzanian brothers took a positive stand on this directive, resultant that today our language is firmly established in almost each and every household there, unfortunately, for unexplained reasons our Kenyan Jamaats simply ignored the resolution; RESULT? A whole generation is growing up as a total stranger to our mother tongue; CONSEQUENCE? I shudder to think of its impact on our culture and the Community as a whole.

The gravity of the situation is augmented by the fact that a personality no other than His Eminence Ayatollah Huseini Al Seestani should express his concern over the lack of interest in encouraging our children to learn our cultural language.

How do we interpret our Mujtaheed's advice on this issue? Here, three questions make an immediate impact on me, bearing in mind that when sages speak their thoughts transcend the trivial. First, why advise in teaching of our language and not Arabic, which ought to have been his choice, considering that it is the Islamic language; second, do I consider this as a divine guidance?; third, am I provoking Allah's displeasure should I choose to ignore our Mujtaheed advice on any issue pertaining to my economical, social, or religious life? I leave it upon the readers themselves to seek appropriate guidance on these issues and enlighten themselves.

Most of us are, perhaps, not even

aware of the fact that we, the Khoja Ithnaasheries are the only Asian Community in Kenya that not only encourage but even defend (!) use of the English language in our religious and social gatherings. Agreed that English language is an indispensable medium of communication universally, in the field of education and commerce, and that every effort must be made to acquire adequate knowledge of it. However, were we to limit this language within its prescribed scope, then this would be an achievement, but stooping to the extent of offering our mother tongue as a sacrificial lamb to achieve any degree of excellence in English language is simply being foolhardy. It is a tragedy that is happening in our Communities everywhere and it must be stopped.

It is sheer fallacy to believe that our youths do not understand our languages; THEY DO, but the fact that they shy away from speaking it in public is purely psychological, and we, the parents are the biggest culprits in this development. Whilst we have given maximum exposure to English language in our homes, we have, inadvertently, shielded our children from our own language, thereby, creating an inferiority complex in their minds towards our mother tongue. I hope that we shall be more responsible and wiser in this regard.

My advice to the youth has always been thus: "Whatever you do, you must first weigh your action on the scale of your wisdom and use your logic as a yardstick; should it fail the test, then shun it, for therein lies your salvation."

By the grace of Allah (swt) we have been endowed with a very rich culture, and this is, perhaps, the reason why we are the most organised Shia Ithna-asheri communities in the world. However, it must be borne in mind that culture is, simply, not tenable without the language. If we lose our mother tongue, our culture will be lost, too,

and when culture is lost our existence as a Community will lose its meaning, as well, causing disorientation among our youths. Therefore, it is imperative that we reform ourselves and ensure that our language regains its position in our societies.

In my considered view, the following steps ought to be implemented to achieve revival of Gujarati language in our Community.

a) The KSI Education Board, which I believe is also responsible to safeguard our cultural values, to consider introducing Gujarati language in its curriculum, on similar lines as the Oshwal Academy have done.

b) The Ithna-asheri Young Men's Union to plan a strategy on how best Gujarati language could be re-introduced at Communal level.

c) Usage of English language to be minimised at our religious and social gatherings as is the case with other Asian communities.

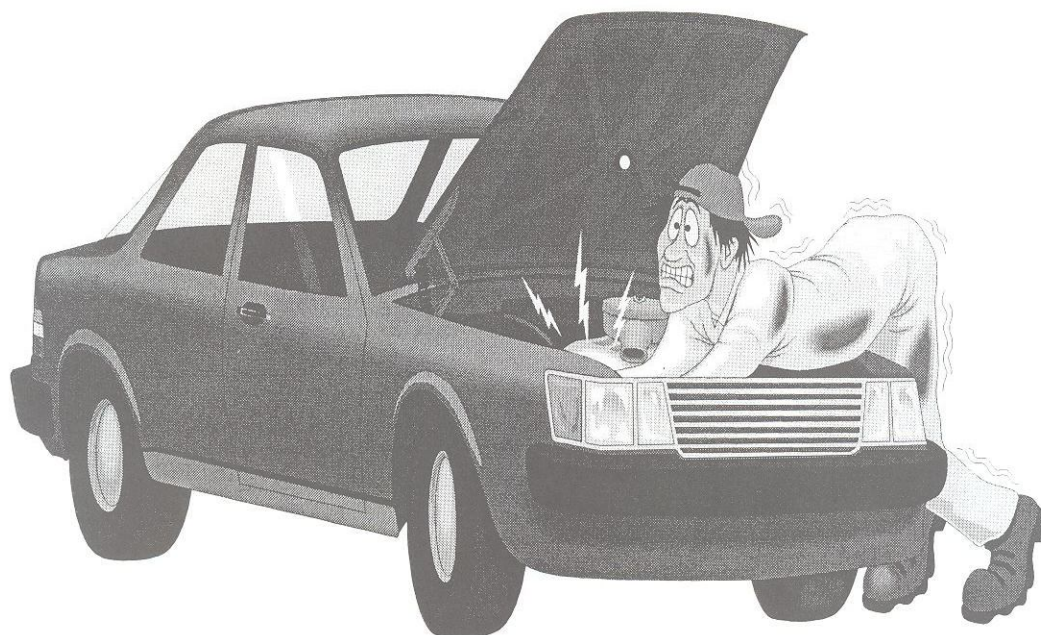
d) Parents must create a conducive climate within their homes to educate their children on the importance of our language and its impact on our culture.

Considering the factors that I have mentioned here, and what I had said in my appeal to the community earlier, I am of the humble opinion that we have all along been driving in the wrong direction; that we must now wake up from our slumber; and that we must head in the direction as guided by both, our Supreme Council and Ayatollah Al Seestani.

I cannot emphasise more than what I have already done. But I must caution our communities not only in East Africa, but the world over wherever our Khoja brothers are settled that should we fail to create an awakening in our youths now towards the importance of our mother tongue, we shall have to regret it later, and our future generations will not judge us kindly on this issue.



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## CASE FOR SURVIVAL

### The Challenge facing the Community in North America

A discussion paper presented on 23rd January, 1999 to NASIMCO and other community workers and educators.

By Hassan Ali M. Jaffer, Mombasa

**The Federation Samachar will serialise this article in the next few issues. Editor.**

Contents:

Part 1 : An Appraisal

Part 2 : The Khoja Community - A Case Study

Part 3 : State of the community in North America

Part 4: Proposals for Nasimco & Jamaats in North America

#### Discussion Points:

##### The Goals

- Bringing up a third and subsequent generation within the framework of Islam
- Helping them understand Islamic Values and traditions
- Enabling them to appreciate Islamic heritage in the modern context
- Engendering harmony and cohesiveness in our societies

##### Community in North America - Altered Dynamics

- A second generation born or raised in North America
- Both have gone through the process of acculturation
- Different outlooks and aspirations
- Widened generation gap

##### Strategy

- Correctly identify and address key issues
- Devise means to deal with these changing dynamics.
- In collaboration with
  - parents
  - social workers
  - community leaders
  - educators
  - scholars

#### Part 1 : An Appraisal The \$64,000 question?

Fifty years hence, will this Community of ours as we know of today, survive as a viable practicing Muslim Community in North America by the year 2050?

Apart from the Community in general, will my own progeny, given all the goodwill, survive as practicing Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslims 50 years from now?

"Why not? We have survived for so long! Why shouldn't we survive as a Community for the next 50 years?", is an obvious reaction one would expect.

#### Analysis

To analyse this question, we need to ask a few more questions.

- (1) Why, when and where did we come into existence as a Community in the first instance?
- (2) Why, if at all, should we concern ourselves to perpetuate the existence and development of the Community in its present form as we have done so far? Are we succeeding in our current endeavors? What, if we cease to exist as a Community as such?
- (3) What are our ideals in life and what is our vision for the type of society we wish to evolve for our progeny?
- (4) Having agreed upon the vision for the type of society we wish to evolve, for our progeny in North America, what are we doing positively to achieve this objective?

For people in the right age bracket, they can easily look back at the past fifty years and recall their childhood memories. The question is how well can we look ahead, and try to visualize the period and the shape of things to come during the next 50 years? A look at the Chart on the next page may help to focus our attention and crystallize the concept.

What we do today and how we now go about evolving our society will go a long way in shaping the destiny for our progeny, five to six generations down the line.

A youth in the age category "D", "E" and "F" today, will have a great role to play in shaping the destiny of the succeeding generations and a heavy burden of responsibility in this context will eventually rest on their shoulders. The question one needs to ask here is: "Do I feel content with the upbringing of my own children within this age category? How do I feel about their outlook, understanding and behavior? If I feel satisfied with their development so far, then there is hope for my offspring to live up to my expectations 50 years from today. On the other hand, if, for any reason, I feel concerned or somewhat unhappy with the current state, outlook and development of my children in the age category "D", "E" and "F", and somehow, I do feel that they do not quite measure up to my expectations for the type of children I would ideally wish them to be, what prospects I can then foresee for my progeny in the category "G", 50 years from today?

Apart from the primary crucial role of the individual parents and the influence of the family-life environment at large, we need to ask, how supportive, relevant and effective is the role of our society, as a Community, as we continue to gravitate around its ever-loosening fold. And how are we placed in this respect with our structured organizations under whose umbrella we tend to operate as a Community, i.e., local Jamaats, regional Federations, and the World Federation?

Above all, we also need to ask, how appropriate, relevant and effective are the people who wield influence in the development of the thought process in

(continued on page 58)



## The Generation Chart

GENERATION	AGE GROUP	CURRENT AGE	EXPECTED AGE 50 YRS HENCE	PROSPECTS OF SURVIVAL AFTER 50 YRS.	RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVE NESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN INFLU- ENCING THOUGHT PROCESS 50 YEARS LATER.
1	A	60 +	110 +	NIL	NIL
2	B	50 +	100 +	NIL	NIL
3	C	40 +	90 +	RARE	NIL
4	D	30 +	80 +	POOR	NIL
5	E	20 +	70 +	50/50	LITTLE
6	F	10 +	60 +	GOOD	NOMINAL
7	G	1 - 10 +	50 - 60 +	V. GOOD	GOOD

(...from page 57)

our society, i.e. the elected leaders, behind the scene power barons, vocal influence peddlers, the Ulema and the religious leaders. Besides, we also need to query the role of the otherwise docile silent majority.

An Urdu poet has once commented on the role of the silent majority in these words:

*Are O Jafao' pe Chup rehne walo,  
Khamoshi Jafa ki Ta'eed hi to hai.*

O those, who chose to remain silent  
over the wrong- doings,  
Your silence amounts to condoning  
the act.

### Part 2 : The Khoja Community - A Case Study

To understand the current state and the prevalent trends among the Muslim Communities in North America, let us first try to review, as a test case, the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community. For this, we need to look back into the history of the Community and trace back its origin.

In a message entitled "Origin" published in the Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri (Pirhai) Jamat, Karachi, Jamat magazine, late Hamidali Bhojani, then President of the Karachi Jamat, has made the following observations.

" Mr.Sachedina Nanjiani, Assistant Revenue Commissioner, Kutch, has

written a book entitled "Khoja Vartant" (Khoja description or Khoja history). According to this book: "The origin of the Khoja Community can be classified into two sections - one part comprising of Kashmiri Hindus while the second portion includes the "Lohanas" ( a community belonging to Kashmir, Lahore and Sindh)".

"In the year 1400 AD Pir Sadruddin converted some members of the Lohana Community into Khojas from among those who had spread over the Sindh, Gujrat and other parts of India and were engaged in trading. Originally the Persian word "Khawaja" got converted into "Khoja" and became an identification of the Ismaili Khoja traders in India and overseas. In the year 1845 A.D., the then Aga Khan visited Sindh and in the same year his followers reached Bombay through Gujrat. The then Aga Khan at that time had large accumulated reserves, which had been collected by him at 20% from the Community. He issued a number of "FARMANS" (decrees) which created unrest and opposition in the Community and litigations followed. The result of this controversy came out in formation of Khoja Shia Isna Asheri Jamats the world over."

Prof. Noel Q. King of the University of California, Santa Cruz, USA, and Seyyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi of Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania, writing

in a joint paper entitled, "The Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community in East Africa (1840 -1967)" trace the origin of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community in the following words.

"The Khojas were a group of Indian Muslims who came mainly from Kutch, Kathiawad and Gujrat. Their traditions indicate that they were converted from Lohana Hinduism and that they probably had been among the Indians who for hundreds of years had sailed down the East African coast. Certainly in the 1850s their presence cannot be denied. Their ancestors had been Islamised in India some five hundred years before by 'piro' (holy men) representing the imam who was then in Persia. The 'piro' had adopted a most interesting policy of accommodation that would have impressed de Nobili and Ricci. They met their converts where they were and led them forward into Islam gently. Thus it was natural that the Khoja group should include a wide spectrum of beliefs, ranging from something not far from which they had come, all the way to beliefs approximating those of the Ismailis who believed that the imamate was continued in the line of which the first Aga Khan was the forty-sixth imam, and those of the Ithna-asheri Shia who recognized only twelve imams of whom the last had gone into hiding.

(to be continued in the next issue)





## Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

### The Mosquito as outlined in the Holy Qur'an

The Internet has enabled people to communicate their thoughts, information and knowledge to others through e-mails. Of the many mails that I receive, I preserve a few which I deem precious. Among these is one which narrates on how accurate the Holy Qur'an is on the life of mosquitoes.

*"Surely Allah is not ashamed to set forth any parable— (that of) a gnat or any thing above that;..."*  
(Al-Baqara (The Cow), 26)

As people are invited to contemplate on their own creation, the Qur'an frequently calls people to investigate nature and to see the signs of Allah (swt) therein. The whole universe, with all its living and non-living elements, consists of signs revealing that they have been 'created'. And they exist just in order to demonstrate the power, knowledge and art of their 'Creator'. And mankind is responsible to know these signs and appreciate the Creator of all, Allah (swt). All living things possess these signs, yet there are some specifically mentioned animals or insects in the Qur'an. The Mosquito is one of these which is referred to in the below verse:

*"Surely Allah is not ashamed to set forth any parable— (that of) a gnat or any thing above that; then as for those who believe, they know*  
*Federation Samachar*

*that it is the truth from their Lord, and as for those who disbelieve, they say: What is it that Allah means by this parable: He causes many to err by it and many He leads aright by it! but He does not cause to err by it (any) except the transgressors,"* (Al-Baqara (The Cow), 26)

What is generally known about mosquitoes is that they absorb and feed on blood. Yet, this is not completely true. Because not all mosquitoes, but only the female ones, absorb blood. And their need for blood is not related to feeding at all. Actually, both male and female mosquitoes feed on nectar of flowers.

The only reason that females, unlike males, do absorb blood is for their eggs which need to mature with the proteins contained in the blood. In other words, a female mosquito absorbs blood just to ensure the survival of the new generation.

The point to be stressed here is that the pertinent verse of the Qur'an only points out the 'female' mosquito. And it is the female mosquito which has superior capabilities compared to the male mosquito. So, it is surely quite expressive that female mosquitoes are particularly emphasized in the Qur'an. Besides, it is a remarkable fact to point out that at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, this

knowledge was completely unknown to mankind.

The development process and its phases, is one of the most amazing aspects of the mosquito. This insect converts from a larva into a mosquito after passing through completely different phases.

The mosquito eggs which are fed with blood are laid by the female mosquito on damp leaves or dried ponds to mature. Prior to this, the mother examines the ground thoroughly by using a receptor placed under her abdomen, functioning as a humidity and temperature sensor. She aims at finding a convenient place for her eggs. When the most suitable area is found, she starts to lay her eggs. These eggs, which have a length of less than 1 mm, are arranged in a line either in groups or one by one. Some species lay their eggs joined to each other thereby forming a raft, some of which may contain up to 300 eggs.

The carefully placed white eggs soon start to change their colour. This takes only about a few hours after they are laid, and they become completely black in colour. With this change, they attain an excellent protection against birds and insects. Their dark colour can not be recognized by these organisms.

After the incubation period ends the larvae start getting out of their eggs, all about the same time and immediately start to swim in water. Now, the underwater days start for the mosquitoes. The continuously fed larvae grow with great speed. Soon the skin covering their body gets too small to let them grow any further. This is the time for their first skin change. The hard and brittle skin gets easily broken. Until this developmental cycle is

(continued on page 60)



## Wayside Wisdom

(....from page 59)

completed as a whole, the mosquito larvae does change its skin two more times.

Since the life of the mosquito initializes in water, the system designed for feeding of the larvae is rather impressive. The larvae empowers whirlpools in the water with its feathered prolongations located at the two sides of its mouth, which lead bacteria and other micro-organisms for feeding. And a solution also exists for its respiration: each larva has an innate diving equipment. They breathe via respiratory tubes at their back while standing upside down in water. This system may be resembled to "snorkels" used by normal divers.

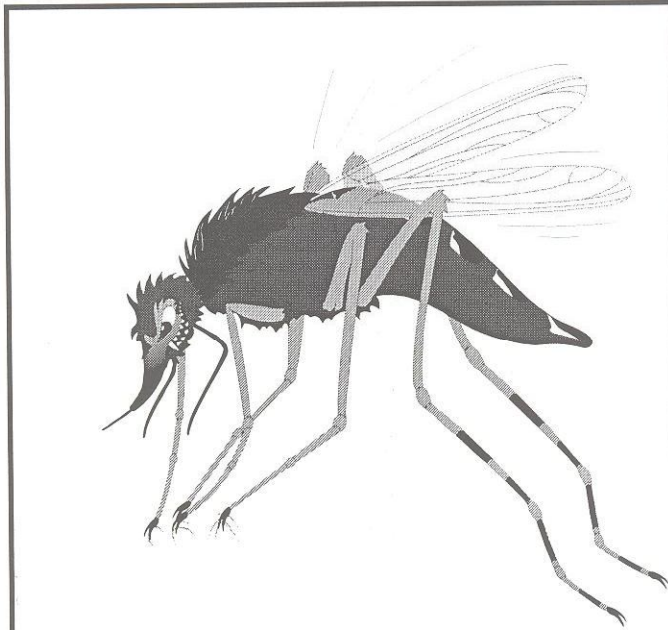
During the employment of this method, the larvae secrete a sticky secretion from their body in order to prevent water from leaking inside, through the respiratory openings. Shortly, the animal lives with the help of the combined harmony of all these delicate balances.

If it did not have a respiratory tube, it would not survive; if it did not have a sticky secretion, its respiratory tube would be choked. As the time goes by, most of the larvae change their skin once more.

The last skin change is rather different from the others. With this last change, larvae pass onto the final phase of their maturation, the "pupa phase", and they are ready to become fully grown mosquitoes at the end. This is the time for the

mature pupa to get out of the sheath covering its body.

However, the creature that gets out of the sheath is so different from the earlier phases, that it seems unbelievable for them to be just two developmental phases of the same insect. This metamorphoses is too complicated and delicate to be designed by the larva itself, nor by its mother, or any other thing...



The period that a mosquito goes through from the time the female lays its eggs to the time it becomes an adult is full of risks. However miraculously Allah (swt) provides it with protection in one way or another.

During this last transition period, there is always a threat for the creature, since the respiratory openings above the water may get closed with the leaking of water inside. This will naturally mean that the pupa will be out of breath, and die. But from then on, respiration is not done via these holes. There then emerge two new air tubes on the head of the pupa.

Therefore, before the pupa gets ready for the last skin change, these two tubes rise on the water. This then becomes its new method for respiration. During the three or four days of the pupa phase, there is no nutrition for the coming mosquito.

Finally the mosquito within the pupa cocoon is mature enough and ready to fly with all its organs and organelles like antennas, trunks, feet, chest, wings, abdomen and large eyes covering most parts of its head. At this time, the pupa cocoon is burst open at the top.

This stage where a complete mosquito is about to emerge is the most dangerous stage of all. The greatest risk is water leakage into the cocoon. However, the torn top is covered with a sticky liquid preventing the head from contacting water. The mosquito must get out of the water without having any direct contact with the water, and normally only its feet touch the water surface. This instant is extremely important; even a light wind may cause its death. Finally, the mosquito leaves for its first flight after a rest of about half an hour.

It should be noted once again: The insect is required to get out of water without even touching it....At this

point, the question that should come to mind is, how have mosquitoes been provided with such an ability as to be able to withstand all the dangers to them prior to becoming adults. Was it because the first mosquito had attained such an 'ability'? Certainly not.

The truth is that this tiny insect which Allah(swt) gives as an example, has specifically been created as it is. To many of us the mosquito is only a small insect which poises a danger to human beings because of its malaria virus. By knowing of its phase of development from the egg to the adult stage, we have with us a further testimony of the existence of Allah (swt).



## With a wrong vision of God don't we seek more and receive less?

There is nothing wrong with us human beings when we think, form views and opinions, make decisions and pass judgements according to our own sense of reasoning. As a matter of fact, this is the only natural way of doing so.

There is nothing wrong in also admitting that our sense of reasoning is almost always tampered and our reasoning itself flawed by human weaknesses like greed, jealousy, pride, anger and other emotions. We allow these emotions to have the better of us when it comes to worldly competition, self-preservation, self-promotion and satisfaction of our biases and prejudices.

Of course, the sense of reasoning and process of reflection can be sharp-witted in some persons or even more so in some than others, yet there is a limitation. The calibre of human wisdom therefore can never match that of the wisdom of our Creator. In fact, human wisdom, however impeccable it may seem, has no semblance of His wisdom. While the vigilance of our wisdom is within our concept of scrutiny, God's wisdom is beyond our comprehension. It is therefore wrong to assess His wisdom through our wisdom.

Incidentally there is a belief among some human beings that God has a shape or image resembling a human one. This belief appears to be prompted more by the fact that we have, and by practice need a shape or form in order to exist and function. Anything otherwise is beyond the comprehension of those who hold this belief. It is strange that by this conviction even God, the Almighty, is portrayed as being needy --- in need of space, accord

ing to those harbouring this notion.

The belief which ascribes God a human image is wrong but worse still is to ascribe to Him the human frame of mind--the human sense of reasoning-- thus imputing the calibre of human wisdom of ours in place of His sublime wisdom,-- imputing such of our calibre of wisdom as is flawed by human emotions and weaknesses.

It is possible therefore for us to fall into the trap of believing wrongly that God's emotions and therefore reactions are like our ours and that if we can be shrewd businessmen with a calculator always handy to ensure that no full payment is made for deliveries or weights which are short, so can God be when it comes to paying "thawab" for offering devotion, a'maals, prayers or charity. Shrewd businessmen do not value the good intention to pay until payment is made fully to the last cent.

The following few hypothetical examples are relevant to the issue being discussed. These examples do not arise out of any particular incident, though the nature of such incidents may not be uncommon.

Ponder the situation where there is reluctance of all the tiny groups to combine into one sizeable group to recite Sura Yaseen and Marsia once only at the Kabrastan in the common spirit of a congregation for the thawab of their deceased relatives buried recently. Instead, there is an insistence by each group, *however small*, to recite these separately at the same time, while being as close as possible to one's relative's grave.

Think also about the situation where a family which arranges a

majlis or nyaz for the entire Jamaat and intends this to be for the thawab of a deceased member of the family, declining the offer of another family wanting to join in the arrangement for the thawab of their deceased relative *unless the cost-sharing was equal*.

Similarly consider the situation where a person is late in commencing three recitations of Sura Yaseen which we perform every year in the mosque in the a'maal of the 15th night of Sha'baan. He however compels himself to complete the recitations on this occasion while leaving his family standing in the streets outside the mosque waiting for him for a drive back home. He thus fails to honour his promise of time to his family and compels them to wait for him thereby making them suffer undue anxiety.

Take another example where a person who recites two rakaats of namaaz for the thawab and "maghfirat" of his deceased parents is unhappy to include other deceased mumineen or muminaat for the thawab sought in his niyyat. Is this not because they believe that if they ask the Almighty forgiveness for many, their close one will get less? If yes, this only confirms the wrong conjecture by which we eye the Almighty.

What we need to do is to cultivate a conviction that Allah (swt) grants thawab or maghfirat in "full measure" to each one among those intended in niyyat, however many they may be or however less the prayers or charity may be in any prevailing shar'i circumstances. This is because His treasure is limitless and does not deplete and His generosity and beneficence is fathomless.



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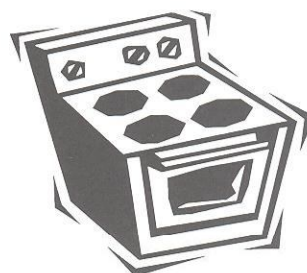
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# Why god is not Allah (swt)

Do we Muslims, Christians, Jews and others, worship and glorify the same one distinct god, universally known as "God"? According to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, the answer is "yes" if He is Allah, and "NO" if he is other than Allah.

This question would not have arisen, if, hypothetically, God had a physical form and face. We would have been able to know with our sensory perception who this common god was by appearance. But if there were different or contradictory characteristics and features attributed to this one common physical god, then he surely could not be the one and the same. There would be more than one, apart from the 'true' one.

But then leaving the hypothesis aside, we do know that God has no physical form or features. Instead, He has attributes (*sifaat*). We human beings can only conceptualize the Unseen God as an absolute Being by His attributes only.

If therefore the beliefs regarding God's attributes vary - that is if God is ascribed contradictory attributes through different beliefs held by different people, then the common god universally known as God cannot be one and the same. There would be more than one, apart from the true one.

The Holy Qur'an clears the confusion in this respect. It teaches that there is no god but Allah, that Islam means submission to none but Allah and "*your god is one and He is Allah.*"

The Holy Qur'an then introduces

the one God (Allah) by His attributes and ascribes to Him 99 names, each of which denotes his distinctive attribute. Among these names are "*Asma-ul-Husna*" (the beautiful names), reference to which is made in the following verses 7:180, 17:110 and 20:8.

Disbelieve in any of these attributes or add any which is earthly or not consistent with His sublime attributes, then he is not Allah. He is the god that exists in the human imagination.

It is no wonder therefore that the belief in the correct attributes of God as taught by the Holy Qur'an is one of the fundamentals in the Islamic faith. It goes to impress the philosophy and logic of there being no god but Allah in His absolute unity and He, Allah is the focus for human submission (*aslama*).

It is interesting to note that all languages including Arabic have their own words for "God". But the word "Allah" belongs to all languages. It is on the lips of all Muslims whatever may be their language.

It is therefore wrong to mislead those who are seeking the truth into believing that all are worshipping and glorifying the same one God. To do so, is to trivialise or negate the fundamental of "submission to Allah" in Islam.

It would appear that the attempt is to portray Islam wrongly as equal with other "monoesthic" religions and that who follows which religion is of no spiritual consequence.

Let us conclude by quoting the following out of many pertinent verses in the Holy Qur'an:

**59:22** - "*He is Allah besides Whom there is no god; the knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.*"

**59:23** -- "*He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, the Giver of peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness; Glory be to Allah from what they set up (with Him).*"

**59:24** -- "*He is Allah the Creator, the maker, the Fashioner; His are the most excellent names; whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His Glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.*"

**112:1**-- "*Say: He, Allah, is One.*"

**112:2**-- "*Allah is He on Whom all depend.*"

**112:3**-- "*He begets not, nor is He begotten.*"

**112:4**-- "*And none is like Him.*"

**3:20**-- "*But if they dispute with you, say: I have submitted myself entirely to Allah and (so) everyone who follows me; and say to those who have been given the Book and the unlearned people: Do you submit yourselves? So if they submit then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, then upon you is only the delivery of the message and Allah sees the servants.*"



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# Madrasahs and Modernity

By Syed Ali Mehdi, India

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Perhaps, I am going to write on a subject that is apt to draw suspicion and criticism from the flag-bearers of both madrasahs and modernity, the conservative and the progressive, alike. But I must courageously say, at the very outset, that a great majority of both groups lack a vision and understanding of the terms they stand for. For them, madrasah and modernity are two irreconcilable poles. And this is what most of our readers might be expecting to read in this article.

Some of the questions relating to this pose a serious challenge for Muslims worldwide : fundamentally, can, and should, madrasahs be reformed according to the spirit of the modern times? If yes, then how? Answers to these questions will prove to be decisive not only for the madrasahs, but for the entire Muslim community. A little misunderstanding or confusion in this respect will not fail to darken the Muslim future. Anyhow, before the real topic is embarked upon, it is indispensable that we discuss what do the terms "madrasah" and "modernity" really mean. The Socratic method is certainly wise.

Madrasah is an Arabic word which literally means 'a center where students attend lectures'. Earlier, as today, education was divided into two levels: primary and higher. The place where primary education was imparted came to be known as maktab, and madrasah was the university where students pursued their higher studies. At that time, they were centers not only of religious learning, as we witness in the present times, but also of worldly education. There was no dichotomy or contradiction between the two types of knowledge.

No sane person, aware of history, can deny the contribution made by madrasahs to learning and civilization.

Even the most vitriolic enemies of Islam admit, though with much hesitation and unwillingness, that a considerable portion of modern science and thought has been directly inherited by the West from Muslims. The very concept of university was borrowed from the idea of a madrasah. Great thinkers and intellectuals of the Islamic world, who have become a source of inspiration for Western people and in whose name big academies have been established, were all products of madrasahs.

But, as expressed in a famous Persian verse, that every perfection has a decline (*har kamaley ra zaval*), the dark clouds of conservatism and stagnation have pervaded the skies of the once magnificent treasures of knowledge. Nowadays, the subjects offered in almost all the madrasahs, and the style in which they are taught, are to a great extent, if not absolutely, obsolete and impractical with regard to the modern world. The system of teaching is such that only a passive and submissive reception of knowledge is expected of the students, thus crushing their inquisitive, imaginative and creative abilities. Minds are stuffed with weak facts by weak mentors. The horizon of the madrasah students, as well as of teachers, is so low that they assume remembering a few prayers and rituals will make them an Alim (one who is learned) and elevate them to the leadership of the Muslim community. The entire thrust is on the bare accumulation of factual knowledge, with production of new ideas very far away from the scene. And whatever little is being produced is either just a compilation of old thoughts or a superficial collection of rigid ideas. Furthermore, the study climate is unhealthy, and the system of evaluation badly diseased.

Besides these weaknesses, a number of other shortcomings are cited by the

critics, to many of whom I can accord only secondary value : for instance, the out-fashioned style of the formal dress of madrasah students, the non-availability of modern furniture in their class and hostel rooms, the poor and unhealthy diet provided to the students, the traditional nature of madrasah buildings, and then the out-dated names of the madrasahs. True, reform in some of these areas is required, but it is not essential. These relate to the outer aspects, and hence not so much worth occupying our minds. What is of utmost importance is the curriculum, the text-books, teachers, style of teaching, system of evaluation, and finally the quality and development of students in the madrasahs.

These problems faced by present-day madrasahs are known to all those who have an enlightened and reformatory outlook. But, can they be cured merely by knowing? Are not practical and detailed solutions needed? Most of our discussions end either in mechanically stating the problems and lamenting over them, or, in cases where a little more pain is taken, in concluding that modernization of madrasahs has become imperative today. What does modernization signify, only a few care. In such a situation, it appears integral to our topic to discuss the real meaning and implications of modernity.

Most of us assume that by modernity is implied: wearing short, skin-tight jeans and other revealing clothes; eating burgers and drinking Pepsi; enjoying night clubs and discos with a friend of the opposite sex; listening to pop music using a walk-man; driving extra-large cars with mobile phones in pocket; studying in some foreign university (preferably in USA or UK) or pursuing a computer course or an MBA; having an

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advanced computer system with Internet, website, e-mail, fax and telephone connections, and, if possible, a lap-top computer also; earning as much as possible by all means; owning a multi-million residential house in the most posh area with Swiss furniture inside; marry someone who is an MBA or a foreign degree holder, who speaks fluent English and has attractive external features; and reject everything having even the slightest association with religion, though not some occasional spiritual exercises to relieve the mind of stress. This is modernity in the popular sense. Beyond, there is a group of refined and intellectual people, modernity for whom means thus : looking at everything very objectively and rationally; discarding religion as outright superstition and regarding science as the ultimate guide and benefactor of humanity; reading books on only specialized subjects, better on economics, management, science, computer or environment; having a passing view of issues like pollution, ecological crisis, preservation of wild life, sensex and stock market, politics, nuclear tests, international relations, cloning, test-tube baby, latest technological discoveries, sex education, feminism, etc.; studying modern thinkers, novelists and fiction writers; going to art exhibitions and purchasing paintings worth millions of dollars; and much more in addition to this. It should be taken into account that these groups, popular and refined, are not tight-compartment divisions-rather, they, at times, share certain features of the other group. Categorization depends only on the dominant inclinations.

We observe between these two groups a similarity-of blindly imitating the West-and, within this similarity, a difference-the former (popular) group is excessively obsessed with the physical and material aspects of 'modernity', while the latter is largely concerned with the intellectual side. Taken together, these two propositions, of similarity and

difference, reveal that the flag-bearers of 'modernity' equate and confuse it with Westernism. For them, being more Westernized is being more modern.

While modernity is an unstoppable phase of human history, a milestone in the rational, spiritual and material development of mankind, Westernism or Western civilization is just one form, one expression, one interpretation of that historical reality. There may be other interpretations too, but unfortunately, hitherto there has been only one, the Western type. This is simply because everyone, except the West, was fast asleep when history was taking a fresh turn; and, taking complete advantage of their awakening, the Western people whole-heartedly embraced the cardinal virtue.

But today, Western civilization is an experiment that has failed. It is a Titanic which, once believed to be the ultimate answer to human progress, is now plainly sinking, sinking lower and lower into the sea. It is nothing more than a carcass that is being glossily packed and exported to the developing nations. And we, the citizens of those developing nations, are extremely over-joyed by playing with broken toys gifted to us by our elder brothers. With this in view, can we sensibly impose the Western brand of modernity on our madrasahs? By doing so, we shall only aggravate the wounds, let alone heal them.

Despite all this, Western civilization, it should be remembered, cannot be outrightly rejected, just as it itself had done to religion in the past. Anything that attracts followers contains, at least, some elements of truth, if not the whole of it. Falsehood, by its very nature, does not have the potential to attract; it is only by mixing itself with truth that it appears attractive. It is for us to intelligently pick out that which fits into the general framework of truth. Western civilization should be treated in the same way. It may be dying a natural death but some of its parts are still useful. The progressive eyes with which the Western civilization saw the world, the

laborious hands with which it wrote innumerable books and created technology, the strong legs with which it unrelentlessly moved towards progress (though only in a material sense)-all can be utilized for constructive purposes. A new mind (vision and world-view) and a new heart (spirituality) are required. An ideal brand of modernity, therefore, would be one having a new, sound mind and heart attached to the Western body. Only this brand can enliven the madrasahs, and thereafter Muslim community.

The first and foremost step in the reformation of madrasahs would be to give them a new vision, a vision that would lead them to shed their conservative garb, and consequently to adopt a broad-minded, progressive approach. This would demand a profound analysis of the various aspects and requirements of the modern times, and likewise a re-interpretation of Islam in the light of Quran and Sunnah (sayings of Prophet Muhammad and the Infallible Imams) so that it becomes intelligible and practicable for present-day humanity.

Now, the question stands : how can this target, this vision be achieved? By delivering "lectures regarding awareness, pollution, science, computers and mathematics," as upheld by those people who are neither aware of the meaning of modernity nor the real problems that have beset the madrasahs. There is one striking common feature between the so-called modernists and the madrasah-oriented group: exclusive concern with facts, and only facts. The difference lies merely in the nature of facts that they tend to accumulate. While the modernists hunt for facts pertaining to modern world-view and living, in madrasahs, students are conditioned to pre-occupy themselves with traditional information and terminology. So it happens that whenever a popular modernist stands to provide solutions to the problems of the madrasahs, he ends up in suggesting the introduction of such superficial subjects. I do not say that they are useless. They are

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necessary, yet neither sufficient nor primary. A shallow solution, if put to practice, will only lead the madrasah students from one set of facts to another, without affecting any real or considerable change. Before trying to modernize the madrasahs, we should genuinely modernize ourselves.

If the new vision is to be sincerely achieved, a total revolution is required in terms of madrasah curriculum, teaching and the evaluation system, class culture, study atmosphere and extra-curricular activities. Partial and petty alterations won't work. As a first step, education should be divided into four stages :

First, when a student is taught Arabic, Persian, English and Urdu, language and literature, along with some primary Islamic orientation course;

Second, in which, besides the teaching of languages and literature at a higher level, students should be trained in world history and geography with special reference to the Islamic world, in the social sciences in an elementary style from an Islamic viewpoint, in the theoretical foundations of Islamic Ideology (epistemology, world-view, concept of man and philosophy of history), in practical Islamic obligations and rules, in the art of Quranic recitation, and in morality;

Third, where the teaching of language as a subject should be discontinued and students encouraged to read the best literature produced in the respective language (mostly belonging to the modern times), when history and the social sciences are taught analytically, when the practical aspects of Islamic Ideology (i.e. its social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual teachings) should be taught, and subjects of skill-development like writing, oration, group discussion and computers added to the syllabus; and fourth, wherein a comparative study of world's great religions (Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Confucianism)

and ideologies (Communism, Liberalism, Fascism and Nationalism), modern currents of Eastern and Western thought, and a brief survey of 20th century life and politics should be added to the practical training of skill-development subjects (by giving them assignments and research work pertaining to Islamic Ideology and the social sciences) and spirituality. Specialization should necessarily be introduced at the final level, but not before it. The scope of my work prevents me from going into elaborate details.

Each stage has a goal set for it; and that goal has to be remembered at every moment of time if teaching is to be systematic and effective. In the first stage, a student should learn the essential tools for learning, and be so oriented that he forms a clear, progressive vision of his ideals in his mind. At the next stage, his mental horizon is to be broadened and his imagination enlarged so that he is protected from conservatism, narrow-mindedness and sectarian prejudices; and he is to be firmly grounded in the Islamic faith and practice. The development of analytical thinking and expression skills, along with the formation of personal opinions with regard to social and ideological issues, is the essential target of the third stage.

The fourth stage is the stage of exposure to a wide variety of beliefs and ideas, the stage of production of new ideas that are geared to the practical, and, simultaneously, that of spiritual elevation.

One may wonder why such traditional subjects like philosophy, logic, Usul al-Fiqh (principles of jurisprudence), tafsir (Quranic exegesis) and kalam (scholastic theology) have not been given any space in the entire syllabus. Before any clarification is given, we should keep in mind that the first stage applies to a child who is about 16 years of age, and by the time he reaches stage four, he will be in the 23rd year of his life (if we decide the first stage to be of one-year duration, and the remaining stages of two years each).

Now, taking into consideration the age and mental level of the students, will it be a sign of prudence to teach such abstract subjects at the madrasah-level? Perhaps not. Because the Noble Quran is a book of profound, multi-layered meanings and concepts, it would amount to an injustice to it if we try to understand it by means of unaided reflection. Only one who is well-equipped with the past, with a wide variety of thoughts and ideas, and possesses the power of analysis and creativity can hope to study it in the true sense. Therefore, the above-mentioned subjects should be taken up not earlier than the post-graduate (or post-madrasah) level.

The suggested curriculum for the madrasahs should be supported by elocution contests, writing competitions, educational trips and tours, and, at least, once-in-a-fortnight lectures on miscellaneous subjects-like, the general concepts of management, science, environment studies, international relations, feminism, sex education, the uses and abuses of modern scientific and technological discoveries-to name a few.

Next to the academic curriculum is the very important problem of teachers and the method of teaching. Agreed that if such a curriculum is followed, the students will be prepared to lead Muslim community in the 21st century. But from where will competent teachers come? What quality of teaching and devotion could be expected of those who consider teaching as the last resort, when one fails to secure a suitable future for oneself? The condition of secular schools and universities is exactly the same in this respect. A person who has been rejected by everyone takes the responsibility of producing leadership for one-fifth population of the world! Unfortunately, there is no teacher's training program of a comprehensive and systematic sort. Before training the students, madrasahs should sincerely think of training the teachers. Nevertheless, inefficiency as regards teaching cannot

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be solely attributed to the teachers-the mentors and administrators are equally, if not more, culpable. Most teachers are compelled to prepare the students for examinations rather than to give them a liberating mental and spiritual training, or to inspire them with the recent works in the subject that they teach. To me, this appears to be the greatest evil of the teaching system. The students are forced to defy their text-books and imprison their minds in those rigid pages. A rigorous mind-conditioning of mentors and administrative people in a democratic and enlightening style is thus the first requisite for curing the teaching system.

As for the teachers, they should be able not only to teach their subjects efficiently, but to provide motivation for learning to the students and to instill in them an attitude of impartial inquiry and tolerance of different points of view without disgust. In fact, before training the students in these lofty things, they should try to follow them themselves. The students' opinions should be considered without any feeling of prejudice or inferiority. A questioning child should always be encouraged, and others stimulated to form questions in their minds.

Apart from these, a teacher should give more emphasis to understanding the things that are taught in the class-room, and strictly discourage the habit of blind cramming. In all, before entering a class, every teacher should keep in mind that he or she is going to do the most difficult thing in the world, that of shaping 'the backbone of the society.' And I think a realization of this great responsibility will, on its own, solve many of the existing problems.

This much for learning and teaching. As in these areas, fundamental changes are indispensable with regard to the system of evaluation. Perhaps, the most basic pre-requisite is a crystal clear conception of the need and aims of evaluation. As I

understand, evaluation is needed so as to ascertain the level to which the curriculum is being practically followed, and then to take appropriate steps to remove the obstacles, if at all they can be. Likewise, the goal of evaluation is to be determined. As matters stand today, evaluation, or examination as it is known, is a sword continually and equally hanging over the heads of students and teachers, destined to fall once, or in some cases twice, a year, and inflicting a severe blow on the minds. Brief, important notes given by the teachers and crammed by the students a couple of days before 'the fall' suffice to produce 'satisfactory' results. What is really and mostly assessed is the power of remembrance, not the essentially human things-that is, the overall mental and spiritual development of a child. At times, it happens that those who have truly 'learnt' fail, or get very less percentage, in the examinations, while those who have not progressed even an inch ahead come out with flying colors. As Eliot has expressed, though in a very different context : *"The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."*

If evaluation is to be honest, a continuous assessment of the students through everyday class performance and behavior, through regular assignments and field work, has to be taken up. Otherwise, we would be just fooling ourselves and others.

In addition to all these important things, madrasahs should try to genuinely develop and enhance study atmosphere and culture. A student whose learning is confined to the class will never be able to become independent or strongly entrenched in his learning. The function of a teacher is just to provide a skeleton of the subject he is dealing with, and it is the responsibility of the student himself to clothe it with the flesh of personal reading and contemplation. The madrasah library should be well-stocked with old and new books on varying subjects, in accordance with, and besides, the

curriculum.

And lastly, cultural programs with an Islamic orientation should be organized at regular intervals by the madrasah authorities. These may vary from the purely religious, like Eid and Milad al-Nabi celebrations, to the very general ones, such as Independence Day, Teacher's Day, Children's Day, and so on. They will come as a refreshing experience, full with feelings of loyalty and devotion, for the students.

Now, when all is said, if one were to ask me what I feel, I would just say that we are caught in a do-or-die situation. If we do not arise from our deep slumber and take the necessary steps, we will only have the chance to cry. It is now or never !

It deserves mention that for the proper implementation of such an academic schedule, the already-existing books would not be of much help; rather, fresh and new books would have to be written and compiled by those people who share the same viewpoint.

I request all sincere readers of this article to send me any suggestions regarding my propositions and general outline of modernization. For this, I shall be highly indebted to them.

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# Take care of your lungs and your doctor won't have to

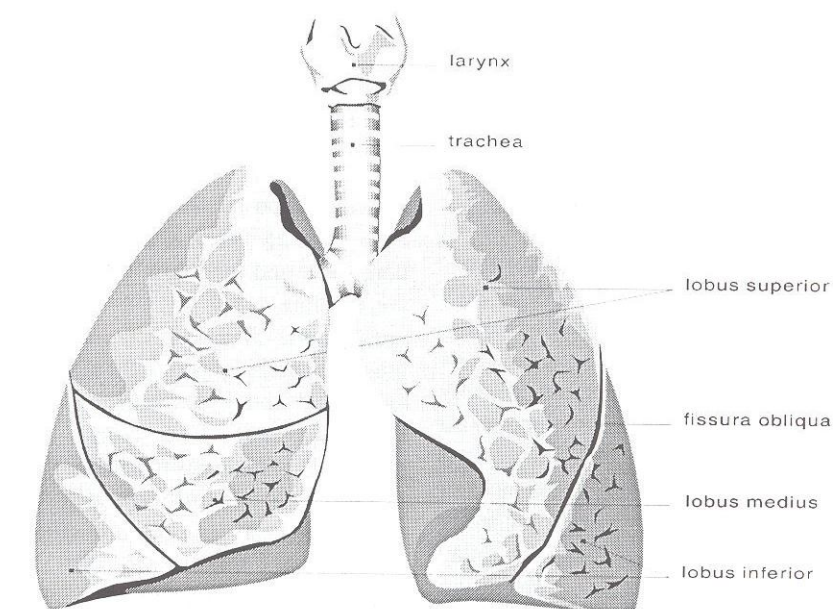
Deep within the lungs, in hundreds of millions of tiny sacs called alveoli, one of the most crucial of all physiological exchanges takes place: oxygen, which is required by every cell in the body to release energy, is drawn from the air you breathe and enters the red blood cells, while carbon dioxide, a waste product, is given off. The route to this remarkable, life-giving micro-universe is long and tortuous, beginning in the nose and mouth and leading down through the windpipe, or trachea, to the bronchi, the tubes that lead into each lung, and on into even smaller passageways, known as bronchioles. The pathway is reasonably well protected by the nose, which warms and filters the air you breathe, and by the mucous lining that cloaks the system, and is activated by millions of cilia, tiny hair-like projections, that help to move impurities back towards the mouth and nose.

In spite of these safeguards the lungs are directly exposed to the outside world and are bombarded constantly by bacteria and viruses by potentially dangerous pollutants, including those that may be self-administered (such as cigarette smoke), and by airborne irritants (known as allergens) that can cause special problems for those who suffer from hay fever or asthma.

The questions and answers in this section are designed to help you in protecting your respiratory system and, when necessary, in treating common problems. The section also deals with more serious conditions — emphysema, for example, and pneumonia. The best respiratory advice of all, however, is probably the simplest: *take care of your lungs and your doctor won't have to.*

**What does my doctor actually hear when he puts his stethoscope against my chest?**

A stethoscope amplifies the sounds of the air you breathe as it passes in and out of the lungs. By 'tuning in'



(moving the stethoscope from place to place on your chest and back as he or she listens), your doctor can get an idea of what's going on in your bronchi, in your alveoli or air sacs, and in the lower portions of your chest.

Unusual or abnormal sounds may indicate disease. A crackling sound, for instance, may be an indication of pneumonia; high-or low-pitched wheezes and rumbling sounds may signal the presence of an asthmatic condition in the lungs.

**Is it better to breathe through the mouth or the nose?**

A good question. The nose is better equipped for breathing than the mouth. It has a special filtering system, composed of the cilia and mucous membrane, that protects the respiratory tract against impurities (dust, for instance) and invasions of harmful bacteria. The nose also 'adjusts' the temperature and humidity of the air before it reaches the lungs. There are times, however, when it is perfectly normal to breathe through the mouth, for example, during heavy exercise.

A chronic cough may indeed be an indication that there is something wrong with your respiratory system. Among the more serious pulmonary conditions that may have a chronic cough as a symptom are bronchitis, lung cancer and tuberculosis.

Suppressing such a cough with over-the-counter medications is not recommended: it may cover up an underlying problem to such an extent that your doctor will have trouble making a correct diagnosis. See your doctor if you have a dry hacking cough, hard coughing spells, chest pains or difficulty in breathing.

**Does coughing ever serve any useful purpose?**

Yes, it does. When you cough, you are protecting the lower respiratory tract against foreign particles and a build-up of mucus. Coughing helps to bring up unwanted invaders and clear the airways.

A minor cough can be eased by drinking comfortably hot liquids or sucking on lozenges; a humidifier may also help to give relief. Consult your

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doctor if a cough persists longer than a week or two.

Coughing up rusty-coloured mucus or blood, however, can be a symptom of a serious infection or underlying lungs disease. See your doctor at once.

### **Is shortness of breath to be expected after a certain age?**

Possibly, but not from age alone, pulmonary experts state. Shortness of breath with ordinary activity may increase slowly over the years, depending on how much you cut down on regular exercise. But normally breathlessness shows up only in really strenuous physical activity. Healthy men and women in their fifties or sixties should notice no more difficulty in breathing while walking briskly on level ground than they did in their twenties. When unusual shortness of breath (known as dyspnoea) occurs for no apparent reason, however, it may be the symptom of an underlying disease such as emphysema, asthma or pneumonia, or an early symptom of heart disease. See your doctor if this condition persists.

### **What can my doctor discover from a chest X-ray?**

X-rays are an excellent diagnostic tool which allow a doctor to study the bones and organs inside a patient's body. These structures show up on X-ray films as varying shades of black and white. Among the diseases that may be diagnosed with the help of chest X-rays are tuberculosis, pneumonia, lung cancer, emphysema, pleurisy and occupational lung diseases.

### **Are chest X-rays dangerous? Can they increase the risk of cancer?**

Generally speaking, chest X-rays do more good than harm. Many lung diseases could not be properly diagnosed without them. But too much of a good thing can turn out to be harmful. X-rays do give off ionising radiation, and this can have a potentially dangerous effect on your cells and genes.

Normally healthy people are no longer required to have yearly chest X-rays

but a doctor may suggest this for someone whose work environment is a potentially hazardous one. To guard against excessive exposure to radiation, keep a record of the date, doctor and findings, if any, of any X-ray you have.

### **I have smoked for years but I feel fine. If I quit now, will my lungs heal and will I reduce the risk of disease?**

It is never too late to stop smoking, even after 25 years. Quitting offers both short and long-term benefits. If you feel fine, as you say, you will soon notice some changes once you have given up smoking: you will be able to taste food better and breathe more efficiently; your 'smoker's cough' will clear up. Susceptibility to a wide range of diseases, including various forms of cancer, heart disease, bronchitis, emphysema and ulcers, will be reduced, and chances of enjoying a longer, healthier life will be increased. Research indicates that with each year you stay off cigarettes, the risk of developing such serious illnesses decreases.

Although your lungs will not return to the state they were in before you took up smoking, some of the damage may clear up. The good news, of course, if you do manage to quit smoking, is that your lungs will cease deteriorating further.

### **Questions your doctor may ask if you have a cough:**

- "Has your chronic smoker's cough recently become more severe?"
- "Is your cough accompanied by fever and breathlessness?"
- "Is your cough accompanied by chest pain that becomes worse as you inhale?"
- "Is your cough brought on by physical exertion, even of the mildest kind?"
- "Are you a smoker?"
- "Have you ever spat up blood when you cough?"
- "Do you have trouble breathing and swallowing when you cough?"
- "Do you cough in spasms?"

## Take care of your lungs.....

contact with anyone who has a similar cough?

- "What is your occupation?"
- "Does a tendency to respiratory problems run in your family?"
- "If you aren't in an upright position when you cough, do you have trouble breathing?"
- "What medication are you taking, if any?"
- "Do you suffer from any allergies?"
- "When did your cough start?"
- "If you cough up sputum, how much do you cough up?"
- "Are you aware of any special lung problems you might have?"
- "Is your only symptom a dry cough?"
- "Have you had the same type of chronic cough during previous cold months?"

### **Are low-tar, low-nicotine cigarettes safer than others?**

There is no such thing as a "safe" cigarette. Low-tar, low-nicotine cigarettes, according to manufacturers' tests, provide some risk reduction as far as contracting lung cancer and heart disease is concerned. These tests, however, are performed on smoking machines and not on human beings. In addition, switching to a low-nicotine brand is not a reliable alternative to quitting, especially for those who increase the number of cigarettes they smoke to maintain former nicotine levels.

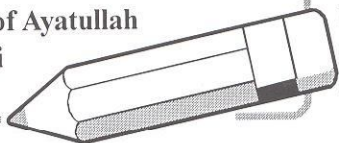
### **I smoke but I don't inhale. Am I still injuring my health?**

Even though you don't inhale when smoking, you hold the smoke in your mouth and thus increase the risks of developing oral cancer and various other head and neck problems. In addition, you may inhale some smoke without being aware of it, and you breathe in glycoprotein (a tobacco ingredient that may cause some damage to the blood vessels) both, during the time you actually smoke each cigarette and for a while afterwards.



## Current legal issues

English Version of *Al-Mustahdathat Minal Masaa'il Ash-Shari'a* according to the Edicts of Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali al-Husaini Sistani



### TAQLID : Following a Mujtahid and on Qadha prayers of a father....

1. It is necessary for a Muslim to believe in the fundamentals of faith with his own insight and understanding, and he cannot follow anyone in this respect i.e. he cannot accept the word of another who knows, simply because he has said it. However, one who has faith in the true tenets of Islam, and manifests it by his deeds, is a Muslim and Mo'min, even if he is not very profound, and the laws related to a Muslim will hold good for him. In matters of religious laws, apart from the ones clearly defined, or ones which are indisputable, a person must:

\* either be a Mujtahid (jurist)\* himself, capable of inferring and deducing from the religious sources and evidence;

\* or if he is not a Mujtahid himself, he should follow one, i.e. he should act according to the verdicts (Fatwa) of the Mujtahid;

\* or if he is neither a Mujtahid nor a follower (Muqallid), he should act on such precaution which should assure him that he has fulfilled his religious obligation. For example, if some Mujtahids consider an act to be haraam, while others say that it is not, he should not perform that act. Similarly, if some Mujtahid consider an act to be obligatory (Wajib) while others consider it to be recommended (Mustahab), he should perform it. Therefore, it is obligatory upon those persons who are neither Mujtahids, nor able to act on precautionary measures (Ihtiyat), to follow a Mujtahid.\*

The asterisk (\*) sign after a number denotes that there is a total or partial variation from the fatwa of Marhum Ayatullah Al Uzama Syed Abul Qasim

El Khui.

\* Mujtahid is a jurist competent enough to deduce precise inferences regarding the commandments from the holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the holy Prophet by the process of Ijtihad. Ijtihad literally means striving and exerting. Technically as a term of jurisprudence it signifies the application by a jurist of all his faculties to the consideration of the authorities of law with a view to finding out what in all probability is the law. In other words Ijtihad means deducing in matters of law, in the cases to which no express text is applicable. (See, Baqir Sadr, A Short History of Ilmul Usul, ISP, 1984).

2. Taqlid in religious laws means acting according to the verdict of a Mujtahid. It is necessary for the Mujtahid who is followed, to be male, Shi'ah Ithna Ash'ari, adult, sane, of legitimate birth, living and just ('Adil). A person is said to be just when he performs all those acts which are obligatory upon him, and refrains from all those things which are forbidden to him. And the sign of being just is that one is apparently of a good character, so that if enquiries are made about him from the people of his locality, or from his neighbours, or from those persons with whom he lives, they would confirm his good conduct. And if one knows that the verdicts of the Mujtahids differ with regard to the problems which we face in every day life, it is necessary that the Mujtahid who is followed be A 'lam (the most learned), who is more capable of understanding the divine laws than any of the contemporary Mujtahids.

3. There are three ways of identifying

a Mujtahid, and the A'alam:

\* when a person is certain that a particular person is a Mujtahid, or the most learned one. For this, he should be a learned person himself, and should possess the capacity to identify a Mujtahid or an A'alam;

\* when two persons, who are teamed and just and possess the capacity to identify a Mujtahid or the A'alam, confirm that a person is a Mujtahid or an A'alam, provided that two other learned and just persons do not contradict them. In fact, being a Mujtahid or an A'alam can also be established by a statement of only one trusted and reliable person;

\* when a number of learned persons who possess the capacity to identify a Mujtahid or an A'lam, certify that a particular person is a Mujtahid or an A'lam, provided that one is satisfied by their statement.

4. If one generally knows that the verdicts of Mujtahids do vary in day to day matters, and also that some of the Mujtahids are more capable than the others, but is unable to identify the most learned one, then he should act on precaution based on their verdicts. And if he is unable to act on precaution, then he should follow a Mujtahid he supposes to be the most learned. And if he decides that they are all of equal stature, then he has a choice.

5. There are four ways of obtaining the verdicts of a Mujtahid:

\* when a man hears from the Mujtahid himself.

\* when the verdict of the Mujtahid is quoted by two just persons.

\* When a man hears the verdict from a person whose statement satisfies him.

\* By reading the Mujtahid's book of Masae'l, provided that one is satisfied about the correctness of the book.

6. As long as a person is certain that the verdict of the Mujtahid has not changed, he can act according to what is written in the Mujtahid's book. And if he suspects that the verdict might have been changed, investigation in that matter is not necessary.

(continued on page 72)



7. If an A'lam Mujtahid gives a fatwa on some matter, his follower cannot act in that matter on the fatwa of another Mujtahid. But if he does not give a fatwa, and expresses a precaution (Ihtiyat) that a man should act in such and such a manner, for example if he says that as a precautionary measure, in the first and second Rak'at of the namaz he should read a complete Surah after the Surah of "Hamd", the follower may either act on this precaution, which is called obligatory precaution (Ihtiyat Wajib), or he may act on the fatwa of another Mujtahid who it is permissible to follow. Hence, if he (the second Mujtahid) rules that only 'Surah Hamd' is enough, he (the person offering prayers) may drop the second Surah. The position will be the same if the A'lam Mujtahid expresses terms like Ta'mmul or Ishkal.

8. If the A'lam Mujtahid observes precaution after or before having given a fatwa, for example, if he says that if Najis vessel is washed once with Kurr water (about 388 litres), it becomes Pak, although as precautionary measure, it should be washed three times, his followers can abandon acting according to this precaution. This precaution is called recommended precaution (Ihtiyat Mustahab).

9. If a Mujtahid, who is followed by a person dies, his category will be the same as when he was alive. Based on this, if he is more learned than a living Mujtahid, the follower who has a general notion about the variation in the day to day Masae'l must continue to remain in his taqlid. And if the living Mujtahid is more learned, then the follower must turn to him for taqlid. The term taqlid' used here implies only an intention to follow a particular Mujtahid, and does not include having acted according to his fatwa.

10. If a person acts according to the fatwa of a Mujtahid in certain matter, and after the death of that Mujtahid, he follows a living Mujtahid in that matter according to his obligation, he cannot act again according to the fatwa of the dead Mujtahid.

11. It is obligatory for a follower to learn the Masae'l which are of daily importance.

## Current legal issues

English Version of *Al-Mustahdathat Minal Masaa'il Ash-Shari'a* according to the Edicts of Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali al-Husaini Sistani

12. If a person faces a problem whose rule is not known to him, it is necessary for him to exercise precaution, or to follow a Mujtahid according to the conditions mentioned above. But if he cannot obtain the ruling of an A'lam Mujtahid on that matter, he is allowed to follow a non-A'lam Mujtahid, even if he has a general notion about the difference between the verdicts.

13. If a person relates the fatwa of a Mujtahid to someone, and then that fatwa is changed, it is not necessary for him to inform that person about the change. But if he realises after having related the fatwa that he had made an error, and the error would lead someone to contradicting the laws of Shariah, then as an obligatory precaution, he should do his best to rectify the error.

14. If a person performs his acts for some time without taqlid of a Mujtahid, and later follows a Mujtahid, his former actions will be valid if that Mujtahid declares them to be valid, otherwise they will be treated as void.

### Qadha of a Father is Obligatory on the Eldest Son...

1399. If a person did not offer some of his obligatory prayers, and did not care to give qadha, in spite of being able to do so, after his death, it is upon his eldest son, as an obligatory precaution to perform those qadha, provided that the father did not leave them as a deliberate act of transgression. If the son cannot do so, he may hire someone to perform them. The qadha prayers of his mother is not obligatory upon him, though it is better if he performs them.

1400. If the eldest son doubts whether or not his father had any qadha on him, he is under no obligation.

1401. If the eldest son knows that his father had a certain number of qadha prayers on him, but he is in doubt whether his father offered them or not

he should offer them, as an obligatory precaution.

1402. If it is not known as to who is the eldest son of a person, it is not obligatory on anyone of the sons to offer their father's qadha prayers. However, the Mustahab precaution is that they should divide his qadha between them, or should draw lots for offering them.

1403. If a dying person makes a will that someone should be hired to offer his qadha prayers, and if the hired person performs them correctly, the eldest son will be free from his obligation.

1404. If the eldest son wishes to offer the qadha prayers of his mother, then in the matter of loud or silent recitations in namaz, he will follow the rules which apply to him. So, he should offer the qadha prayers of his mother for Fajr, Maghrib and Isha prayers loudly.

1405. If a person has to offer his own qadha prayers, and he also wishes to offer the qadha prayers of his parents, whichever he offers first will be in order.

1406. If the eldest son was minor, or insane at the time of his father's death, it will not be obligatory upon him to offer qadha of his father when he attains puberty or becomes sane.

1407. If the eldest son of a person dies before offering the qadha prayers of his father, it will not be obligatory on the second son.

### A Question on learning music as an art....

**Q.** Is it permissible for a Muslim to send his son to a music institute to learn music as an art, provided that he does not use his artistic skills in haraam matters?

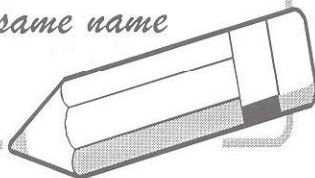
**A.** There is no harm in children learning halal music as such. However, when sending children to music schools, there must be the guarantee that this would not adversely affect their upbringing. Allah is All-Knowing.



## Your Questions Answered

by Maulana Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

from his book by the same name



### Polygamy vs Polyandry

**Q:** If a woman cannot satisfy the desires of a man he can marry once again or enter a contract of Mut'ah. But if a man cannot satisfy his wife what can she do? Is it that men have a stronger desire than women?

**A:** Man has been allowed to marry four wives at one time. There is no question whether the present wife can satisfy his sexual urge or not. Therefore, your question is based on a wrong presumption.

(However there are conditions to be adhered to prior to a man being allowed to marry more than one wife. This includes the requirement that the husband treats and maintains all his wives equally. Editor.)

### Divorce under pressure

**Q:** Some people took me by force to an 'Alim and pressurised me to divorce my wife. Although I did not wish to divorce her, they compelled me and I signed the divorce paper. I kept the paper for two weeks without informing my wife and then tore it up. Is that divorce valid? Is my wife divorced from me?

**A:** As a general rule, divorce under duress or compulsion is invalid. In the case quoted above, even if it were a valid divorce, the husband's behaviour in living with the wife and tearing the divorce paper constitutes revocation of the divorce and the wife continues to be legally married to the husband.

### Is abortion allowed after rape?

**Q:** If I live in a town, city or village

and some unbelievers raped my wife or daughter and impregnated her, is it haram to get an abortion for her? How would I go about this issue?

**A:** The punishment in Islam for raping a woman (i.e. having sexual intercourse with a woman other than his wife without her genuine consent) is death; it makes no difference whether the culprit is a Muslim or Kafir. However the sentence can be given only by a duly appointed Qadi of Shari'ah who will look at all the evidence and then decide the case.

As for the woman, it is a sin and crime on her part to abort the foetus. The child will be affiliated to the mother and will be legitimate on her side. The mother and child will enjoy their mutual rights including the right of inheritance from each other.

The fact is that in Islam a child born out of wedlock is considered illegitimate and is not affiliated to either of the physical parents. But there are cases where it is considered a legitimate child as, for example, when at the time of its conception both parties were under the impression of being lawfully married, and then it transpired that it was not so; such a child is affiliated to both parents. Also in some cases it is considered legitimate on the part of one physical parent, to whom he or she is affiliated, and illegitimate on the part of the other with whom it has no relationship, as for example in the case mentioned in your question.

### On Atheists

**Q:** According to the Imams (A.S.) and the Prophet (S.A.W.) what is my responsibility concerning (zanadiqah) atheists? Do I exile him from the Muslim land or send him back to Allah by

sword?

**A:** You are not to take the law into your hands. As for this particular matter, you should remember that there were a lot of atheists under the Muslim rule all over Asia, Africa and Europe but they were not banished or killed.

### On betting of horses...

**Q:** Imam Khomeini (R.A.) gave a Fatwa on betting saying that it was Halal particularly on horses and camel racing. Is it Halal to receive money on winning?

**A:** You have been given wrong information. The fact is that in Islam, competitions like horse-riding and archery are allowed. Also it is permitted to make a condition that the loser will give so much prize to the winner; and/or that a third party will pay a reward/prize to the winner. But betting on who will win or lose is strictly forbidden.

And detailed rules for regulating this competition or race are found in all books of Fiqh from the early days of Islam. It is not only a Fatwa from Ayatullah Khomeini (R.A.).

This approval has got nothing to do with the present day horse-racing which is pure gambling and is diametrically opposed to the Islamic way of racing and archery which develops martial arts and trains youths to be physically fit.

Based on the same principle, in modern times, archery rules may probably be applied to competition of marksmanship with fire-arms; and the rules of horse-riding may cover competition in manoeuvring tanks, warplanes etc. But one has to ask one's Mujtahid for a definite ruling on these modern systems of warfare.

### Child from Mut'ah Marriage

**Q:** Is a child born from Mut'ah marriage entitled to inheritance from his father or mother upon his/her death?

**A:** Certainly. A legitimate offspring inherits both parents, whether he is born in the so-called 'permanent marriage' or in mut'ah marriage.





Dear Children,

## Being rewarded after death...

Salamunalaykum.

Some of you have complained that we do not offer prize puzzles which would increase the interest in the Kids Spot pages of the *Federation Samachar*. We understand this but in the past we experienced some problems in actually awarding the prize winners with their gifts. As a result, some winners were never presented with their gifts. Please bear with us for this.

It is our intention to soon begin carrying a prize puzzle in each issue. However because the *Federation Samachar* now has a North American Edition we are looking into the modalities of how this can be done with enough time being availed to even our overseas readers to participate.

To encourage communication between our youths around the world we are also prepared to carry a Pen Pal column. If you are interested in having a Pen Pal from around the world please send in your particulars.

Now let me tell you something about the importance of Charity in Islam. To spend in the path of Allah (swt) by way of propagating the Deen of Allah is highly meritorious and rewarding. Reward attained through the performance of certain good deeds affords the continuity of reward even after death.

Indeed fortunate are those who have reaped such tremendous benefits and InshaAllah will bear the fruits in the hereafter. Some of the common contributions made in this respect are: donations towards the Masjid, printing of Yaseen Shareef, building of mosques and schools for Islamic education for kids, etc. Undoubtedly these projects are required and should be encouraged.

To spend in the path of Allah (swt) by way of propagating the Deen of Allah is highly meritorious and rewarding

even after death.

However, the printing of 'Yaseen Shareef', or 'Dua's (supplications) and other similar material is undertaken frequently and on a large scale. The result is that mosques, Madrassahs (schools) and homes are flooded with these booklets/leaflets.

Among the actions and good deeds for which a believer will continue to receive reward, after his death, are knowledge which he taught and spread, a good son whom he left behind, or a copy of the Qur'an which he left as a legacy, or a mosque which he erected, or a house which he built for the traveller, or a stream which he caused to flow, or a Sadaqah which he gave from his property when he was alive and well.

The above indicates various ways to attain the reward of Sadaqa e Jaariyya (PERPETUAL GOOD DEEDS). Sadaqa e Jariyya can also be earned by printing any suitable Islamic literature, for example, printing a book on 'remembrance of Allah' or 'Example of the Prophet (SAW)'. Alhumdullah many books in English are available that only need to be reproduced.

Printing and reproducing expensive Islamic literature and making this available free of charge is another way of earning this perpetual reward. However, one should ensure the authenticity of books before printing them for very easily much harm could be caused. Reliable Ulama (scholars) should be consulted in this regard.

Our time on earth is limited and it is very important that we use the little time we have to do, at the earliest opportunity, the good things that will benefit our community and us. After all, we know that our money spent after our death has a far lesser significance.

## DID YOU KNOW?

There are some questions every parent dreads from a child. Now, help is at hand. *New Scientist Magazine* has compiled a list of such teasers in a new book. Here are a few:

### What time is it at the North Pole?

The International Date Line runs through the North Pole, leaving it eternally between one date and the next. In other words it is always midnight at the North Pole.

### If you run rather than walk in the rain, will you get less wet?

The number of raindrops falling directly on you depends on how long you are in the storm, so running should keep you drier. But running will also mean rain drops land on your head in a shorter time, with no opportunity for the drops to dry naturally, so you will end up getting wetter.

So if there is only a light shower, you are better off walking whereas in a downpour you should run.

### Is it true that you catch a cold after getting cold?

No. You tend to get more colds in winter because viruses that cause them spread faster because people spend more time inside close together.

People also close windows, so air contaminated by virus particles is not diluted by fresh air, making it easier for a virus to spread.

### How does a squirrel find the nuts it buries?

Squirrels have a good spatial memory and can even make a mental map of where they buried their nuts, remembering landmarks around the place and the environment. They also use their acute sense of smell.

### Why do human beings have fingerprints?

Fingerprints help us to grip and handle objects. The prints work on the same principles as car tyre patterns. Smooth surfaces are fine for gripping when they are dry but useless when they are wet. So fingerprints are a system of channels and ridges to help lead the water away from the fingerprints.





# Samachar Classifieds

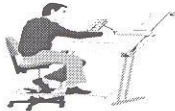


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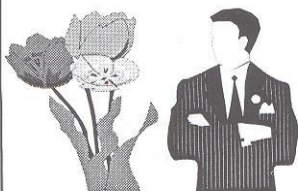
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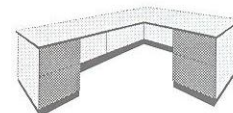
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### Zanzibar daily trips

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## Classifieds



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### Computers

#### Computer World Ltd.

P.O. Box 4220  
Dar es Salaam  
Tel: 118049/50; Fax: 130679  
E-mail: computerworld@compworld.net  
Website: http://www.compworld.net

#### Salama Computers Ltd.

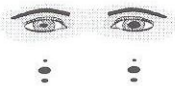
P.O. Box 12933  
Dar es Salaam  
Tel: 116123/4/5; 120920, 113835, 111342  
E-mail: lakha@salama.net



### Second-hand Clothing

#### Universal Industries Limited

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Dar es Salaam.  
Tel: 864354/865439/28029



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#### Vision Plus

(Formerly Medical Eye Centre)

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#### Msimbazi Eye Centre

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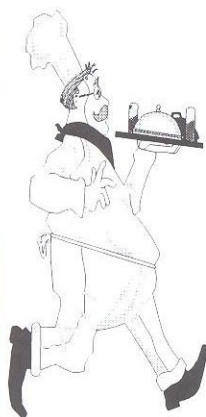
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## Islam decries homosexuality

Islam teaches that homosexual acts are sinful and punishable by God. This teaching comes not from human beings, but from the Creator of all humans. God tells us in His own words how He punished the people of Lut for their homosexual behaviour.

The story of Prophet Lut, on whom be peace, finds mention in several Qur'anic passages, especially Chapter 26:160-175 which reads: "The people of Lut rejected the apostles. Behold, their brother Lut said to them: "Will ye not fear (God)? "I am to you an apostle worthy of all trust. "So fear God and obey me. "No reward do I ask of you for it: my reward is only from the Lord of the Worlds. "Of all the creatures in the world, will ye approach males, "And leave those whom God has created for you to be your mates? Nay, ye are a people transgressing (all limits)!"

They said: "If thou desist not, O Lut! thou wilt assuredly be cast out!"

He said: "I do detest your doings."

"O my Lord! deliver me and my family from such things as they do!" So We delivered him and his family, - all Except an old woman who lingered behind. But the rest We destroyed utterly. We rained down on them a shower (of brimstone): and evil was the shower on those who were admonished

(but heeded not)! Verily in this is a Sign: but most of them do not believe. And verily thy Lord is He, the Exalted in Might Most Merciful."

From these passages we learn that God saved Prophet Lut and the righteous ones of his family, and rained on the rest a shower of brimstone, so they were utterly destroyed. This is mentioned in the Qur'an not only for the sake of information, but mainly to serve as a warning to anyone who dares to repeat such acts.

As Muslims we believe that every human action leads to consequences. Good actions entail good results, and evil actions entail evil consequences. Some of these consequences may not become known for many years after a certain action. The consequences of some actions will become manifest only after death when one enters a new, everlasting life.... A common mistake among humans is that if they don't see any negative consequences for their actions they consider it harmless.

Human beings are taught and encouraged to seek superior secular and religious knowledge which is of tremendous benefit to them to succeed in this world and to safeguard them against the hereafter. God, the source of all knowledge, warns us of His pun-

ishment if people perpetrate homosexual acts. Let us pay attention and learn the easy way.

Some will say that a person may be born with homosexual tendencies. We say that everyone is a free agent. God lays before us two paths and has given us knowledge of where these paths lead. One is the path to which the devil calls us. We must avoid that. One is the path leading to paradise. We must stick to that one. Everyone experiences evil prompting from time to time. We must resist those with all our might. If one feels a tendency to do something that God prohibits, he or she should seek help from a community of loving, caring, believers who would understand his or her difficulty and help him or her overcome it.

A common ploy of the devil is to convince people that they cannot avoid sin. Then they do not even try. But God promises that the devil can have no lasting power over those who sincerely seek God (see Qur'an 15:42)

Finally, our bodies are given to us in trust from God. One should not use his or her body contrary to the user guide provided by its Maker. Consenting adults also need God's consent to their behaviours.

*The main goal here is to allow the Islamic perspective to enter the public discourse. I am of the firm conviction that if we were to adopt the Islamic model in society instead of paying lip service to it and pursuing non-Islamic systems, we would be much better off and would reap the blessings of Allah (swt) on us. The central reason for the many ills we face within our world is due to the fact that we do not follow what our Creator has prescribed for us.*



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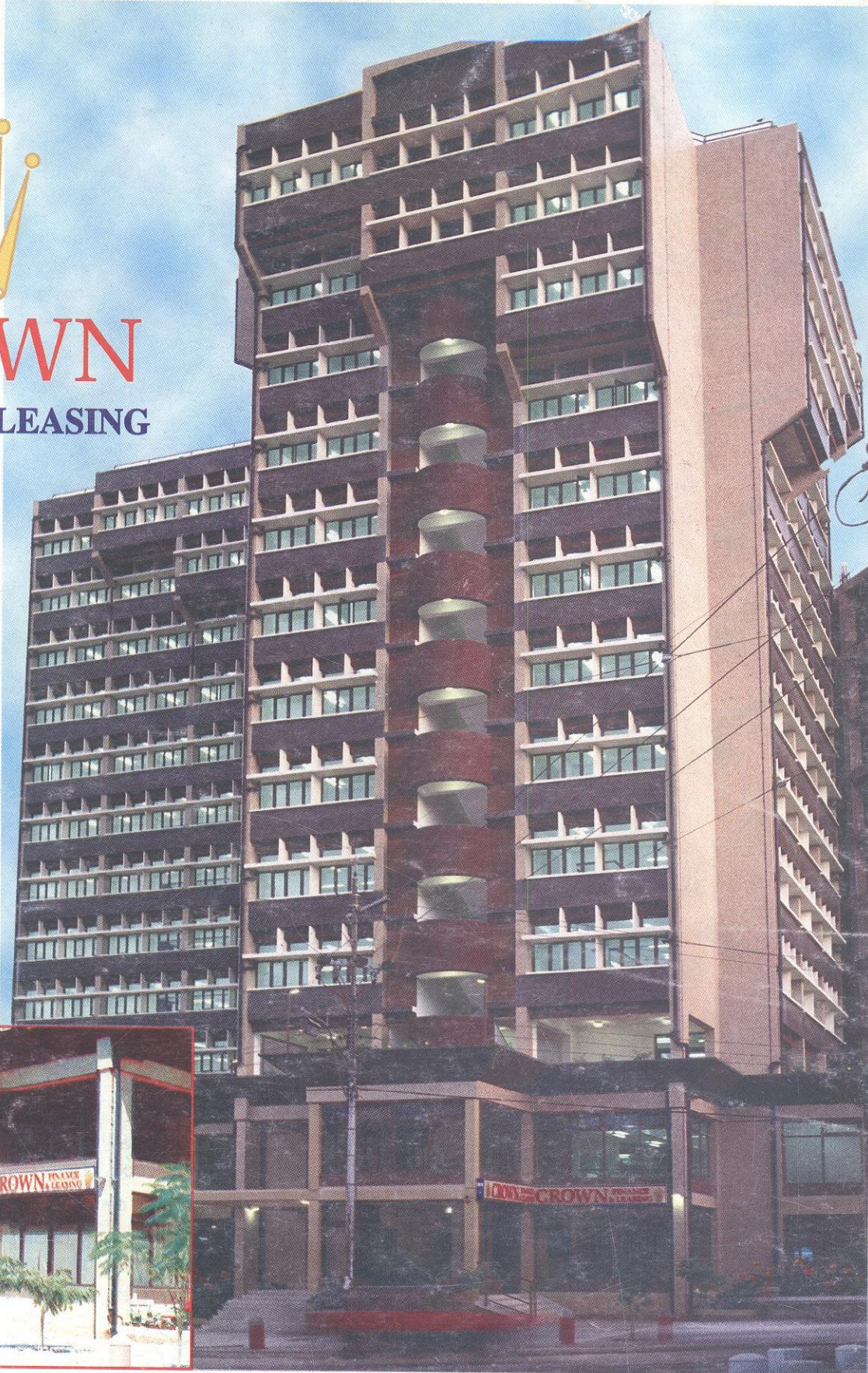
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