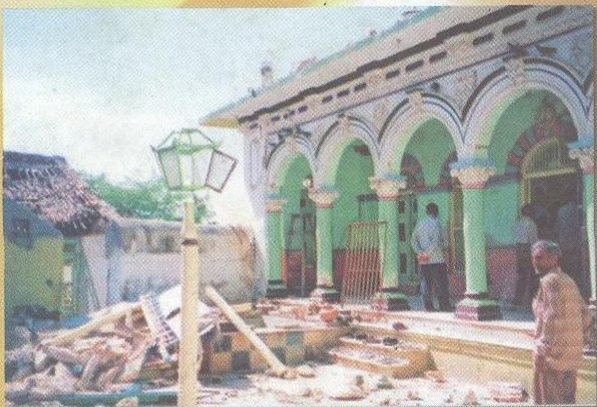


# Federation Samachar



## Africa Federation Team ends term in office



Earthquake devastates  
community in Gujarat



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## FEDERATION SAMACHAR

A publication of the Federation  
of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri  
Jamaats of Africa  
Volume 31, No. 9  
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April, 2001



**Editor:**

Munir Daya

**Advertising:**

Mukhtar Damji

**Circulation:**

Mrs. Fatim Haji

Fatima Patel

**Circulation and**

**Photographs:**

Murtaza Jivraj

**USA Circulation:**

Shabbir Master Baker

**North American Edition:**

Baqir Alloo, Gulam Sajan,  
Nazmul Damji, Sibtain Jaffer  
and Bashir Valji

Correspondence to:

**The Editor,**

**Federation Samachar**

**P.O. Box 6710, Dar es Salaam.**

**E-mail:**

samachar@raha.com

**Internet edition:**

<http://www.africafederation.org>

**Overseas correspondents:**

Baqir Alloo (Toronto)

Gulam Sajan (Toronto)

Gulam Dhalla (Los Angeles)

Sadik Alloo (Los Angeles)

**COVER PICTURE**

The outgoing Africa Federation team at a farewell photo session: Sitting from left to right Habib Virani, Mohamed Pirbhai Mohamed Dhirani and Gulam Janmohamed. Standing from left to right Ahmed Alloo, Murtaza Habib, Mohamed Somji, Naushad Dhanji, Asghar Dhanji, Munir Daya, Roshan Fazal and Aunali Khalfan (some members of the team were not available for the photo session).

## From the Editor's Desk

### Trust Fund - a pragmatic solution to Higher Education woes

The Africa Federation has wholeheartedly encouraged and supported students to pursue further education through their own financial means or through some financial assistance from the Federation with respective Jamaats having to bear half of the total cost. The Federation has also extended its support in one way or another to constituent Jamaats to boost the facilities of the schools or educational institutions that operate in their area.

Education has been a keynote subject for discussion at Supreme Council meetings and the formation of an Education Board some years ago underscored the seriousness of the community to produce more professionals. With these noble intentions the bottleneck that does ensue is that of limited finance. Limited finance renders practical implementation of laid out procedures difficult to follow.

The approximate cost of a three year Degree Course in the UK or a four year degree course in the US is US \$70,000. In South Africa the cost for a three year degree course is about US\$ 40,000 while in India it is about US\$ 30,000. In East African countries the cost ranges between US\$ 20,000 to US\$ 25000 for a similar three year degree course.

The Supreme Council does not have adequate funds to meet the escalating costs of fees for any one child. To some extent this bottleneck was eased by Jamaats being asked to foot 50% of the scholarship cost but the problem does arise that smaller Jamaats and sometimes even the larger one's do not have enough funds to supplement the 50% put in by the Federation. The end result is that some highly intelligent students are deprived of an opportunity to pursue higher education.

For the Africa Federation an Educational Trust Fund needs to be considered. Under this scheme resources from philanthropists around the world can be pooled in order to create adequate funds to finance the need of our students. The Trust Fund can be monitored by say, a committee of philanthropists, at least one of whom should be a professional educationist. The philanthropists can be assigned the responsibility of creating an initial impetus for funds. In Dar es Salaam, the Jamaat has introduced a fine scheme to cater for community students who cannot afford fees at the Al Muntazir Schools. This Fund solicits support from philanthropists who pay for entrance or admission fees or for both.

To truly back education we need a six pronged approach. One to ensure that we have a proper infrastructure by way of schools etc. in at least the major Jamaats, two, ensure our community schools are run professionally, three, ensure that teachers and academic staff of our schools possess the required skills, four, ensure that there are in-house training facilities for teachers, five, ensure that students are availed with adequate career guidance and six, ensure we earn enough from our schools to finance regular upgrading and to provide free scholarships to good students. Such scholarships would also help to encourage other students to study hard to qualify for similar assistance.

**Munir Daya**

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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,

### Answers to questions were contradictory

Please review the following questions and answers that were carried in the *Federation Samachar* Vol 31, No. 7 on page 59.:

Q. Is it permissible to make a statue in the shape of a human being or an animal?

A. No, it is not permissible.

Q. What about buying and selling statues of human beings and animals and displaying them for decoration?

A. It is permissible.

When the making of something is not permissible how can it become permissible for buying, selling and displaying the same item?

Meanwhile I'm living in Kampala and to get the *Federation Samachar* is very difficult. Please look towards improving the distribution at this end.

Mushtak P.Nazarali.  
Kampala.

Dear brother,

### Thanks for an interesting site

I was surfing Angelfire and checked out the Africa Federation website and particularly the weekly thoughts at Angelfire/weeklythought. I have a good friend with a really similar site, and I passed your URL along to her.

Have you ever seen a weblog? I was noticing your writing style, and I think the weblog format might really work well for you. I just started one recently, and I am actually thinking of dumping my homepage in favor of just having the weblog, since I'm enjoying it so much more than maintaining my homesite.

Anyway, I really just wanted to say thanks for an interesting site!

Bianca  
Bianca\_Broussard@yahoo.com

The Africa Federation website can be accessed on <http://www.africafederation.org>  
*Federation Samachar*

Dear brother,

### Continuity of the Samachar is essential

Your work for the *Federation Samachar* is very commendable and we can see it growing now in the number of pages year in year out. Well done and keep it up.

There are a couple of things I want to suggest. Firstly that this task is a mammoth task and there may be many who would be helping you but I don't see an Editorial Board on page 3 of the *Samachar*. I'm sure it would be useful to put down their names.

Secondly, it would also help if there is a contents page for members to search for a particular article. Finally, I can see you taking up higher posts in the Africa Federation or for that matter the World Federation in the future INSHALLAH. I hope you are training someone to carry on this task as this is one of the major means of communication for our community worldwide. It shouldn't be that you become the Secretary or President and then the *Samachar* suffers.

Sajjad Tejani  
UK.

Dear brother,

### Editorial was well-balanced

The Editorial in the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* 'LEARNING AB on CD' covered the subject about the limitless potential of the Internet as a learning tool and the dire need for its sensible usage - within our homes and in our community institutions.

The Editorial was well balanced and very well written. The issues and fears that were touched upon are indeed very valid. In my opinion, it is a good idea for a child to have supervised or monitored access to the information highway.

There is some merit in assuming that the child might still be tempted to 'explore' this highway further when no one is around. But in this day and age, no parent is equipped enough to police his child round the clock... unlike the past!

In my childhood days, in the fifties in Mombasa, the farthest I could venture on my own was to the community sports club or then to the kabrastan on Thursdays. I had to be in the mosque at every prayer time, come hell or high water!

R Parvana,  
Toronto,  
Canada.

Dear brother,

### Website counter jammed!

I recently visited the Africa Federation website and noted that the visitor counter showed that you had only one visitor. Certainly this is not possible and I also noted that the links section to other sites was not activated.

Please look into this.

Curious Surfer.

Both these problems have since been rectified.

Editor.

Dear brother,

## Few suggestions for the *Samachar*

Going through the recent issues of the *Federation Samachar*, a few points came to my mind.

The prime aim of the magazine is to bring together information related to the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community, and thereby help in closer organization and affinity.

In my humble opinion, certain modifications are called for in order to give it a more systematic and universal look. Few examples follow:

a) Proper Distribution of Space. For this I suggest the following general lay-out:

Editorial (1 page),  
 Letters to the Editor (2 pages),  
 Outstanding/Innovative achievements by a particular project or individual of the community (2 pages),  
 World Affairs of significance to us (5 pages),  
 Articles on Islam and Muslim-related topics (20 pages),  
 Interviews of important personalities from diverse fields (2x2 pages),  
 Region-wise community reports (10 pages),  
 Reformatory aspirations of community members (2 pages),  
 Hot debates going around in various parts of the world (4 pages),  
 A brief report about the developments in sponsored projects (10 pages),  
 Womens' section (5 pages),  
 Kids section (2 pages),  
 An Islamically-oriented story (2 pages),  
 Insights into the Educational System of various countries (2 pages),  
 Quiz and Essay Contests (1 page),  
 Obituaries (2 pages) etc.

b) Text should be made attractive with the addition of pictures and graphics wherever possible.

c) Recycled paper of fine quality may be tried instead of glossy paper.

d) Printing should be 4-coloured instead of unicolored to give it an attractive look.

e) The quality of English should be maintained and well controlled.

f) Typesetting and fonts should be precise and sharp-edged.

g) Uncommon Islamic terms should be properly defined by way of notes.

h) Back cover page should be improved.

I think orientation of the community is more important than providing dead facts and information. The horizon and scope of the magazine should be extended to cover the entire Shia community, and should have a Pan-Islamic Approach. The title of the magazine should reflect this approach, instead of suggesting a casteist outlook.

*Federation Samachar* is definitely doing a great service. It should be popularized in the mainstream Shia community. It is because of its worthiness and important role in our society that I have offered you such suggestions.

I have a problem of being outspoken and I hope you do take my comments positively.

Syed Ali Mehdi  
 India

Thank you for your indepth analysis of the *Samachar*. It reflects your interest in the community media and your understanding of how important the role of the media is in our community at large.

On the points you have suggested, a few explanations follow:

**Distribution of space: The Editorial is on one page and more pages are availed for letters in order to encourage exchange of opinions or suggestions on various issues pertaining to**

**the community. The other suggested lay-out titles are normally covered under one section or another. The objective is to limit each issue to not more than 64 or 68 pages.**

**Additions of graphics and pictures is certainly required. So far we have avoided excessive graphics to portray the *Samachar* as a serious media. However graphics and more photographs should make the *Samachar* more readable.**

**The type of font used is times new roman which is a common font used in magazines. The font size is 10 simply because larger fonts would require our normal issues to be increased in size by at least 12 pages.**

**Four-colour printing has been envisaged in the past but plans to initiate this were shelved because of high costs. The incoming *Samachar* team can probably consider this by increasing advertising rates or by obtaining more adverts.**

**For the magazine title, '*Samachar*' means 'news' in Gujarati and this is the official language of the community. The magazine does cover the entire Shia community particularly in the section covering news from the Muslim world. As for dead facts and information, I doubt we have carried these in any of our recent past issues.**

**A North American Edition of the *Samachar* is printed in Toronto and the magazine can also be read on the Internet (<http://www.africa.federation.org>).**

**Your suggestion to explain uncommon Islamic terms is valid and we will try to do this in future.**

Editor:

*The writer is a lecturer of Islamic Ideology and History in Madinatul Uloom Seminary, Aligarh.*

Dear brother,

## Thoughts on education and career planning for our youth

I would like to take a few minutes of your time by sharing some of the thoughts/information I have gathered from my visits to Asia in the last few weeks. My thoughts/findings here are very preliminary and only at the idea stage and by no means should these be considered well developed positions/recommendations. So please review the appended in that light. My goal is to stimulate some thinking.

### 1. Affordable higher education for our youth at reputable institutions

I'd like to point out that by encouraging students to go to reputable educational institutions in countries such as India and Taiwan we could accomplish the goal of educating our youth from Africa (and may be other places) at very affordable rates.

I have spoken to people who have contacts at reputable Indian educational institutions such as the IIT and they may be very open to reserving a few seats for students we may want to sponsor. We could reserve seats for qualified children at various IITs in India. Getting admission in these institutes is extremely competitive and the graduates I have seen from these colleges in the US job market are above average and often brilliant. Let me know if this is worth exploring further.

Similarly I was in Taiwan last week and I learned the cost of educating someone in Taiwan at one of their top universities (Tsing-Hua University) is around \$2000.00 (\$1500.00 tuition, \$500 room and board) - a fraction of what it will cost in the West. This university has good undergraduate and graduate programs. Of course we will have to verify these numbers and do the necessary groundwork. However

if the number of publications that they get is an indication of their quality, this university would rate very highly. I had a chance to meet with the President of the University and if there is interest on our part I could explore if they are open to a relationship with our community through a more formalized scholarship/sponsored education program.

A concern I would have sending our youths to these universities is the career planning for them once they have completed their formalized education. What prospects will there be for them to earn a good living and to establish themselves? This is an area where entrepreneurs/business people/career counsellors in our community need to be sought to help develop a well thought long term plan.

### 2. Singapore

From my visit to Singapore, I learned that the government there is very supportive of allowing businesses to be set-up and attracting professionals who can contribute to the vibrancy of the Singaporean economy. Information Technology is a ripe field. Although I was in Singapore for only a day or so, my impressions were generally positive. Singapore is a safe and progressive city with a very diverse ethnic make-up. There is a Muslim presence although I did not get a chance to explore much in detail in the day I spent there. May be there is something here worth further investigation from the point of settling our community.

Reading the national newspapers it was clear that the government of Singapore has incentives to increase the island's population by helping subsidize the cost of rearing a multi-

child family with significantly higher subsidies.

Of course a much more elaborate study needs to be undertaken on suitability/affordability of Singapore. Its progressive stance, status as a free port and its proximities to major economies of Asia should warrant a serious consideration as we look ahead for the prospects of our communities worldwide.

Educating our youth worldwide has to be a top priority as was discussed at the last World Federation conference. With limited funds we have to be creative in how we go about delivering the best education for them whilst stretching our budgets to the maximum.

We also need to look ahead and help settle our growing community worldwide in stable and progressive environments. I hope this mail stimulates some thinking and I am hoping that it could be forwarded to the appropriate education/career/settlement committees as input in their planning process. Education for all and self sufficiency for all is a worthy goal that our communities around the world need to work towards!

**Jawad Khaki**  
Seattle  
USA

**The above was not received as a specific letter to the Editor but was received by way of a general e-mail. As the objective of the writer is to stimulate thinking on the subject, this is being carried as a letter.**

Editor.

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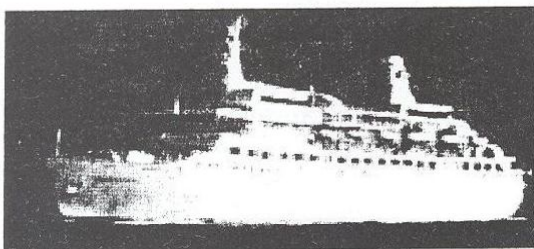
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Dear brother,

## Dar children misguided in Ramadhan

This year in Ramadhan the Union Sports Club once again organized sports for gents and ladies at the Complex. Having sports activities is not against the *sharia*. Unfortunately the way it is being done on the ladies side overlooks some religious protocols.

Women in Dar es Salaam began with the Sports Festival some three years. Every year brings with it its problems but nobody cares about solving them. Last year the Complex remained closed on Thursdays and big nights like khushalis, wafaats and amaal nights. This time no respect was given to these occasions. When a suggestion to this effect was made to the Gents Union by some ladies their reply was that they could not help it.

This time the Complex gates were open as early as 9:00 p.m. and when this matter was brought to the attention of the gents they defended this by saying that organizers needed to go early. After dua there were half an hour English lectures for our youth which cost our Jamaat dear money. But Alas! almost all youngsters after dua used to leave in a rush to go to the Complex. Only a handful of mothers and elderly, some of whom did not even understand English were seen in the mosque.

Union were requested to open the gates at 10:15 p.m. and not allow anyone to enter the compound before then but they ignored the request. Last year they had the curfew time that lights should be off at twelve, this time even till two in the morning the Complex was sometimes open.

When concern was raised nothing was said against any of the ladies in charge. Have we reached a stage where our men cannot control the ladies committee any more? If not, can

somebody tell us about why no time discipline was maintained at the Complex?

For an hour's program at the mosque our youngsters complain. It's a pity, a shame. English lectures were held for our youths, but where were they? .....at the Complex. Just as the duas ended there was chaos and a rush to leave. Are we so disorganized as a community that we cannot discipline our children? There is a time and a place for everything. Go to any Shia mosque in the West in the holy month of Ramadhan like in England and the USA and you will be surprised to see how much reverence children have for this blessed month and on how much religious knowledge they have. Sadly for many of our girls this holy month is about fasting and the Complex only.

On one khushali night an announcement was made that called upon ladies not to rush to the Complex before 10:30p.m. This announcement fell to deaf ears and as a matter of fact many mothers were against the Complex. Some even complained that their children did not wake up for subh prayers after staying at the Complex till so late.

At this juncture may I just point out that some of the referees for the games that were contested did not even know the proper rules of the games played and this is why at times there were arguments between them and the players who knew the rules better. In my opinion there was also a lot of favourism going on.

Unfortunately the Complex is being misused a lot. For years we have been complaining about lack of space, now we have an ideal space and we are not making proper use of it. This time a madrassa workshop could not be held

because of power problems yet both the Boarding and Complex had big generators and so many flood lights.

Our young girls are going to be the mothers of soldiers' of Imam-Zamana. What are we teaching them? What example are we giving them? Only by giving them strong religious foundation can we hope that they will bring up the next generation with strong Islamic values. Isn't it time our community leaders step in to control such situations so that our children are not misguided?

**Concerned Parent**  
Dar es Salaam.

**Sports is important to any community and from the contents of your letter it appears that you do not dispute this.**

**For the Complex guidelines were provided and these guidelines took into consideration the need for our youths to indulge in various religious activities like recitation of the holy Qur'an, due-e-iftetah, listening to lectures and participation in quiz contests.**

**My understanding is that the Complex was closed on big nights. However when guidelines are flouted, this creates problems. At the same time parents have a role to play in the upbringing of their children. Responsible parents would not be expected to allow their children to return home late especially if their children end up missing morning prayers.**

**The Jamaat operates through a system of delegation. Be it for education, medical, tabligh, youths or sports there are committees which are entrusted to run affairs. When members of the Jamaat have complaints these are normally handled by the responsible committees but if complaints are against the very people responsible to manage affairs, the Jamaat does not stop members from seeking direct dialogue when such complaints are sincere and unprejudiced.**

Editor.

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## Earthquake causes havoc in India



More than 50,000 people, probably many more, were killed in a powerful earthquake that struck western India and parts of Pakistan on 26th January, 2001. A number of tremors were felt after the preliminary quake which measured between 6.9 to 7.9 on the Richter scale. The earthquake was felt as far away as Bangladesh, Nepal and the town of Pondicherry in south-east India where people fled in panic from a Republic Day parade. The earthquake and subsequent tremors caused widespread death and damage to property with some towns being reduced to rubble. Following the earthquake a series of aftershocks measuring up to 5.9 on the Richter scale ensued with the total tremors in the first three days being about 77.

The epicentre of the earthquake was in Bhuj, Kutch. At community level  
*Federation Samachar*

there was a massive destruction of houses and properties including mosques, imambaras and madressas. Maliya, a village in the border of Kutch and Gujarat bore the brunt of the earthquake. Here we have 120 people (17 families) whose houses and twenty shops were all reduced to rubble.

The once throbbing town of Bhuj was reduced to rubbles with not a building in site. Any building not flattened by the earthquake is uninhabitable. At the Al Mahdi Colony, the housing estate built by the World Federation 4 houses were totally destroyed and the rest suffered extensive structural damage. Another 20 houses were rendered uninhabitable. The Tawheed Boys Hostel, the Mosque and the Imambada were severely damaged. A 75 year old lady, from our community died as a

result of the calamity. We have 61 families (272 people) in Bhuj who are now all homeless and wandering under open skies. After the earthquake our people erected makeshift shelters in the grounds of the Al Mahdi Colony.

Fifty percent of our families residing in Bhuj left town. They are living in other towns with their families mainly in Gujarat. Of those remaining some have found temporary accommodation on rent and are living there with their families. The rest are still living in the corrugated iron temporary buildings put up with the help of Council of Gujarat. They live communally, eat from a common kitchen and living conditions are generally miserable.

The families wish to move to acceptable temporary accommodation until permanent houses are provided. They have decided that they would like to live in the locality of the Al-Mahdi Colony, with their own Mosque, Imambada and Madressa. It was decided that the office bearers of the Jamat will look for suitable land to put up seventy one storey houses and the required community buildings. The land will first be used for temporary accommodation while permanent houses will be put up in stages.

The Government has decided that for the moment nobody is allowed to live or work in the city centre where many of our community members used to live and where our religious centers were located. Water and electricity have been disconnected there and the decision of when and how to rebuild may take a long time. The decision of our community to start a new self contained colony in the neighbourhood of the Al-Mehdi Colony therefore makes a lot of sense.

At Nagalpur we have 21 families (114 people). Their houses and shops were completely destroyed and one five year old girl died. The Mosque, Imambada and library were flattened. Two ladies had broken legs and were transferred to a hospital in Bhavnagar. Relief teams delivered tents, drinking water, foodstuff and essential medical supplies immediately after the earthquake.

(continued on page 12)

The Mumineen of Nagalpur are now living in makeshift tin huts erected with help of the Council of Gujarat. They have also set up a communal kitchen for all meals and a tent for Namaz which is also used for sleeping at night. There is water and electricity. Mumineen use toilet facilities of surrounding houses and some have restarted their businesses and jobs.

As soon as the first shock had settled, youth in Nagalpur went round to all the houses and got families to the open ground outside the mosque. They then visited the outlying villages and brought everybody in before salvaging all belongings from the houses for safekeeping in the Mosque store room. During their errands our volunteers helped people of all communities and their work was generally appreciated.

In all towns there were highly emotional situations and if individual accounts were to be reported these could add up to be a book. For example in Nagalpur there was the case of Zainab Hussein Ladha, 11 years old whose feet got crushed under the huge stones of the Mazar that had fallen on to her. She told volunteers that her brother Abbas was inside the rubble before dying a few hours later because of excessive loss of blood. The youths did locate 5 year-old Abbas and dug him out safe and sound.

The families of Nagalpur have decided that they want to stay locally. It is therefore important that they be relocated in temporary accommodation until permanent housing can be provided. They have found a land on which temporary accommodation can be constructed where each family can independently reside with their own room, kitchen and washroom. The proposed life of the temporary houses would be about three years.

Ultimately most of the households prefer to live in a purpose designed Complex in new Anjar that would also accommodate a Mosque, Imambada and Madressa. Anjar is located 3 kms. away from Nagalpur and has a lot of job and commercial opportunities to offer. This is why the Jamat is thinking of moving there. Moreover rebuilding on their own lands in Nagalpur is not

viable at present as it is not known what the neighbours will do and of future city plans.

Regarding permanent accommodation the government has still not given any directive regarding the rebuilding of Nagalpur or Anjar. Anjar was however not severely damaged by the earthquake and our families who live there have not been seriously affected.

In Kera, our people were rendered homeless and were given refuge in the grounds neighboring our mosque where makeshift shelters were set up. Rajabalibhai Gulamhussein, a trustee and former President of the Kutch Federation played an active role in managing the camp. Moreover our members displayed tremendous magnanimity by also assisting non-community people who had fallen victims to the disaster. Various relief convoys from members of our communities helped with provisions of ration and other essential supplies while selfless doctors sacrificed valuable time to assist the sick and injured of our community. Kera and Mundra suffered comparatively lesser and the damage there is around 15% of the damage in the other three regions of Kutch. About four houses were destroyed in Mundra.

Here the Jamaat has got a beautiful piece of land next to the Mosque, where they planned to put up temporary houses for those who needed to be vacated from their homes. In the early days that followed the earthquake most people spent the day at work or in their homes, but at night they slept in tents erected in the ground near the mosque. This was for safety as the area then still experienced aftershocks.

The Mosque has sustained structural damage which is repairable. The new Imambada is under construction and did not sustain any damage. Other buildings in the Mosque compound are damaged, some repairable, some beyond repair.

At Mariya Mian all sixteen families of our community residing in this part of Kutch lost their homes and shops. Here we have 28 households with about 140 men, women and children. Their shops are a total loss but some have re-opened for business in badly cracked and damaged structures. The

mosque is badly cracked but can be repaired. The Imambada roof has caved in because the first floor Madressa wall has collapsed through it into the Imambada. Men sleep on the floor in the corrugated iron temporary shelters put up by donations. All the ladies and children of the community have been moved to Chotila another town in Gujarat.

Maria Miyana is in a really pathetic condition. Almost 90% of the town is down and of a population of 14000 only 7000 now remain and are living in the open amidst the ruins. Probably the only consolation is that there is a good supply of fresh vegetables in the market. Mariya Miyana is 90% Muslim.

During the crisis a high powered delegation of the Council of Gujarat including the President of the Council of Gujarat, Ghulubhai Bhurani and a number of volunteers visited many areas taking along essential supplies.

The earthquake in Gujarat was unusual in that it took place in the middle of a tectonic plate. Earthquakes usually happen at the edges of tectonic plates when tension caused by them rubbing together is released.

But the Bhuj earthquake was by no means the first in the region. In 1668, all 30,000 houses in the town of Samaji on the Indus delta reportedly sank into the ground. And in 1819, 2,000 people were killed in Ahmedabad and Kutch and a 90 km (56 mile) long scarp up to nine metres (30 feet) high was formed. Recently in 1956, 115 people were killed in a magnitude seven quake in Anjar.

Analysts believe that many lives could have been saved in the recent earthquake if building codes had been enforced and cheap protection measures carried out. Buildings in Bhuj are usually built from local sandstone and covered with a clay mixture called adobe. Some use regular sandstone blocks, but the cheapest buildings use irregular blocks held together with mortar. Analysts suggest that regular blocks offer good earthquake protection unlike irregular blocks which easily crack and turn into a pile of rubble. They have advised local builders to use regular blocks in new construction work which would help to save lives in any future quakes.

*Community leaders  
meet in Kutch to  
formulate a  
resettlement  
action plan*

A delegation of the World Federation including Vice President, Ahmed Hassam and Treasurer, Ahmed Daya flew to India about a week after the earthquake to tour the afflicted areas. The Chairman of Africa Federation Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani having being requested specially flew to India and joined the World Federation Vice Chairman Alhaj Ahmed Hassam and the Treasurer Alhaj Ahmed Daya who then all visited the Earthquake affected areas from 11th to 14th February 2001. They were also joined by Br. Gulamabbas Bhurani, President of Council of Gujarat, Br. Gulam Meghani, Br. Noorali Mukhi, Br. M.D. Vakil, Alhaj Aunali Salehmohamed and Br. Bismillah Sultan Aly from Australia. Their visit took them to Marya, Bhuj, Nagalpur, Kera and Mundra.

Extensive damage was noted and the majority of our community members were seen to be homeless, with no livelihood, experiencing poor sanitary conditions and bad weather. Children did not have a school to attend to.

After conducting the intensive tour of the afflicted regions a special meeting was convened on Wednesday 14th February to enable all agencies working in the area to discuss matters related to the welfare of our community in Kutch. Leaders of Kutch Jamaats as well as our various regional organizations were also present.

The delegations came from the World Federation, Africa Federation, Sajjadia Trust, Al Iman Trust as well as the Council of Gujarat and the Kutch Federation. At this historic meeting, all parties agreed upon the following broad principles:

1. All parties unreservedly pledged to accord full cooperation to help and assist our brethren in the affected areas in every way.

(continued on page 14)

*Federation Samachar*

**Special Message from the President of the World Federation to participants of the meeting on 14th February, 2000 in Kutch**

Respected Leaders of the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Community,

**Assalamu Alaykum.**

Firstly, my heart goes out to all the munineen in affected areas. For all of us here at the Secretariat, our thoughts and prayers have been very much with our brothers and sisters in Bhuj, Nagalpur, Marya and elsewhere ever since the calamity that befell us on Friday Jan 26. I pray for their safety and well being and wish to assure our Community through the President of the Federation of Kutch and Kutch Jamaat Leaders, that the World Federation, in conjunction with all the regional federations and agencies, will leave no stone unturned to promptly assist, enable and facilitate the resettlement of our brethren in all the affected areas.

At this juncture I must commend the rapid response by all those who endeavoured to accord timely assistance by arranging convoys to deliver drinking water, foodstuffs, tents, and essential medical supplies. In particular I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the Council Of Gujarat personally led by the President Alhaj Gulubhai Bhurani, AlHaj Chotubhai (Salim) Dosani and his team, Alhaj Sajjad Varteji and his team and others.

The support from the Khoja Shia Ithna asheri Community all around the globe has been tremendous. The Kutch Disaster Desk (KDD) set up by the World Federation has been coordinating and collating data on all relief efforts with all the parties and issuing frequent updates for the information of the Community. The KDD has responded to hundreds of calls and emails from anxious relatives from all over the world in the last few days.

It is my earnest hope and prayer that at this landmark meeting, the World Federation representation led by our Vice President Dr Ahmed Hassam, joined by the Hon Treasurer Alhaj Ahmed Daya and Executive Councilor Alhaj Aunali Salehmohammed will be able to engage in fruitful deliberations with all of you, in charting out a comprehensive plan to resettle those who wish to remain in the affected areas as well as assist those who wish to move to nearby areas.

Needless to say we will need to address many diverse issues in order to plan their settlement such as housing, businesses, farming or employment. Equally important, we will need to ensure as much as possible the education of children is not affected.

We will also need to embark upon rebuilding our Mosques and Imambargahs in accordance with the requirements of the population. I would particularly encourage where possible utilizing the land to build houses too. This will have an added benefit of having the community within the close proximity of the religious centers.

I urge you all that together as a Community we must optimize our efforts, pool our resources, and set out modalities towards formulating a comprehensive and a professionally prepared plan for the resettlement and rehabilitation of munineen in affected areas. Once formulated, let us all pledge to join hands in bringing that plan to fruition for the affected munineen for the pleasure of Allah Subhanahu Wat'ala.

Wassalamu Alaykum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatu

**Hasnain Walji  
President.**

## Muslim World News

(...from page 13)

2. All parties agreed to work together to facilitate the long term settlement of our community in affected areas.

3. The meeting recognized the immediate need for charting out a programme of resettlement based on the need and requirements of the Jamaats and individuals.

4. All parties echoed the spirit to optimize our efforts, pool resources, and set out modalities towards jointly implementing a well prepared plan.

Meanwhile the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme was outlined as follows:

**PHASE ONE – “ONE YEAR SCHEME” PROGRAMME:** to be of assistance for our approx 125 families. This will involve the following:

a. To resettle them all from camps to nearby places such as Mahuwa, Bhavnagar and Ahmedabad, so that they can continue with their lives and strive to earn a living and send their children to schools.

b. To assist them for a year with rent and rations for each family upto \$ 120 per month. The amount required to support one family for a year is approx US \$ 1,440, a total amount of approx \$ 180,000 will be required to cater for all the affected families. During this period they should start to work in the new areas and those who were in small business should start afresh for which financial assistance as loan is being considered.

**PHASE TWO:** will involve the construction period and rehousing. This will take a longer period due to the fact that the reconstruction will depend upon clearance of the rubble and Government's Town Planning. It is planned that the reconstruction of Mosques and Imambaras will be undertaken in this Phase.

The estimated total cost is expected to be close to U.S. \$ 500,000.

All Jamaats and Community members are requested to donate generously either through their Jamaats or direct to the Africa Federation. All the funds will be forwarded to World Federation – who have the machinery and the manpower in place to organize this massive task.

*Federation Samachar*



Surveying damage of Bhuj Imambara and Mosque



Extensive damage of Mehfil in Bhuj



Damage of Bhuj Imambara and Mosque Complex

## Vice Chairman addresses Dar Condolence meeting

During a condolence meeting organised in Dar es Salaam by the Hindu Mandal and attended by heads of various communities, the Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation Mohamed Pirbhai expressed the community's shock and grief on learning about the recent earthquake in India. This meeting was also attended by the High Commissioner of India, Virendra Gupta, Chairman of Hindu Mandal, Bihari Tanna and other guests.

Pirbhai defined the tragedy as sad, more so because most of our ancestors emigrated from the affected areas in Gujarat with which we still maintain strong ties. He said our community has in the last decade invested heavily in Gujarat and other parts of India in the field of education, health and housing.

He pointed out that the World Federation of K.S.I. Muslim Communities started relief measures immediately on getting the news by despatching an investigating team from the Gujarat Federation. He said a strategy of assistance had been put in place in the form of technical, monetary and material assistance with a website also created for up-to-date news and for awakening people to help.

Admitting that ours is a small community compared to other NGO's and relief organizations, Pirbhai said that our community felt obliged to play its part by way of humanitarian services to alleviate in whatever small way the immense sufferings that we have painfully seen through the media.

He said India is a determined nation and has in the past overcome disasters and destruction through floods, famine, landslide etc. He expressed confidence that the present calamity, albeit on a scale and magnitude not seen before, would also be overcome by the people of India.

He said the world, irrespective of any differences in religion, cast or creed has risen to its social obligation with both international and local assistance flowing in immediately. The task is mammoth, but has to be and will be done.

He pointed out that the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani was in Hyderabad with a team of experts from the London based World Federation to visit some of the devastated areas.

*Federation Samachar*

## Condolence letter written to the Indian High Commissioner in Tanzania

“Dear Mr. Virendra Gupta,

**RE: THE EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA**

OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY OF THE KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI IN AFRICA WAS UTTERLY SHOCKED AND SADDENED BY THE EARTHQUAKE THAT KILLED MANY PEOPLE AND LEFT A LARGE NUMBER HOMELESS.

THE LOSS OF LIVES AND PROPERTY NOT TO MENTION THE SUFFERING OF THE SURVIVORS AT SUCH A HUGE SCALE IS A TREMENDOUS SET BACK FOR A COUNTRY THAT WAS MAKING UNPRECEDENTED STRIDES IN ALL FIELDS OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS.

IT IS OUR FIRM BELIEF, THAT INDIA IS A DETERMINED NATION AND HAS IN THE PAST OVERCOME DISASTERS AND DESTRUCTION, ALBEIT NOT AT A LEVEL OF MAGNITUDE THAT WE ARE WITNESSING NOW.

OUR COMMUNITY AT LARGE WISH TO CONVEY OUR CONDOLENCE FOR THE LIVES LOST AND TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE SYMPATHY TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED BY WAY OF LOSING LOVED ONES, BY INJURIES SUFFERED AND BY LOSS OF PROPERTIES.

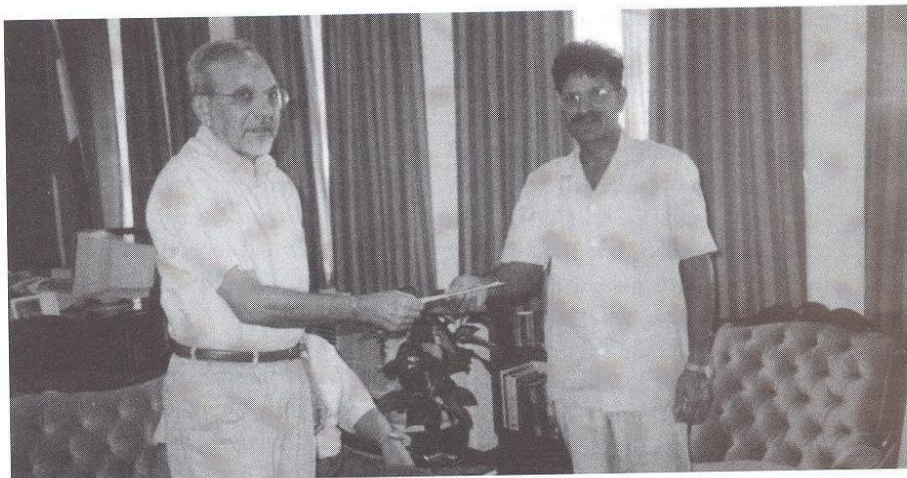
OUR CHAIRMAN IS ALREADY IN INDIA ON A MISSION AND WE ARE CERTAIN THAT HE WILL BRING A FIRST HAND REPORT OF THE CALAMITY.

OUR COMMUNITY JOINS INDIA IN MOURNING AND WE PRAY THAT THIS DYNAMIC NATION QUICKLY RECOVERS FROM THE AFTERMATH OF THE EARTHQUAKE.

PLEASE CONVEY OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

YOURS SINCERELY.

**Mohamed Pirbhai – Vice Chairman ”**



**The Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Pirbhai presents a condolence letter to the Indian High Commissioner in Tanzania, Virendra Gupta.**

# Canadian Free Press apologises on a write-up against Islam

In January this year the Editor of Free Press, Nicholas Hirst apologised to readers for a write-up from their Winnipeg correspondent which undermined Islam. The article was carried on the Faith Page of the Winnipeg Free Press on 13 January, 2001.

After the article was carried the newspaper was inundated with complaints from Muslims who classified the article as a form of 'hate mail'. Following the apology a letter of appreciation was written to the Editor expressing relief and gratitude that the misreporting had been clarified and also expressing confidence on the fair-mindedness and integrity of the Canadian media.

The apology follows:

"WE have offended many, as is clear from the letters we publish on this page, with our printing of a letter from a Winnipeg correspondent in the Faith page on Saturday.

The letter was about Islam and was in reply to an earlier article published on December 30 last year that was written in praise of the religion. Saturday's letter was condemnatory and, had I been Muslim, I should have found it offensive. It was offensive because however many misdeeds may be performed in the name of any religion, there can be no cause to condemn all its believers. It was also offensive because it interpreted the religion in ways that stated interpretation as fact. The letter claimed, for instance, that "the religion of Islam is false," that "Muslims claim that Allah is the same God as Christians and Jews worship, but that is false" and many other tendentious and inflammatory statements that many Islamic believers would wholeheartedly reject.

This newspaper aims to be the forum

for debate for the community it serves. That community includes all religions that are practised wherever the newspaper may be read, whether in print or on-line. Its primary readership and therefore its focus for debate, is, of course, the people of Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. It is among those people that we have caused anger and caused them to suspect our editorial judgment and balance.

In judging what to print, we must consider what is a fair balance of opinion. There are, of course, limits to what we will allow people to say, but we do allow letters that criticize us, our standards, our morals and, occasionally, the competency of our staff. We allow people to complain about the service we provide. We allow far more latitude in the presentation of fact and opinion to our letter writers than we do to ourselves in the fact and opinion pieces that we write. Sometimes, our own staff feel we go too far in allowing attacks on the newspaper and those who work for it.

## Controversial opinion

Given the choice between printing opinion and holding it back, we will tend to err on the side of printing. In doing so, we may from time to time print what should not be printed. This newspaper cannot shirk controversy and do its job. There is a fine line, however, between controversial opinion and hurtful opinion, between a well-argued case and incendiary views. A free society, like a free press, censors opinion at its peril.

Nowhere is the decision-making on matters of opinion more difficult than on the Faith page. Religion is about belief, belief that can defy rational thought. Religion is believed passionately. What is controversial to one believer is commonplace to the next.

Faith is not monolithic, it allows of many interpretations, but one person's interpretation is another's heresy. Wars are still fought over religion. It is, then, hardly surprising that views expressed on a Faith page can cause anger and offence. However careful I may be as editor, offence will be caused.

I still believe that the Faith page can and should explore different views of religion and the search for belief and divinity. That on the Faith page, and elsewhere, our judgment over what we publish will falter, I have no doubt either.

My judgment is not perfect, neither is my staff's and neither is yours.

## Best of motives

The letter on Saturday was printed in the best of motives as part of a debate that has flourished on the Faith page from time to time about the nature of Islam, a religion in which many may have a great interest but is practised by a minority of Canadians. Our attempt to provide debate on Islam was intended to be inclusive, to reflect our community back to itself. That has not been the result.

In retrospect, the standards of debate to which we would hold ourselves were breached on Saturday. Like others, we learn from our mistakes. The views expressed are not the views of this newspaper. No religion should be impervious to criticism, no believers should shun debate. The letter, however, crossed the normal bounds of acceptable debate within this newspaper. I am responsible for what appears in this newspaper and I offer my apology for the offence caused."

**The Editor's apology was carried on 16 January, 2001 under the heading, "Offence to Islam not taken lightly."**



## Brampton to embark on building an Islamic Centre

The Shia Ithna-Asheri community in the western suburbs of Toronto, Canada (specifically in Brampton, Mississauga and its vicinity) currently consists of about 500 people and is growing quickly. It is affiliated with the Islamic Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaat (I.S.I.J.) of Toronto.

For the future growth and development of our community, they have undertaken an initiative to build their own congregation Centre. Presently, they are renting a temporary location that presents significant limitations such as inadequate facilities for the elderly or handicapped and for nursing mothers; a lack of a proper heating and cooling system; limited parking availability; and only one hall split in two with no place for a Thursday night madressa.

The proposed Centre, to be called the Ma'sumeen Islamic Centre, will address these shortcomings and also provide additional benefits. The Centre is also expected to unite the community, who will be coming to it for religious purposes as well as for educational and recreational needs.

On January 3rd, 2001, the ISIJ of Toronto was successful in purchasing two lots of land of 0.84 acres each in Brampton at a total cost of CDN \$650,000 (US \$440,000), which includes all the study and report expenses. It is also planned to purchase a third adjoining piece of land.

The West Ja'ffari community in Brampton, Mississauga and its vicinities has managed to raise the Canadian \$650,000.00, which will cover the purchase of the two lots of land, and are now focusing on attaining the zoning from residential to institutional use by mid 2001. The staff and Councillors of the City of Brampton, as well the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs of the Province of Ontario, have been very cooperative in pursuing this noble cause.

## Albanian school expels students for wearing headscarves

In February this year three Albanian girls were expelled from a foreign language secondary school in Tirana for wearing Islamic head coverings. The school Principal said "Students must respect the rules of the school, which is secular and where religious accoutrements are banned. Outside the school, they are free to do what they want, but here it is not possible to do gymnastics in a headscarf or to refuse to attend certain courses for religious reasons." He also pointed out that all students had signed the school's statutes at the beginning of the year.

"It is my religion. I believe in it, and the veil is a requirement for a good Muslim," said Miralda Gjoka, 17, a top English-language student and one of the three expelled.

The Education Ministry defended the Principal's decision. He said, "there are Quranic schools in Albania and everyone is free to enrol, but there are also public schools where the rules must be respected."

## Career Interests Game

For high-school leavers and new graduates, planning which career path to follow can be a difficult decision. The University of Missouri have a Career Interests Game on their web site at <http://web.missouri.edu~cppcwww/holland.shtml> which can help.

The Game is an exercise in discovering different career possibilities based on the sort of personality you have. After matching your interests and skills with specific careers, you can also read brief descriptions of what each job entails.

## Over 21000 British Muslims go for Haj

The number of the Muslim pilgrims from Britain during this year's Haj season exceeded 21,000 for the first time.

The record figure was announced by Saudi Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Ireland, Dr. Ghazi bin Abdulrahman Al-Gosaibi.

## MAB organises ninth Eye Camp at Khujwa in Bihar, India

In February this year the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) of the World Federation once again held an Eye Camp at Khujwa in Bihar, India. This was the ninth consecutive year for the Camp to be held.

The Camp was confined to people who were either blind, partially sighted or who had other eye disorders. Over 600 people were checked and over 250 patients were operated for cataract surgery with their sight being restored.

The cost to restore the vision of a blind person was merely £4.00. Also over 600 people were treated for different eye diseases. The patients and their families were accommodated at our school complex in Khujwa. The operations took place in the classrooms.

The total cost of the eye camp was born by the Primary Health Care Fund of the World Federation. Photographs can be viewed on the World Federation Website.

# Supreme Council of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaats of Africa

P.O.BOX 31347 NAIROBI, KENYA.

FAX NO. +254-2-533369

## VACANCY FOR AN EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### JOB DESCRIPTION:

Job Title : **Executive Officer**

Location and place of posting: Nairobi

Immediate Supervisor : Honorary Secretary. To liaise with the Chairman on specific tasks.

Will Supervise : Management Assistant, Finance and Administration Assistant, Communication and Information Officer. Indirectly to supervise all staff.

### Job summary- The Overall Purpose of the Job

- The Executive Officer is the Chief Officer of the Supreme Council's Secretariat and is responsible to the Executive Committee
- Develop proposals for strategic direction of the Federation
- Provide leadership and management of Supreme Council's operations
- Initiate concrete interventions discharging the Supreme Council's mandate
- Liaise with the Supreme Council's office bearers, Boards and Committees and affiliates
- Maintain a fully functional and efficient Secretariat

### Description of Main Duties

- Establish operational systems (Administration, Finance, Communication) for a fully functional office
- Initiate policy proposals for considerations by the Supreme Council
- Act as Secretary to the Supreme Council, Executive Committee of office bearers and other Boards and committees when called upon.
- Act as the link between Supreme Council and staff
- Liaise with all stakeholders
- Take overall responsibility for supporting the implementation of the Supreme Council's strategic plan.
- Establish contacts with other relevant institutions
- In conjunction with the Finance Officer and the Secretary and Treasurer, develop and present the annual budget for discussion and adoption by the Supreme Council
- Co-ordinate and manage the annual Audit and program evaluation
- Plan and guide the growth of Supreme Council
- Manage and co-ordinate staff evaluation appraisals
- Develop and co-ordinate an effective monitoring mechanism for all activities and programs of the Supreme Council
- Make programs and financial reports to the Board on the progress made in the implementation of strategic plans and activities.
- Act as the accounting officer of the organization.
- Responsible for the day to day management and supervision of staff.
- Handle Finance related responsibilities.
- Manage purchasing and office services
- Advise the Honorary Secretary on statutory requirements and changes
- Administer staff benefits and remuneration

## Job opportunity

- Help formulate and execute Supreme Council's accounting procedures including budgeting, forecasting, reporting, projects and program reporting.
- Supervise the maintenance of proper accounting records and produce monthly financial reports
- Deal with all financial and administrative matters including co-ordination of transport, purchases, tendering, secretarial and communication services, payments.
- Any other duty assigned by the Chairman and/or the Honorary Secretary.

### EMPLOYEE SPECIFICATIONS:

**Qualification:** Minimal: Post Secondary; Desirable: University Degree

**Experience** Minimal: At least 5 years in senior management of a busy organization with experience in a membership organization; Desirable: At least 10 years managing a large organization as its head preferably with experience in a membership organization with a regional base.

### Other attributes:

- Practicing Shia Ithna Asheri and well regarded by Constituent Jamaat. Preferably but not necessarily should have a higher religious knowledge and should be well regarded by Constituent Jamaat.
- Proven record and commitment towards a constituent Jamaat's activities.
- Excellent communication skills, ability to write well and to communicate ideas orally and in writing
- Ability to organize and work independently; Willingness to travel outside Nairobi at short notice.
- Mature person of at least 35 years of age or over but under 60 years.
- Fluent in English with ability to converse well in Gujerati and Kiswahili. Preferably should know Arabic.

**Salary:** Person presently earning less than \$ 1000 need not apply.

**Citizenship:** Resident of Africa and member of constituent Jamaat. Preferably should be a citizen of the country in which his Constituency Jamaat is located.

**Other Skills:** Computer and IT literate. Familiar with Microsoft Office package and database. Ability to understand and supervise basic accounts.

### Nature and Amount of Supervision Received.

Works independently, will consult with the Honorary Secretary and Chairman on policy issues.

### Access to and custody of Important and Confidential Information.

Will be custodian of confidential and sensitive information of the Supreme Council and its constituent Jamaats and affiliates.

### Responsibility over assets

Responsible for all Secretariat staff.

Direct supervision of officers and Management Assistant.

To allocate duties, motivate and appraise staff and to inculcate in staff, Supreme Council values so as to ensure team work and open communication.

### Performance standards

Supreme Council objectives should be achieved.

Harmonious relations with superiors, office bearers, Supreme Council Boards and committees, constituent Jamaat officials and members, individual donors and other collaborating institutions. High productivity and professionalism.

**Deadline:** applications must be received by the Secretariat in Nairobi not later than 30th June 2001.

Please apply with resume, photograph and pertinent information and/or documents to:

**Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji, P.O. Box 31347, Nairobi, Kenya.**

**Fax: 254 2 533369**

**Email: mpps@swiftkenya.com**

## Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme

-- a few questions answered

*...a 3 minute way to child sponsorship*

**What does ZCSS stand for?**  
Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme.

**Who does ZCSS sponsor?**

ZCSS sponsors all Shia children who cannot afford to pay for their basic education. ZCSS also helps University students who cannot afford their tuition by paying part of their tuition fees.

**Is it true that ZCSS only helps children in India?**

At the moment the majority of ZCSS's concentration is in India because we Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri originate from India and the World Federation thought it to be wise to start helping children from where we originate and then slowly help others. However, it is not true that ZCSS only helps children in India because at the moment it supports children in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand and Kenya.

**How many Children does ZCSS sponsor?**

At the moment ZCSS approximately sponsors eleven thousand (11,000) children altogether throughout the world.

**How much to sponsor a child?**

You will have to pay a fixed amount for the entire period you have chosen, which may be anything between 1 and 14 years. The yearly sum is £ 90 or USD 144 or Can.D 180.

**Can I sponsor more than one child?**

Yes you can sponsor as many children as you wish. Once you sponsor a child, you will be called the sponsor parent for that child/children.

**How long can I sponsor a child for?**

You can sponsor a child for a minimum of one year and there is no limit to the number of years you wish to sponsor a child. We prefer you to sponsor a child for at least four years.

**How will I know who am I sponsoring?**

Once you sponsor a child you will be sent a profile of the child you have been allocated, which will contain his/her photograph and all details. Also every year you will be sent a progress

report of how the child has performed during the year. This will be sent to your home address and so if you change your address it is vital that you inform us immediately.

**Do you sponsor students in Western Universities?**

This work is being done by CETAB and not ZCSS.

**What is the ZCSS graduate scheme?**

The Zainabiya graduate scheme supports potential students who cannot afford their entire tuition fees. These are students who attend colleges and Universities and at the moment we have approximately 500 students taking different courses.

**What is the cost of sponsoring a graduate?**

£500 or US\$ 800 or Can.D 1000 per student per year.

**Can I write to the child?**

Yes indeed. In fact it will be good for the child to receive a letter from you from time to time. When they do well or badly in school, a letter from you could work wonders. But please do not expect a reply.

**In what language should I write?**  
Simple English.

**What address should I use?**

For your address, use World Federation's address. We will re-direct the reply to you. For the student's address, use the Organisation's address given on top of the student's details which are with you.

**Why are you discouraging me from giving my address to the family?**

Because your letter could fall into the wrong hands and you could receive lots of bogus letters appealing for financial help.

**What if I want to visit the child/children I have sponsored?**

You are most welcomed to visit them at any time of the year. Please contact ZCSS secretariat and you will be guided as to the best course of action when going there.

**Are we allowed to give khums money to these children?**

Our Policy is not to use Sehme Imam (A.S.) for ZCSS. As for the Sehme Sadat, this can be spent on Sadat children and approximately 50% of the children being sponsored are Sadats. 50% of the khums, which is the Sehme Imam, is allowed to be spent on these children.

**What happens if the child I am sponsoring drops out of the scheme?**

Generally we want children to study and are expending all efforts to that end. If a child drops out of the scheme, this will be due to an unfortunate circumstance of that child, but we will allocate another child to you as soon as possible. A child may drop for several reasons. They may have completed their studies or have joined their parents in business or are now economically well off.

**What happens if I decide to discontinue sponsoring a child?**

If your circumstances do not allow you to sponsor any more, the scheme will allocate another sponsor parent to the child you were sponsoring.

**Does all the money I pay go to the same student?**

No. Your student may get more or less than your donation. The rest goes into the pool to finance higher education, building of schools, providing religious education and other works.

**If the child I am sponsoring is not performing well, does that mean that I am wasting my money?**

No you are not wasting your money but to start with at least your efforts have taken out a child from the evils of debt slavery and illiteracy.

**Why do I get a report only once a year? Can't I get it quarterly?**

The administration cost will be horrendous to distribute worldwide 4000 reports every quarter. It will be far more effective if you write to the student once or twice a year.

**Why can't the report be translated into English before it's sent to me?**

We try to make sure the report you get is either in English or Gujarati and no other language.

(continued on page 21)

(..from page 20)

Can I send any other funds to the child myself besides sponsoring him/her e.g. for Eid?

You can by all means but we would not encourage it as there will be other peers of the child who may not receive a gift and it might disappoint them.

**I notice from the reports that some children are taught "sangeet"? Is it music and if so what of the sharia?**

The subject "Sangeet" in the reports is not music but poetry that is better known as *Shairi*. In Government schools sometimes music is taught which we cannot stop but as far as our schools are concerned music is not allowed to be taught.

**Is the money given to the child treated as a loan or an aid? If so are they obliged to pay back?**

The money given to the children is treated as an aid but those funds given to the graduates are treated as a loan and are repayable whenever they can.

**Is the levy of 7% that is charged on dispersal of all funds of the World Federation applicable to the ZCSS funds as well?**

Yes the levy is applicable to the ZCSS funds as the World Federation is a big organisation and it is getting bigger day by day and employs many full time staff. You can rest assured that the levy does not profit the WF in any way but is spent towards the cost of administration and financing other community projects for which funds are low.

**Are students under the ZCSS provided with secular education only or do they also receive religious education as well?**

In all our schools both secular and religious education are given equal importance but those who attend government schools, special evening classes are arranged for them for Qur'an recitation and other religious subjects like *Fiqh* and *Akhlaq*.

**What is the easiest and fastest way of sponsoring a child?**

The World Federation home page guides you through a 3 minute procedure to sponsor a child.

*Federation Samachar*

# "Beware of cousin marriages" warns MAB once again

*Tests prove that as many as 9% of community could be affected by thalassaemia*

According to figures released by the Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation (MAB) at least 9% of our community members are suffering from thalassaemia. These statistics are based on screening tests done at the end of last year on 1222 community members in nine UK Jamaats namely, Birmingham, Essex, Hyderi, Leicester, Leeds, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Stanmore and Wessex.

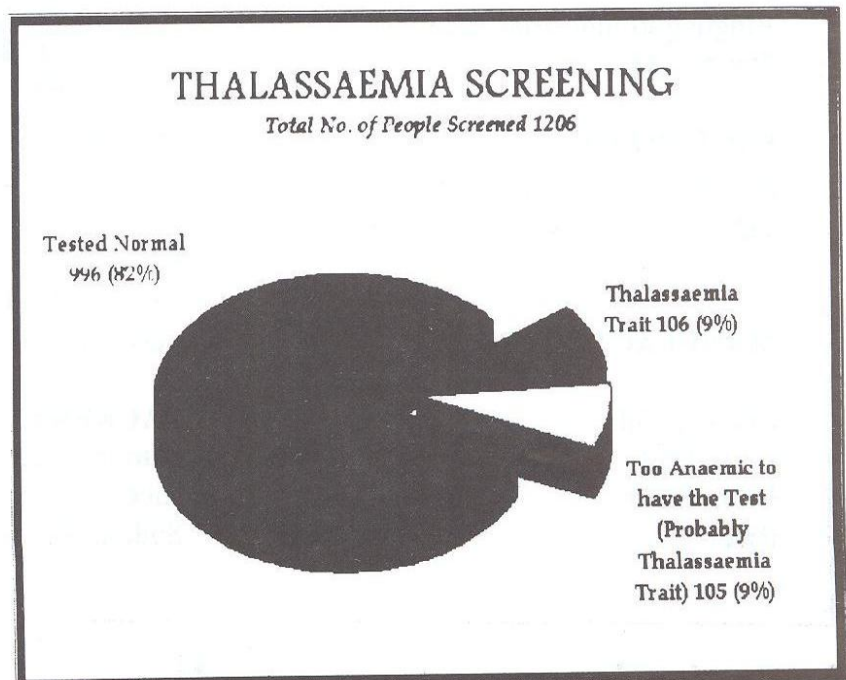
The basic statistics that were obtained from these screening tests were:

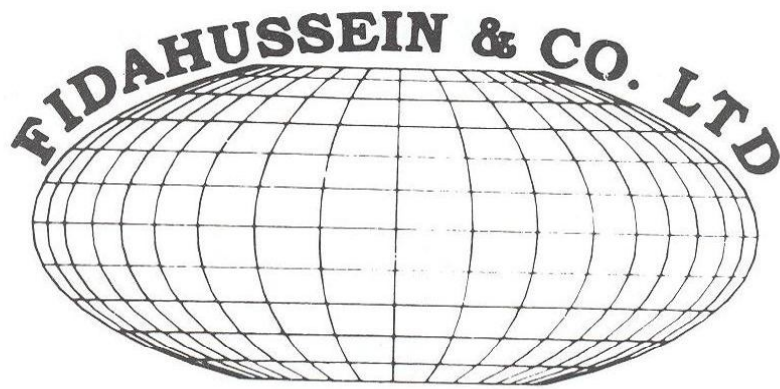
- People who attended the screening programmes = 1821
- People who had Thalassaemia test = 1222
- People whose blood sample was insufficient and will need to repeat the test = 15 [1%]
- People who had a successful test = 1206 [99%]
- People who were too anaemic to have the test (they need an Iron supplement before repeating the test) = 105 [9%]
- People who were not affected by Thalassaemia = 996 [83%]
- People with Thalassaemia Trait. = 106 [9%]

These figures suggest that at least 9% of our community are Thalassaemia carriers and this figure is likely to be near 18%. This is a very high incidence and the likelihood of two Thalassaemia carriers getting married is therefore high. It is higher still if the bride and groom are related (cousins). It is therefore important to avoid cousin marriages and to have a blood test prior to getting engaged to ensure that both the parties are not Thalassaemia carriers.

Jamaats worldwide are urged to organise Thalassaemia screening for its members and to provide adequate counselling to those found positive.

## Statistics Graph





**EXPORTERS, IMPORTERS, MILLERS & PACKERS  
ESTABLISHED 1947**

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WAREHOUSE**

P.O. Box 816, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
 Fax: 255 (22) 284994, 2843186  
 Cables: FIDHUSCO  
 Tel: 255 (22) 2844510, 2842530 & 2843186  
 Mobile: 0812 782872, 0812 789789  
 E-mail: mffazal @eastafrika.net

**MOROGORO ROAD OFFICE**

Tel: 255 (22) 2111539, 2111865

**FACTORY & WAREHOUSE:**

Vingunguti Industrial Area  
 Plot No. 88

**PUGU ROAD**

Plot 46/3 Next to Banco Products  
 Tel: 255 (22) 2863595, 2865243

**MANUFACTURERS**

Coconut Oil  
 Gram Dall  
 Gram Flour  
 Rice

**EXPORTS**

Beeswax	Finger Millet
Cardamoms	Green Moong
Cashewnuts	Groundnuts
Castor Seeds	Gum Arabica
Cassava Roots	Jungoo Beans
Cocoa Beans	Maize
Copra Cake	Pigeon Peas
Cotton Seeds	Rice Bran
Cotton Seed Cakes	Sorghum
Cow Peas	Sunflower



**IMPORTS**

Agricultural Implements	Jute Bags
Bicycles	P.P. Bags
Bicycle Spares	Sundries
Chalwyn Globes	Hessian Cloth
Secondhand Clothes	

**PACKERS**

Petroleum Jelly  
 Rice  
 Sodium Bi Carbonate



# DATELINE TORONTO

from Baqir Alloo in Toronto

## Toronto Jamaat collects \$125,000 for Kutch-Gujarat Earthquake Fund

A total amount of \$125,000 was raised for the Gujarat Earthquake fund on March 2nd, 2001 when a special fund raising dinner event was held at the Bayview Center hosted by the Toronto Jamaat in collaboration with Nasimco. The World Federation President Alhaj Hasnain Walji accompanied by Councilors Alhaj Mustafa Jaffer and Alhaj Mohammed Moledina made a special trip to Toronto to attend the event. President of Toronto Jamaat Alhaj Aliraza Rajani, President of Nasimco Alhaj Ghulamabbas Sajan and President of the World Federation Alhaj Hasnain Walji gave inspiring speeches and briefed the audience with the efforts being made in the relief work.

The highlight of the event was the address by the well-known scholar and writer Hujatul Islam Maulana Sayed Akhtar Rizvi who is presently in Toronto on a working holiday. He touched the hearts of many by addressing the need of our brotherly duty to help those affected in Kutch. His eagerly awaited and scholarly work on Shias of the World is expected to be published shortly.

Councillor Mohamed Raza Moledina, as the coordinator of the earthquake fund raising effort in North America, then introduced a specially prepared 15-minute video of the devastation, relief efforts and interviews with the affected mumeeneen. The haunted looks in their eyes brought stunned silence to the gathering and tears to their eyes.

Finally Alhaj Hasnain Walji appealed for cooperation among various institutions and individuals of the community so that concerted and well planned re-building efforts. He said that the World Federation has set the worldwide target of US\$1.5 million of it which US\$0.5 million is expected from

*Federation Samachar*

North America, with Toronto's contribution expected to be US \$250,000.

During his address he lauded the Seniors Group for their contribution of \$5,000 in addition to their individual contributions. He was also highly impressed by the contribution of over \$10,000 raised by Thursday Night Madressa students through sponsorship for memorizing the suras from Al-Qura'n.

**Volunteers Appreciation Night:** A special dinner event to thank and appreciate the 200 plus volunteers of our community was held on March 20 at the Bayview Center. Vice-President Razac Damani spelled out the purpose of the function and gave the overview of the work being done by volunteers who serve in Jamaat sub-committees. He said that it is through their efforts and cooperation that the Jamaat has been seen to be a vibrant community with an impressive performance.

In an informative and illuminating 70-minute address, President Aliraza Rajani gave a review of almost all sub-committees and spelled out the objectives and targets for work to be achieved during his second term in office. High on the agenda are the Bathurst Project, social services, secular and religious education and immigration. He appreciated the dedication and zeal with which all the volunteers have worked and urged them to maintain the momentum. Maulana Sayed Muhammad Rizvi and Maulana Shabbir Mayssami also added their admiration of the volunteers and exhorted them to aim for even better work in the service of Hazrat Hujjat (a.s.).

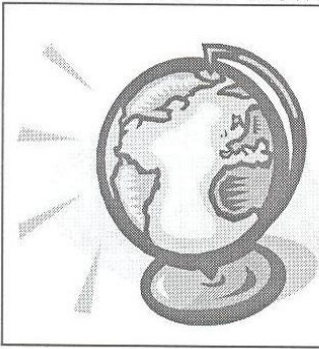
**Moharram Azadari Program:** Sheikh Arif Abdulhussein will preach to ladies and gents at nightly majalis at the

Bayview Center and Zakira Razia Najafi will address the ladies in the morning majalis at the same venue. Sheikh Liyakat Takim will address the youths at a nearby hall whereas Sheikh Zaffar Abbas will preach at nightly majalis at the Brampton Center. Sheikh Shafiq Huda will cater for the Hamilton congregation and at London Ontario Center Sheikh Raza Rahim will sermonize. Crescent Village will be linked with Bayview by video conference for morning ladies majalis and nightly majalis. Nightly majalis will also be held at Al-Mahdi Center (Urdu). Al-Huda Center (Arabic), Iranian Center (Farsi) and other centers in Urdu, English, Arabic and Pushto.

**Jafari Islamic Housing Corporation (Crescent Village)** held its Annual General Meeting on March 14 when Alhaj Sajjad Ebrahim was elected as President. Alhaj Ghulamabbas Sajan, Alhaj Kassim Moledina, Alhaj Nazmul Damji, Alhaj Dr. Hyderali Fazal and Alhaj Baqir Alloo were elected to serve as Board Members.

**As-Sadiq Islamic School** held a Grandparents Day on Friday 9th March with the aim of acquainting young ones with our culture, tradition and strong love for Ahlul-Beit A.S. Grandparents talked to the students, related their experience in life and told short moral stories. The success of the program inspired the Administration to promise another such event when the weather gets warmer so that more seniors can participate. The day also marked the Winterlude by the students who participated in outdoor winter activities and celebrated the three Eids with gift exchange. The Student Council meanwhile raised enough funds to buy about 200 pairs of boots for the Chechen refugees during winter.

**Islamic perspective in the curriculum of As-Sadiq School:** With the advent of the somber month of Muharram, the students of As-Sadiq have had regular majalises in English by students and are expected to participate in the Ashura Day Procession at the school, led by reciters from the school. "Keeping the azadari alive is a sacred trust to us which we have to inculcate in our children" commented Principal Nisar Sheraly.



## Global news from the Islamic World

### Saudi Government tells India that its Haj subsidies are unIslamic

In late February this year the Saudi Government advised the Indian Government that subsidy to Hajjis is un-Islamic. India's annual subsidy incurred on the Haj pilgrimage, amounts to about Rs 150 crore per year.

Embarassingly enough, the issue came up during the visit of the Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh to Saudi Arabia in January this year. Saudi ambassador to India, A. Rahman N. Alohaly elaborated upon the fact in the presence of the Indian contingent visiting the Saudi foreign Minister, Saud Al-Faisal.

Al-Faisal is said to have made remonstrating noises. "This is wrong," the Minister told the Indian delegation in words to that effect, adding, "Our Ulema will help you in explaining to your people that the subsidy goes against the spirit of the Shariat."

The Koran which specifically enjoins every Muslim to undertake the Haj at least once in a lifetime, also insists that the pilgrimage must be done from "within" the pilgrim's own resources. Religious authorities confirmed that, strictly speaking, the Haj pilgrimage may not be "accepted by God" if expenditure on transport and on food is not the pilgrim's own.

In 1997, Pakistan discontinued government subsidies to Haj pilgrims. In a case before the Lahore High Court, Justice Tanvir Ahmed ruled that any expenditure defrayed by the government was contrary to the Shariat and therefore, wrong.

In India the subsidy is managed by the Civil Aviation Ministry but the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is the apex body that deals with the pil-

grimage. Over the last few years, the MEA has argued that the subsidy be gradually discontinued, but the government hasn't been able to take a decision on the matter.

New Delhi's own subsidy for the Haj began in 1993, the year after the Babri Masjid demolition, when the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao was persuaded to pay out of the Exchequer in the hope of "assuaging" the Muslim community. Interestingly, though, there had never been any plea on the part of any Muslim individual or body, however poor, to the government to defray Haj expenses. As many as 35,000 "private" Haj pilgrims — those who do not manage the government quota — in any case pay the full fare to the holy sites and back.

In 1993, the price fixed for the pilgrim's airfare (air travel began only the previous year) was fixed at Rs 12,000, while the additional subsidy per person amounted to Rs 2,000. Despite mounting expenditure over the years, the pilgrim's personal fare component has remained static, but the government has been forced to foot the rest. This year, the subsidy came to an additional Rs 20,000 per person, amounting to Rs 150 crore.

### Varying opinions on Taliban destruction of statues

Pakistan and Iran have openly declared that they are against the Taliban's destruction of statues. Muslim scholars and other faithfuls have expressed that this act was one of vandalism which is not promoted by Islam. Yet many others have compared this act to the act of Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) when he broke all the statues or when Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) broke the idols in the Kaa'bah.

The Taliban did not accommodate room

for dialogue on the issue and instead offered an atonement for delaying the destruction of the statues. They slaughtered 100 cows, the meat of which was distributed to the poor.

### Egypt seizes viagra "snacks"

Two Syrian businessmen were recently arrested in Cairo after flying into the country carrying sandwiches and pastries with a rather unusual filling, reports say.

Customs officials say they found more than 1,100 Viagra anti-impotence pills stuffed into the snacks, which were tucked inside the men's luggage. One man had 600 pills in twelve sandwiches and the other man had 500 pills in a box of oriental pastries and 500 pills in his suit lining.

Egypt legalised Viagra in December 1999, but under strict conditions. It can only be purchased after obtaining a doctor's prescription. Men have to undergo a complete medical check-up and those suffering heart problems are not allowed to take it.

### Bush invites Shia scholar to the White House

On January 29th, 2001, the President of the United States, George Bush invited a diverse group of religious leaders residing in the U.S. The President initiated a bill that would confer billions of dollars to religious groups to help the poor, shelter the homeless, and other religious activities.

Among the religious leaders who attended was Imam Seyed Hassan Al-Qazwini, the religious leader of The Islamic Center of America in Detroit, the son of Ayatollah Seyed Mortaza Alqazwini.

Seyed Hassan Alqazwini is a prominent religious Shia scholar who graduated from the Islamic Seminary of Qom. He urged the President to remove the imposed sanctions against Iraq, overthrow Saddam from power, and have some Muslims in the White House and Congress.

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If anything significant has happened in your area email us the news for our next issue. Our email address is [samachar@raha.com](mailto:samachar@raha.com).



# New World Federation Executive Council meets for the first time

On 27th January, 2001 the Hujjat Imambargah, Stanmore, was once again the venue for a World Federation Executive Council meeting. It was with an air of anticipation, in the packed house, that the first meeting of the term commenced with the recitation of the Quran by Muallim Murtaza Bandali.

In addition to councillors and invitees from New York, London, London (South), Birmingham, Peterborough, Milton Keynes, Leeds, Essex, Paris (La Courneve) Allentown and Wessex, the president of NASIMCO Al Haj Gulam Sajan, President of COEJ - Alhaj Jaffer Dharamsi and the Chairman-elect of Africa Federation Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji were in attendance.

The President, Al Haj Hasnain Walji initiated the session with tributes to Marhum Husain Bharwani and Marhum Maalim Najaf for their services to the Community. He also requested all present to remember Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Mehdi Shamsuddin and Agha Sultani, the wakil of Ayatullah Seestani, who had been assassinated in Karachi recently with Sura e Fateha.

## EARTHQUAKE IN KUTCH AND GUJARAT

Updating the Council on the latest reports from earthquake stricken areas of Kutch and Gujarat, he stated that there was extensive damage to property in Bhuj, Nagalpur and Mariya. With the grace of Allah, our community had escaped major injuries or fatalities. On receiving the news of this calamity, the World Federation was able to establish contact with Al Haj Ghulubhai Bhurani, the President of the Council of Gujarat. Within 24 hours of the earthquake, Ghulubhai Bhurani, with a few colleagues, was able to lead the first convoy into Maliya, Nagalpur, Bhuj, Kera and

*Federation Samachar*

Mundra, carrying with them relief supplies.

Reports received so far indicate that two members of our community lost their lives and over a hundred families have been rendered homeless losing their farms and everything - including their means to earn decent livelihood. The Mosques and Imambargah in Bhuj, Nagalpur, Maliya, Kera and Mundra have either fallen down or have suffered extensive structural damage.

The World Federation has offered to assist in any way it could. Its web site will continue to carry regular updates on the latest situation. Meanwhile, he requested all to pray for the safety and ease of our brethren in the affected areas. The Secretariat was in a process of sending a team led by one of the office bearers to the affected areas and would soon be launching an appeal for stabilizing the community as well as reconstruction (story carried elsewhere in this issue).

## CHAIRMAN ELECT AFRICA FEDERATION

The President informed the house that a circular had just been received from Africa Federation declaring Al Haj Zulfikar Khimji as the President Elect for the forthcoming term. The house was privileged to be the first to congratulate him in person since he was present at the meeting. He offered his full support and hoped that Africa Federation would reach new heights under the leadership of Al Haj Zulfikar Khimji, whose prowess at mountain climbing was all too well known.

Al Haj Zulfikar reciprocated by thanking the house for the felicitations and called for a path of unity and fraternity. He also pledged full support to and cooperation with the World Federation and invited the Executive Council to hold its next meeting in Africa.

## FROM VISION TO REALITY

Introducing a paper 'From Vision to reality' the President stated that the quarter gone by had been one of intense planning. In cognizance of the vision deliberations at the Conference, the team at the secretariat defined objectives and submitted project plans for the term.

He stated "The purpose of this master document is to state the plans and projects for the term 2000 - 2003 and seek the support from the community to turn this collective vision into action. It is an attempt at defining the direction envisaged during the term 2000 - 2003."

In essence the document before the Councillors was a blueprint for the term and beyond. He urged Councillors to carefully study the paper, give their considered input and actively participate in realizing the vision espoused by Conference 2000 and defined by the team at the secretariat.

## TERM OF EDUCATION

Emphasizing upon striving for excellence in education he enumerated priorities relating to primary, secondary and higher education. He also called upon the community to recognize children with exceptional abilities and not to forget those who needed special help due to impaired learning abilities. He requested Jamaats to embark upon computer literacy programs and enhance awareness of IT within their membership.

At the request of the Chair, the Secretary General, Al Haj Sibtain Panjwani recounted the ongoing welfare projects and capital projects assistance.

(continued on page 26)

(.....from page 25)

### VISIT TO KARACHI

Reporting on his recent visit to Karachi, he said that the progress and the activities there were admirable.

The Khoja Pirhai Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat Karachi and Mehfile Murtaza are providing much needed services in the fields of welfare, education as well as tabligh. In addition there are many other institutions involved in medical and housing projects. He acknowledged that in Karachi and the immediate vicinity, the hallmark of all the projects was self-sufficiency and was pleased to note that almost all the funding was from within.

However he reported that in the interior of Sindh, much needs to be done and the World Federation would facilitate optimizing community resources and enable the community in the interior to improve its state.

The President also briefed the house on the productive discussions held towards resolving a long-term concern of the Khoja Pirhai Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat of Karachi on the issue of ceiling on voting rights. He said he had assured the officials of the Jamaat that this would be considered along with a review of many other desirable revisions to the structure and the constitution of the World Federation during the term to enable implementation by October 2003, Inshallah.

### DUBAI VISIT

On his way back from Karachi, he visited the Dubai Jamaat and appreciated the welcome and support by mumineen in Dubai. At his request a special meeting was convened to resolve the long standing issue of certain membership restrictions in the constitution. He emphasized that while the World Federation had no jurisdiction over the matter, he had prevailed upon mumineen in Dubai to find an equitable solution to this complex and sensitive matter.

He was hopeful that the matter would

be resolved in the near future as all concerned were committed to bringing an early resolution to the issue.

### WIDER CONSULTATION AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

The President informed the house that during the current term Executive Council meetings would be held in different parts of the world. To enable councillors plan ahead, meetings would be scheduled every January, May and September. At the same time, monthly secretariat working sessions would be held every second Saturday of the month at the Secretariat. He invited all councillors to participate if they could.

### ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

In this definitive special paper, the Secretary General assertively outlined the councillors' role, responsibilities and opportunities to serve. He invited councillors to avail themselves to the unique opportunity accorded by the World Federation to enrich their life experiences in the service of the community as well as humanity. At the same time he challenged councillors to be proactive and urged them to take their responsibility seriously.

He suggested that *"we cannot take the World Federation for granted. It would be folly to think that much useful work can be done by the World Federation without a team of councillors backing it. Commitment, purpose and pro-activeness are necessary values that must be upheld if one is to make the World Federation function effectively."*

To that end he offered the following guidelines:

- Councillors should assist with the delivery of the World Federation core services of Education, Tabligh and relief of poverty. They can proactively communicate the needs of the region to the Secretariat

- Councillors should provide the 'image' and 'legitimacy' for the World Federation, particularly in its request

for funds from community members

- Councillors can bring a diversity of skills, talents, expertise and experience to the World Federation.

- Councillors can provide community outreach and access – acting as door openers and be a link between the region and the Secretariat.

- Councillors can provide an element of passion and enthusiasm within their respective communities by presenting regular reports of the World Federation activities to the grassroots/jamaats.

- Councillors can provide formal reports on regular basis at Executive Council Meetings.

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Honorary Treasurer, Alhaj Ahmed Daya presented financial statements for the period to November 2000. He stated that while he considered that presenting periodic accounts was important, it was even more important for councillors to deliberate upon ways and means of maximizing revenues. He focused upon the efforts required to raise sufficient funds to fulfill the lofty vision espoused by the President in the field of education, especially during this term. He was hopeful that, given the commitment from councillors as enumerated by the Secretary General, the World Federation would be able to mobilize the raising of the required funds.

### Executive Council Meetings - tentative dates

Meanwhile the following are tentative dates and venues for the World Federation Executive Council Meetings for this year. A notice confirming the date and venue will be sent closer to the time.

**2nd meeting proposed to be held on Friday 18 May to Sunday 20 May in New York.**

**3rd meeting proposed to be held from Friday 14 September to Sunday 16 September in Karachi.**

## US Muslim employees make headway in their demands

Several US companies have agreed to accommodate the religious practices of Muslim employees following intervention by the Washington-based Islamic advocacy group, CAIR. Some 50 female Muslim employees at the Bloomington (Minnesota) facility of in-flight catering giant LSG Sky Chefs successfully challenged a uniform policy that would have forced them to wear pants and sports shirts. A revised uniform policy now gives Muslim women the option to wear their own ankle-length non-flowing skirts under long-sleeve lab coats.

"The company was not opposed to making an accommodation to satisfy [Muslim] religious requirements as long as such accommodations fall within the applicable health and safety regulations," said Priscilla Loges, LSG Sky Chefs' Corporate Manager for Diversity. Arlington, Texas-based LSG Sky Chefs, Inc. is the world's largest in-flight catering firm with combined annual revenues of over \$3 billion.

Meanwhile in Indiana, Muslim security officers at the Indianapolis facility of Securalex, a suburban Chicago-based private security and detective agency can now maintain beards if they provide a letter stating that this is for religious reasons. CAIR contacted the firm after two Muslim employees were told to shave their beards in order to keep their jobs.

And in Ohio more than 50 Muslim employees at the Columbus area Value City Department Stores are now allowed to take time off to perform their obligatory Islamic prayers. The workers, most of whom are refugees from Somalia, asked to take a few minute prayer break every day.

Representatives of the Ohio office of CAIR contacted the Value City Corporate office to this effect. Company officials agreed to the request. They are also working on providing quiet areas for prayers and designating restrooms for *wudhoo*.

*Federation Samachar*

## Tabligh work consolidated in America

The Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community has not been present in North America for very long. Members of our community emigrated there gradually, first as students who went to study there and decided to make it their home. Later, professionals and skilled members migrated for better pastures. By the Mid 70's, they had formed four Jamaats and delegates from these Jamaats were amongst the founder members that, at the constitutional conference in London in October 1976, shaped the World Federation. That was nearly 25 years ago.

Today, the numbers of Islamic centres have increased and so has the awareness among Shia Ithna asheries as well as non-Muslims. NASIMCO through its Islamic Education Board looks after the Madressa needs of our community in North America.

Many charitable organisations have risen and flourished. Tarike-Tarsile Qur'an is amongst such organisations which has done excellent publication work. The Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas (BMMA) is another, which has introduced to as many people as possible, the teachings of Ahlul bait.

The propagation work through BMMA is progressing well especially in the Correctional Facilities of America and Canada where inmates are embracing Original Islam in greater numbers. It has recently published a book entitled 'Qur'an - Its Protection from Alteration' which was originally authored by Allama Seyyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi. This book reiterates the Shia position in unequivocal terms that the Qur'an as it is now is the entire Qur'an without addition, deletion or change.

BMMA is also actively involved in Tabligh in Central and South America including the Caribbean islands. It has established madressas in Guyana and Trinidad and has seen better awareness of the Ja'afri faith among the communities there. It has also expanded its tabligh activities into Columbia and the Solomon Islands. The World Federation has sent many books to the BMMA for free distribution and continues to provide assistance when required. For example the World Federation extended its full support in the acquisition of the first Shia Islamic Centre in the Port of Spain, Trinidad.

The field of services in America is extremely wide. Marhum Mulla Asgharali M M Jaffer opened the Dar al Tabligh in New York on the 18th of September 1999 marking another milestone in the activities of IEB in North America. The Dar al Tabligh in North America performs operations like its counterpart in the UK. Its routine functions include dissemination of Islamic knowledge by distribution of books, audio and video material and multimedia CDs. It also acts as a resource centre for researchers, madressa teachers and students and members of the Shiite Ummah at large. Furthermore it has a facility whereby Questions on issues pertaining to religion and religious duties are answered.

Dar al Tabligh-North America recently received a donation of equipment for duplication of video cassettes. Video material sent from the UK is converted to the NTSC system prevalent in North America and is distributed all over the North American continent. A library comprising of classic reference material in original Arabic language as well as books in English, Urdu and Persian language has also been set up. Soon the Dar al Tabligh hopes to also begin organising short courses and seminars.

# Muslims make their presence felt in foreign universities

On her first night as a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Sarah Ibrahim panicked when she saw her room mates entertaining friends in their cramped triple. Being a committed Muslim who covers her hair around men outside her family, she feared she might not be able to remove her head scarf and go to sleep. With this fear she also called her dad to take her home.

But she soon returned to campus, the only freshman with a single room in the all-woman dormitory. Now she often cooks Islamically approved halal food in the suite she shares with eight other women, three of them Muslim. Men are banned from the restroom on her floor, and a suite-mate's boyfriend is careful to announce his arrival.

"The second you say religious reasons," said Ms. Ibrahim, 18, a chemical engineering major from Wayne, N.J., "people are quick to accommodate."

The number of Muslims at American colleges and universities has more than doubled over the past decade, and although they remain a tiny minority — under 1 percent — their presence is helping reconfigure many campuses in substantial ways. Arriving from around the globe and including African-Americans, they are creating vibrant hubs for what is the nation's fastest-growing religious community. But they are also presenting new problems for administrators eager to embrace diversity.

From the College of Wooster in Ohio to Southern Methodist University in Dallas to the University of Southern California, students struggle to avoid classes during Jum'aa congregational prayer. Dining halls provide boxed meals for takeout during Ramadan. And then there is the delicate matter of using shared sinks to wash one's feet before prayer.

Dozens of colleges and universities have hired part-time Imams for Mus-

lims. At least 75 colleges have dedicated space for Muslims' prayers whether it be a basement dormitory room, a stairwell landing in the library or a specially designed room like the one at MIT, which includes tiled areas with thigh-high faucets where students rinse their forearms, face and feet.

Tensions often flare between Muslims and Jews on campus over conflicts in the Middle East, but now the two groups are beginning to forge links over common interests, including similar dietary laws and accommodation for religious practice.

In part, the changes reflect a religious revival among students of all faiths, and a new trend of campus centres where Baptists and Buddhists, Seventh-day Adventists and Zoroastrians pass each other in the hallways of a shared building.

Colleges typically do not keep track of students' religions, but an annual survey by researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles shows that .9 percent of first-year students nationwide identified themselves as Muslims last year, up from .4 percent in 1990 and .1 percent in 1974. (Jews, meanwhile, have decreased from 5.4 percent of freshmen in 1970 to 2.8 percent in 2000).

The growth comes as a generation of children of Muslim immigrants reach college age and is fueled by an increase in international students. There are an estimated 6 million Muslims in the United States.

Muslims are a diverse group, with immigrants from Bosnia, Asia, Africa and the Persian Gulf praying shoulder to shoulder with American black people.

Yet Islam remains shrouded in mystery for many students, and Muslims often complain of stereotyping and discrimination. There are reports that last year a student was expelled from class after rebutting derogatory comments about Islam; that a college employee poured glue in the

shoe of a Muslim who was praying, barefoot, in the library; that Muslim-sponsored posters about the Middle East were ripped down on campuses; and that a professor used a textbook tainting Muslims as terrorists. These actions would previously pass unnoticed or be taken lightly but today any act against Muslims is brought to the attention of authorities without any inhibition.

Some students report nascent partnerships with other religious groups on campus, particularly Jews, who were among the first to diversify American colleges in the 1950's. At Dartmouth, the president of the Islamic student group, Al-Nur, and the Jewish president of Hillel began having dinner together last year, and the two also led a candlelight vigil promoting Middle East peace. In pushing for the kosher-halal meal plan, a \$300,000 project, they capitalized on the strength of their combined numbers, as well as the college's desire to promote harmony among diverse groups.

Judaism and Islam have many parallel dietary restrictions, including ritual slaughter and a prohibition on pork. But after the combined dining hall was approved, Dartmouth was unable to find a butcher anywhere in the world that provides simultaneous Rabbinic and Islamic supervision.

So it was decided to have separate halal and kosher meals under the same roof, with chefs respecting both traditions, by keeping milk and meat separate (a Jewish stricture) and avoiding alcohol (an Islamic rule). "When I close my eyes and pray, it doesn't really matter what Yousuf is praying next to me," Jason Spitalnick, the Hillel president, said of his Muslim counterpart, Yousuf Haque.

Whether they come from a Muslim country or any other country, or grow up as the only students wearing a head scarf at a public school, Muslim students are now making their presence felt in American and some other foreign Universities.

## Toronto Muslims demonstrate

The Muslim community of Toronto held a demonstration on 23th February 2001 against the killings of Shia Muslims in Pakistan. The demonstration took place in front of the office of the Consulate General of Pakistan demanding immediate action against the killings of Shia Muslims in Pakistan.

More than 200 men, women and children took part braving the cold wind and harsh weather (minus 21C). They held placards and raised slogans demanding justice and punishment to the killers of innocent Shias in Pakistan.

Speeches highlighting the unity of Shia and Sunnis were made. Local TV channels and newsmen were present and at the end prayers for the unity of Muslim ummah was held. The following memorandum was handed over to the Consulate General of Pakistan:

*"The killings of the Shias have, in recent years, escalated to a shameful degree where certain groups have formed for the sole purpose of slaughtering innocent Muslims. It is strange that the Government of Pakistan has been voicing its concern against brutalities in Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Palestine, but has never taken any serious action against sectarian killers to the extent of showing reluctance in executing the sentence of even the Supreme Court of Pakistan. We, the demonstrators, ask you today: What steps, in particular has the government of Pakistan taken, to contain this inhuman practice of perpetrating violence against the Shia Muslims?"*

The following resolutions were also passed:

1. That the Government of Pakistan should take concrete steps to stop the killing of Shia Muslims in Pakistan.
  2. That the Government of Pakistan, which is well aware of the terrorist groups in Pakistan, should take immediate steps to break the network of terrorism in Pakistan.
  3. That these killings are not a result of any sectarian conflict and that the
- Federation Samachar*

Shia and Sunni Muslims are united not only in Pakistan but the world over.

4. That the Pakistan Government should ensure basic citizen rights of all the citizens of Pakistan belonging to the different sects and they should respect the basic rights and social and religious liberties of the others.

5. The army Government should enforce law and justice. Terrorist (Sipah-e-Sahaba) should be brought to trial and illegal weapons should be collected and banned, immediately.

6. That the Government should financially support oppressed Shia Muslim families and announce relief packages for them.

### Mauritius Elections

At the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 11th March 2001, a new managing committee has been elected. The new office bearers have been elected for a three year term.

They are as follows:

**President:** Hornali Hasanali Pirbhai  
**Vice President:** Hassenjee Essoufali Moosajee  
**Secretary:** Mohshinali Hasanali Pirbhai  
**Assistant Secretary:** Vasheen Kassamally Esmael  
**Treasurer:** Pyarali Hasanali Pirbhai  
**Assistant Treasurer:** Mohamad Iqbal Kassamally Esmael  
**Member:** Goolam Abbas Kassamally Esmael

### Tanga

In Tanga, the new Managing Committee for the remaining term up to 31st May, 2001 are:

**Chairman:** Mahmoud Y. J. Dhirani  
**Vice Chairman:** Anverali A. Fazal  
**Secretary:** Shabbir H. Alidina  
**Joint Secretary:** Shabbir M. Sachoo  
**Treasurer:** Mohamedbaker Manekia  
**Joint Treasurer:** Hasnain Hassanali  
**Committee Members:** Mohamed J. Chandoo and Mohsin G. Meghji

Election  
Round -up

### Edmonton

At the Annual General Meeting held on March 18, 2001 the following were unanimously elected to serve the Edmonton Jamaat for the 2001 term:

**President:** Shaukat Moloo  
**Secretary:** Mohammed Bhimji  
**Treasurer:** Aliraza Rajani  
**Program Coordinator:** Farid Dhalla  
**External Relations:** Mahmood Jaffer  
**Immediate Past President:** Mohamed Raza Fazal

### Toronto

The following Office Bearers have been unanimously chosen to lead Toronto Jamaat for the period of two years to 2003.

**President:** Aliraza Rajani  
**Vice President:** Razak Damani  
**Hon. Secretary:** Shabbir Jeraj  
**Treasurer:** Sajjad Haji  
**Mukhi:** Raza Kassam  
**Chairlady:** Sr. Zarina Hussein Bharwani

Nargis Valimohamed, Laila Kara, Shabneez Shivji and Nasim Esmail were declared elected to serve in the Ladies Committee.

### Songea

The Office-bearers of the Songea Jamaat with effect from 13th March, 2001 are:

**Chairman:** Mohammed M. Versi  
**Vice Chairman:** Rizwan K. Rajani  
**Secretary:** Bashir M. Versi  
**Asst. Secretary:** Rizwan R. Dhalla  
**Treasurer:** Sadiq Y. Meghji  
**Asst. Treasurer:** Bashir M. Versi  
**Mukhi:** Munish F. Panjwani  
**Member:** Mohammed F. Dinani  
**Member:** Mohammed Abbas

The Jamaat's Education Board consists of the following members: Mohamed M. Versi (Chairman), Akber Bashir (Secretary), Mohammed Abbas (Treasurer), Rizwan Dhalla, Munish Panjwani and Sadiq Meghji (Members) and Imtiyaz Sultan (School Incharge).

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**ELECTION  
ROUND-UP**

**World Federation -  
Executive Council  
appointments**

The President of the World Federation, Alhaj Hasnain Walji - under Clause 19.1.2 (C) of the Constitution - appointed the following to the Executive Council of the World Federation for the term 2000-2003:

1. Haji Haider Haji
2. Haji Aunali Salehmohamed
3. Haji Manzoor Kanani
4. Haji Mustafa G.R. Jaffer
5. Haji Mohamed Raza Moledina

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL -  
ELECTED COUNCILLORS -  
2000-2003**

1. Haji Masum Somji
2. Haji Mahmood Hooda
3. Haji Hussein Walji
4. Dr. Akber Mithani
5. Dr. Asgherali Moledina

**Nairobi**

At the biennial General Meeting held on 23rd. January 2001, the following Office Bearers were elected to serve a term of two years.

**Chairman:** Mohamed Y. Kermali  
**Vice-Chairman:** Feeroz Jagani  
**Hon. Secretary:** Murtaza Somji  
**Asst. Hon. Secretary:** Rizwan Shabbir Janmohamed  
**Hon. Treasurer:** Murtaza M. Kanani  
**Asst. Hon. Treasurer:** Hasnaen M. Khimji

**Committee Members:** Mohamed-Nazir Kalyan, Moonawer Dhanani, Shabbir A. Janmohamed, Mohamed A. Dattoo, Sajjad R. M. Nanji and Ebrahim Jaffer.

*Federation Samachar*

**Madagascar**

The following are the new Office Bearers of the Madagascar Territorial Council for the term 2000 - 2003:

**President:** Moajiz Raza M.H. Khamis  
**First Vice President:** Roshan Jamil (also is in charge of Tableegh)  
**Second Vice President:** Ikbal Akbarali (also in charge of Aalims)  
**Third Vice President:** Moise Hassanaly (also in charge of Socio-Economics)  
**Secretary General:** Soheb N. Khamis  
**Jnt Secretary General:** Afzal Piaraly (also in charge of Education)  
**Treasurer:** Mohib Pirbay  
**Jnt Treasurer:** Rafikhousen Fidahousen

**MEMBERS:** Badouraly M. Djaffer (In charge of logistics), Abdoul Momin H. Ramdje (In charge of administrative affairs), Younous Lavarhousen (In charge of sports), Sermamod A. Rajabaly, Chahine Cassam Chenai, Zahid H. Karim, Nasir DJ. Sivdje, Zoufrikar A. Daya and Azim M. Piaraly Dharamsy

**COMMISSAIRES AU COMPTE:**  
 Yakat K. Daya  
 Chamine R. Tahora

**TRUSTEES TANA:**  
 Razaly Kamis  
 Sabir R. Goulamaly

**TRUSTEES MAJUNGA:** Dindar Suleman and Zakir Suleman

**COUNCILLORS:** Mamodaly Jivan, Safir M. Ballou, Manjouraly Hassanaly, Bakar Vasram, Ikbal Mawdje (Tulear), Amine Alimamode Ramdje (Tamatave).

**Stanmore**

The Annual General Meeting of the KSIM Senior Citizen Association took place on 20th January 2001 at Hussein Islamic Centre, Stanmore and the following office bearers were elected for the term 2001 - 2002.

**Chairman:** Rhemtulla M Rhemtulla  
**Vice Chairman:** Gulamabbas Janmohamed (Tommy)  
**Hon. Secretary:** Mohamedraffiq Ladhu Jaffer  
**Asst. Secretary:** Sultan Govani  
**Treasurer:** Abdulhussein Hassanali  
**Committee Member:** Mulla Fidahussein H Khaki

**Minnesota**

At the Annual General Meeting held on 13th January 2001 at the Ja'afari Islamic Centre in Minneapolis, the following were elected as the new office bearers of Minnesota Jamaat for the 2001 - 2002 term.

**President:** Shabir Karim  
**Vice President:** Mohamed Remtula  
**Secretary:** Mohsin Kassam  
**Treasurer:** Naushad Karim  
**Building Administration:** Shabir Walji

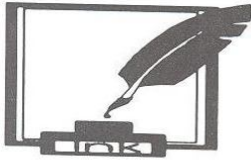
**Trustees:**  
 Hussein Walji (2001-2006)  
 Sherali Salehmohamed (1999-2004)  
 Dr. Ansar Ahmed (1997-2002)

Meanwhile the Jamaat appointed Mohamedraza Lakha as its auditor for the new term.

**KISM SENIOR CITIZEN ASSOCIATION LADIES SECTION**

During the biennial General Meeting of the KSIM Senior Citizen Association Ladies Section which was held on 24th January, 2001 at Stanmore, London the following office bearers were elected:-

**Chairlady:** Mrs. Nargisbai Asgherali Kassamali  
**Vice Chairlady:** Mrs. Zehrabai Jaffer Walji  
**Hon. Secretary:** Mrs. Shirinbai Abdulhusein Hassanali  
**Hon. Treasurer:** Mrs. Raziabai Pirbhai  
**Comm. Member:** Mrs. Taherabai Khaki



## Death Jottings

**inna lillaahi wa inna  
ilaihi raajiun**

The following deaths have been reported since the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* which carried death announcements to 16th December, 2000, 19th Ramadhan 1421.

**Mrs. Rukiyabai Roshanali Hameer** of Dar-es-Salaam on 5th April 2001, 10th Muharram 1422.

**Marhum Mohamedrafik Haji Jaffer** of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 3 April 2001, 8 Muharram 1422

**Haji Sajjad Hasanali Fazal (Zainab's)** of Dar-es-Salaam on Saturday 31st March 2001, 5th Muharram 1422.

**Marhuma Siddikabai Ahmad Janmohamed Dhirani**, Memphis, Tennessee, USA, 29 March 2001, 3 Muharram 1422

**Marhuma Rukiabai Mohamedali Fazal**, Dar-es-Salaam on 27 March 2001, 01 Muharram 1422.

**Marhuma Kulsumbai Dharsee**, Mumbai on 26 March 2001, 30th Zilhajj 1421.

**Marhuma Noorbanubai Wazirali Valimohammad Lakhani**, London, United Kingdom, 16 March 2001, 20 Zilhaj 1421.

**Marhuma Ruhibai Bashir Gulamali**, London, United Kingdom, 11 March 2001, 15 Zilhaj 1421.

**Marhum Abid Husain Mohammedbhai Momin**, London, United Kingdom, 11 March 2001, 15 Zilhaj 1421.

**Marhuma Fatimabai Fidahusseini Mohamed Alidina**, Dar-es-Salaam, Wednesday 7th March 2001, 11th Zilhaaj 1421.

**Marhum Zishan Pyarali Shivji, Medina**, Saudi Arabia, 26 February 2001, 2 Zilhaj 1421

**Marhum Roshanali Kassamali Moledina**, London, United Kingdom, 20 February 2001, 26 Zilkaad 1421.

**Marhum Gulamali Mohamed Hassan Dawood**, Tanga, 17 February 2001, 23 Zilkaad 1421

**Mrs Sukainabai Abbas Ladha**, Dar-es-Salaam on Friday 16th Feb, 2001 - 22nd Zilqaad 1421

**Mrs. Shabnam Shabbir H. Fazal**, Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday 15th February 2001 21st Zilqaad, 1421

**Marhum Alhaj Shaukat Dhirani**, Tanga, Tanzania, 13 February 2001, 19 Zilkaad 1421.

**Marhum Reza Hussain Pirani**, Stockholm, Sweden, 12 February 2001, 18 Zilkaad 1421

**Haji Muhammad'ali Ladha Ismail** of Dar-es-Salaam on Saturday 10th February, 2001 - 16th Zilqaad, 1421.

**Mrs Khatijabai Muhammadhuseini Muhammadali** of Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday 8th February 2001 14th Zilqaad, 1421

**Marhum Muzaffar Ali Kirmani and Nazeer Abbas**, Karachi, Pakistan, 5 February 2001, 11 Zilkaad 1421.

**Haji Muhammadali Abdallah Kanji Damani** of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 4th Feb 2001, 10th Zilqaad 1421

**Mrs Khairoonbai Gulamhuseini Jaffer** of Dar-es-Salaam on Friday 2nd February 2001, 8th Zilqaad, 1421

**Marhum Gulamhuseini Abdalla Kassam Manji** of Dar-es-Salaam on 30 January 2001, 05 Zilkaad 1421

**Marhuma Khairunbai H. K. Jaffer**, Mombasa, Kenya, 25 January 2001, 30 Shawaal 1421

**Marhum Hussein (Sheni) Fazal Haji**, Toronto, Ontario, 23 January 2001, 28 Shawwal 1421

**Marhum Agha Sultani, Karachi**, Pakistan, 20 January 2001, 25 Shawaal 142. Marhum was a well known A'lim-e-Deen and a wakil of Ayatullah Syed Ali Seestani. He was martyred in a cowardly attack, a few yards from his residence near Dr. Ziauddin Hospital, Nazimabad, Karachi, while he was returning home after his daily *Dars* at *Madressah-e-Noor-e-Iman*, Nazimabad on Saturday 20 January 2001, 25 Shawaal 1421. His *Namaz-e-Janazah* was held after *Namaz-e-Maghrebain* at Imam Bargah Rizvia Society after which his body was taken to Iran for burial.

**Haji Dr Fidahusseini Hassanali Abdulrahim (Dr Fida)** of Tanga on Sunday 21st January, 2001 - 26th Shawwal 1421

**Mrs. Zainabbai Huseini Muhammad Dhalla** of D'Salaam on Sunday 14th January 2001, 19th Shawwal 1421.

**Marhum Sheikh Ayatullah Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddine**, Lebanon, on 10 January 2001, 15th Shawaal 1421

Sheikh Ayatullah Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddine was a great Scholar, and the Chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite Islamic Council of Lebanon. He passed away after a long battle of cancer.

Marhum was renowned for his tireless and selfless efforts in uniting the Lebanese people in a spirit of co-operation and peaceful co-existence. In the field of Islamic knowledge, Marhum was a graduate of the Hawza in Najaf and he authored many valuable books.

**Alhaj Ma'alim Najafali Muhammadtaqi Tejani** of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 7th January 2001, 12th Shawwal 1421.

**Haji Mohamedraza Haji Jaffer (Raza Kigoma)** of Dar-es-Salaam on Saturday 6th January 2001, 11th Shawwal 1421

**Alhaj Habib Mohamedali** of Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 3rd January 2001, 8th Shawwal 1421

**Mrs Zainabbai Mohamed Kassim Dewji** of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 2nd January 2001, 7th Shawwal 1421

**Alhaj Hassanali Abdulrasul Suleiman** of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 31st December 2000, 5th Shawwal 1421

**Alhaj Firoz Husayn Kassam Somji** of Arusha on Wednesday 27th December 2000, 1st Shawwal 1421

**Br. Munawwer Jivraj** of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 26th December 2000, 29th Ramadhan 1421

**Marhum Gulam Mohammed Abdallah Jaffer**, London, United Kingdom on 21 December 2000, 24 Ramadhan 1421

**Marhuma Zainabbai Noor Mohammed Padhani**, London, United Kingdom on 19 December 2000, 22 Ramadhan 1421

**Marhum Noorali (Nurubhai) Suleiman**, Allentown on 18 December 2000, 21 Ramadhan 1421.



# inna lillaahi wa inna ilaihi raajiuun

## Marhum Najafali Tejani



Marhoom Najafali was born in 1919 in Zanzibar. He was the first born in the family of Mahmedtaqi Tejani. He passed away in Dar es Salaam on Sunday 7th January, 2001.

The famous Faiz Night School Madrassah was where he received his grounding in religion. This proved to be a foundation of all his future endeavours. He graduated here when in his 30's and was among the first batch to qualify before proceeding to become an eminent teacher. He taught Qur'an, Dinyaat and Urdu.

He was a source of inspiration to many even in his younger days and his inspiration came from an eminent personality no less inspiring in his own way, Allamah Rashid Turabi. This inspiration led Marhum to start reciting majalises in the early sixties.

Fate took a turn when he left his beloved Zanzibar to settle in Dar es Salaam in 1968. His reputation preceded him as the Dar es Salaam Jamat took him on immediately to teach religious education in quite a few primary and secondary schools. He went on to assist in the preparation of the Husseini Madrassah syllabi whilst using his teaching ability to impart knowledge of the Qur'an and Dinyaat.

Today there are a multitude of personalities who owe their religious grounding to him. Yet you at no time heard this from him as he was extremely modest, very affable and while his sagacious presence was always there he never considered it necessary to make his presence felt.

The resident Aalim in the 70's, Aqa Haider was among those who was impressed by Marhum's unassuming personality. He recommended to the Jamat that he be made in charge of all activities that took place in the mosque. This is something that he continued doing till his last days. Through this he encouraged many youngsters to recite, who have gone on to become accomplished reciters. These services included leading prayers in the absence of the Resident Aalim, reciting *Nikahs*, advising the Tabligh committee on their activities as well as ordering of books.

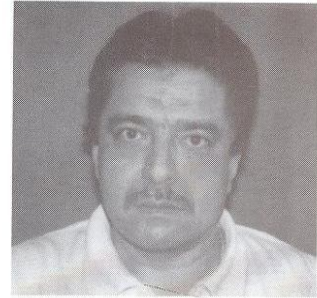
His presence at the mosque was similar to that of an institution. However it was his activities outside the mosque that endeared him to the masses at large. His pious nature led people to trust him with *Khairat* and *Sadka* funds for distribution to the poor and needy. This arrangement worked admirably for there were many of the needy who did not wish to identify themselves. His discretion and ability to discern those who were really in need led to collection and distribution without bias or prejudice.

His knowledge and experience also became invaluable during his numerous trips to various Zia'araats and Umra. His advice was sought by many and normally he was among the first to arrive at the mosque always whispering a kind word to one and many.

Alas, he is no more. He leaves behind three sons and a daughter, fourteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren, all of whom he doted on.

*"From earth We created you and into it We shall send you back and from it will We raise you a second time."* (20:55). May Marhum's soul rest in eternal peace in the proximity of Ahlul Bait (a.s.). Please recite Surah Fateha for the Marhum.

## Marhum Shaukat M. Dhirani



The tragic death of Brother Shaukat M. Dhirani of Tanga on Wednesday 14th February came as a shock to the community especially the Tanga Jamaat. Marhum served the Tanga Jamaat in various fields and capacities. He first served as a volunteer with the Ithnaasheri Volunteer Corps (IVC) following which he held various posts.

He was the Honorary Secretary of the Jaffery Charitable Dispensary for several terms and then served as a Vice Chairman in the Managing Committee. He was also twice appointed as the Chairman of the Caretaker Committee.

At the time of his death he was the Secretary of the Jamaat's Marriage Reconciliation Board, a member of the Jamaat's Emergency Unit and the Chairman of the Constitution Committee. The vacuum he has left will be difficult to fill. May Allah (SWT) rest his soul in the proximity of Ahlul Bait (a.s.). Please recite Surah Fateha.

## Marhum Asgher Karim Rehmtullah

The sudden death of Alhaj Asgher Karim Rehmtullah, which occurred in Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 13th December 2000 came as a deep shock to the community.

Marhum was the President of Kigoma Jamaat from 1995 to 1999 and took active interest in the affairs of the Jamaat. He also actively undertook Tablighi activities among indigenous people.

May Marhum's soul rest in eternal peace in the proximity of Ahlul Bait (a.s.). Please recite Surah Fateha for the Marhum.

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## New Tabligh Centre for Dar es Salaam



The above is an artist's impression of the proposed new Tabligh Centre that the Dar es Salaam Jamaat will soon be venturing on.

The Dar es Salaam Jamaat has ventured into an ambitious Six-storey Tabligh Centre on a plot donated by the Marhum Daya Walji family. The proposed modern Centre is expected to cater for the Tabligh and Madressa needs of the community for many years to come.

In addition to providing a basement car parking and shops on the ground floor, the proposed Centre is expected to house a full fledged Islamic Resource Centre including a public library, audio/video library, computer databank (a digital library), a book Centre, Internet facilities, Conference and lecture room, a ladies area, a section for Career Guidance and Language Classes among others.

Our Marja Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali al-Hussaini Seestani has given permission through the Resident Wakil, the Chairman of the Africa Federation, to utilise US\$ 1 million from Sehme Imam for the construction of this Centre. The Dar es Salaam Jamaat seeks the cooperation of community members for contributions by way of donations or khums payments for this noble purpose.

## Dar Tabligh launches new Web site

[www.tabligh-tz.org](http://www.tabligh-tz.org)

The Tabligh Sub Committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat has launched a new website which has drawn over 6500 visitors since being launched on 26th February 2001.

The site is user-friendly with sections on various interesting articles, news, duas, books, audio/video, religious months, marriage, Islamic Laws etc.

The new site offers *Istikharas* online which probably is the first time whereby this facility is offered online. Those seeking an *Istakhara* simply have to fill out a form and the Tabligh Section will respond to you immediately. The *Istakhara* is done by a reputable person who, if required, can also provide the Quran text that influenced a pertinent decision.

The site also provides an opportunity for those interested in the Friday Supplement to subscribe for this online. Those interested in Friday Supplements can simply join a mailing list via this website.

Moreover the site offers a facility of direct registration for the Nakuru Summer Residential Camp 2001. Boys and girls can register themselves online. More details on the Camp are provided on this site.

A special Site on the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) was also created at the beginning of Muharram. This site provides indepth details about the significance of the month and why we commemorate this every year.

The website is meanwhile being expanded to accomodate more new features. The Tabligh Section is keen to have a feedback and comments from surfers in order to make the site as adaptable as possible to the needs of our community members.

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# Zulfikar Khimji takes over the helm of the Africa Federation



The new Chairman of the Africa Federation, Zulfikar Khimji is a familiar face at Supreme Council level. He has been a regular attendant to the annual meetings of the Council during which he has participated actively in deliberations on different issues. He is also well known in Nairobi where he was the Chairman of the Jamaat from 1992 to 1996, a period when the Jamaat endeavoured on the massive Lavington Project now well known as the Jaffery Islamic Centre.

In his new capacity as Chairman of the Africa Federation, he looks forward to extending his services to all the Jamaats in Africa with an objective of achieving progress by way of consolidating unity, strengthening the infrastructural set-up and enhancing facilities and means by which community members can live as good citizens and can perform their religious obligations with improved facilities. He also looks forward to consolidate global unity among the communal Federations worldwide.

Born in Mombasa in 1950, Zulfikarbhai moved to Arusha in 1951 where he resided until 1956 following which he moved to Moshi for two years prior to returning to Mombasa. He pursued primary education at the Indian Public School in Arusha and Moshi. After 1959 he studied at the Alibhai Panju Primary School in Mombasa where he also completed his secondary education at Makupa High

School. He was a regular participant in community religious functions and while he attended the Husseini Madressa in Mombasa he was a member of the renowned Husseini Voluntary Corps there.

Ever since his young days, Zulfikarbhai has yearned to serve the community and society at large. He has been a member of several charitable organizations and in 1987, when he was the Convener of a project to assist the physically handicapped he was befitted with an award for being the 'Outstanding Member of the Year.' He has also received several appreciation awards as a member of the Golden Crescent Group. As a Crescent he has vehemently supported mountain climbing not by word of mouth or through speeches but by actually organizing and leading six expeditions, four to Mount Kenya and two to Mount Kilimanjaro, the last of which was in September 2000. In 1999 he was appointed the Director of the Golden Crescent Group following which he has been actively involved with youths.

At non-Community level he is involved with the Mathare Hospital in Nairobi since 1981 where his philanthropic services have been greatly appreciated by Kenyans. It was this appreciation that saw him being appointed as a board member of the hospital in 1998. He was also part of a delegation of the Kenya Ministry of Health that visited Uganda when invited by the Ministry there.

In 1999/2000 when Kenya faced serious drought in some areas, Zulfikarbhai initiated a joint programme involving not only the community but also various other Asian communities to solicit support for some of the afflicted. A group, 'Asian communities

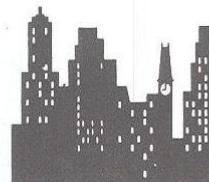
of Kenya' was formed which then organized a joint aid programme that was well covered by the local media and television stations. This coverage served well to portray the involvement of minorities in alleviating the plight of some of the deprived members of Kenyan society. The joint programme also helped to consolidate unity among different Asian communities in Kenya.

In business Zulfikarbhai has made great progress ever since he started his small family business in 1969 in Nairobi where he migrated to in 1968. Through diversification and gradual expansion he has made M.P.P.S. a noteworthy name in Nairobi and surely nobody can miss the large Piranha Centre on the Airport road in Nairobi. The Piranha Centre houses his office.

His hobbies and leisure pursuits include traveling to different countries, swimming, jogging, scuba diving, bird and fish feeding, badminton, mountain climbing and walking. One may say, "who doesn't walk?" but in the case of Zulfikarbhai he has won several walking competitions spanning over long distances up to 20km. He was an active member of Khoon-Khar Walking Club of Mombasa and in 1966 he also became the Coast champion. In 1967 he participated and won a prestigious 50km. walk to become the Kenya Champion in a record-breaking time. In 1968 he walked non-stop over a distance of 80km from Nairobi to Naivasha, a feat that earned him the second prize.

He may be a great walker but in his new position he has indicated that he just cannot afford to 'walk' through the next three years. He intends to 'run' and breeze through his term with dazzling results. Welcome to the helm Zulfikarbhai!

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## Dar Al Muntazir School continues to grow

At the Al Muntazir School in Dar es Salaam, construction work to Block C which was formerly a residential block owned by the Koreans has been completed at a cost of about Shs. 104 million. The official handing over ceremony to the Jamaat was held on Sunday 7th January, 2001.

Present during the hand-over were the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani and Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Pirbhai. Those present from the Dar es Salaam Jamaat were Asgherbhai Bharwani, President, Zulfikar Dewji (Vice President), Yasin Nurmohamed (Hon. Secretary) and Munir Daya (Education Secretary).

The Central Board of Education was represented by Chairman Habib Virani along with the Chairman of the Construction Committee, Sameer Habib. Other Board members present were Mahmood Damji and Hasnain Ladak.

Also present at the occasion was the Chairman of the Education Board of the Supreme Council, Asgher Manji. Officials from Sumar Varma and Ladwa Contractors were also present.

Construction took a period of four months and the plan is to accommodate the entire girls primary school (Grade 1-7) here. This requires 28 classrooms while currently the Academy has 23 classes. As a result the adjacent Block B is now in the process of being converted into classrooms to bridge the shortage of space. The projected plan is to have two Campuses instead of three that were planned earlier.

While the full fledged implementation of the Master Plan continues the Nursery School has been moved to the Korean Cultural Centre.

Meanwhile the Dar es Salaam Jamaat has assigned its Higher Education Board to assess the long term viability of establishing a full fledged Commercial Training Centre possibly at the Korean Cultural Centre. The Committee has been given until 15th May, 2001 to present its findings.

*Federation Samachar*



The building prior to construction



The School wing as it stands today

## CHB steps forward to curtail smoking

The Central Health Board (CHB) of the Africa Federation has resolved to make the year 2001 as the Year of 'Campaign against smoking'. The hazards of smoking and indeed passive smoking are known and numerous articles in connection with the hazards associated with smoking have been circulated and publicised for many years. CHB now intends to seek a practical implementation of previous recommendations as smoking is still rampant in many of our surroundings.

Smoking of cigarettes is one of the major preventable causes of heart disease. It also causes an increased risk of all types of cancer. Passive smoking has also been shown to increase the risk of cancer, heart and lung disease in non-smokers who live with smokers.

The following are some of the advantages of stopping smoking: -

- § Reduce risk of getting lung cancer
- § Be fitter and more active
- § Be less likely to have a heart attack
- § Set children a good example
- § Breathe more easily
- § Have fresher smelling breath, hair and clothes
- § Have more money
- § Have more chance of having a healthy baby

To set a good example, and safeguard the health status of our community members including women and children, Jamaats have been requested to ban smoking in all community public places, i.e. in sports complexes, Mosque and Imambargah compounds, Schools, Madressahs, Meeting Halls etc.

The CHB has called for 'No Smoking' signs to be placed prominently at all strategic places with Jamaats being asked to seriously ensure its compliance.

# Dar hosts 21st Triennial Conference and 59th Session of the Supreme Council

Once again Dar es Salaam is the venue for a Supreme Council Conference. The 21st Conference of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa and the 59th Session of the Supreme Council will be held during the Easter Holidays commencing from Friday 13th April 2001 (18th Muharram 1422 A.H.) and will end inshallah on Sunday 15th April 2001.

The Conference will start on 13th April 2001 at 1430 hours to deliberate upon the first three items of the Agenda which are:

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the 20th Triennial Conference held in Dar-es-Salaam from 10th April 1998.

2. Matters Arising therefore.

3. To consider and adopt Audited Accounts for the financial year ended 30th June 2000.

The formal Opening Session will take place at 2100 hours on the same day with all delegates, councilors, participants, invitees and guests having been requested to arrive and check-in in the morning of the same day.

- The Opening Session will include:  
- Recitation of Verses from the Holy Qur'an

- Dua-e-Wahdat .

- Welcome Address by the Chairman of the host Jamaat

- Speech by the retiring Chairman

- Introduction and induction of the new chairman

- Address by the incoming Chairman

- Election of the following office-bearers for the ensuing term 2001 to 2004  
(i) Vice-Chairman (ii) Hon. Treasurer

(b) Appointments by the Chairman of the following: (i) Hon Secretary (ii)

Hon. Asst. Secretary (iii) Hon. Asst Treasurer

(c) Election for Six Trustees

2 from Tanzania

2 from Kenya

2 from Uganda

(d) Appointment of Auditor

- Secretariat Report of the Federation

- Views, comments and opinion by the designated representatives from Overseas.

Beginning from Saturday 14th April, 2001 the following will be the agenda:

- Observations by delegates, councilors and invitees on Items 7,9 and 11 above

- Proposed resolutions and amendments to the Constitution:- (i) From the Secretariat (i) From the Jamaats

- Report of the World Federation of the K.S.I. Muslim Communities

- Report of the Regional Council of the K.S.I. Jamaats of Indian Ocean Islands (Formerly Madagascar territorial Council).

- Discussion on the state of the Community and its needs.

- Discussion and decision on the report of the Restructure Committee.

- Reports of the following Boards and Sub-committees:

(i) Education Board

(ii) Central Health Board

(iii) Settlement Welfare Board

(iv) Editorial Board of the *Federation Samachar* and

(v) Sports Council

- Reports of the Bilal Muslim Missions: (i) Tanzania (a) Arusha (b) Dar-es-Salaam (ii) Kenya (a) Mombasa (b) Nairobi (iii) Madagascar

- Tabligh Reports (i) Secretariat (ii) Tabligh Sub Committee (iii) Jamaats

- Vote of Thanks

The 59th Session of the Supreme Council will be held during the run of the Triennial Conference Session. The Agenda is as follows:

1. Recitation of the verses from the Holy Qur'an.

2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 58th Supreme Council Session held at Mombasa from 21st to 23rd April 2000.

3. Matters arising from the above Minutes.

4. To approve the budget for the ensuing financial year ending 30th June 2002.

The following Resolution has been submitted by the Secretariat and will be considered in the next Triennial Conference to be held in Dar-es-Salaam from Friday 13th April 2001.

## BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED:

**“That this Conference authorizes the Trustees of the Federation to purchase the properties of Mombasa Jamaat whose beneficiaries are the Alibhai Panju School, Mombasa and which consist of godowns situated on Chuma Road, Changombe, Dar-es-Salaam”.**

**“That the Trustees of the Federation shall acquire the said properties at a fair and reasonable price taking into consideration the market value and acceptable return on the investment”.**

The Dar es Salaam Session will be the final one for the outgoing Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani whose profile is carried on page 45 of this issue.



## Central Health Board (CHB) organises Second International Convention

The Central Health Board (CHB) of the Supreme Council will hold its Second International Convention at the Karimjee Hall in Dar es Salaam from 12th to 13th April, 2001.

CHB was established in 1990 by the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Supreme Council with the aim and purpose of providing professional services to the community in Africa in the field of medicine and educate the community on health matters in the form of regular bulletins, videos, lectures, seminars and screening programmes. Under the CHB, the Medical Advisory Panel provides specialist consultation and organizes treatment locally and overseas for welfare and self-financing patients.

The Chairman of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa (Supreme Council) appoints the Chairman of the Central Health Board (CHB) and the Board consists of seven members that include three medical professionals. The term of the office of the Board is three years.

Its objectives include:

1] To integrate resources within the community in Africa in order to establish center of expertise in the field of Health and Health Education to fulfill the expectations of the community members.

2] To establish closer working relationships and alliances with other medical organizations and institutions in the world, including external faculty in order to achieve the key objective of the Board.

3] Through statistical analysis, establish the health status of the community and its trend; consequently advise or take corrective and preventative measures to combat the poor health trend.

The Medical Convention has the following aims and objectives:

1. To provide a platform for commu-

nity medical and allied health professionals to discuss and disseminate the medical, moral, ethical and religious aspects of health care of our community.

2. To promote interactive dialogue between the medical professionals and the community leaders, heads of religious institutions i.e. madressahs, heads of the community schools, heads of medical Sub-Committees, the youth organizations so as to discuss the present day problems in areas of health care and education.

3. To organize lectures and presentations by the local and overseas medical consultants/specialists on the new and latest inventions viz a viz medical treatment of various ailments and diseases for the benefit of our community doctors, medical students and community members.

4. To establish a medium of communication and alliances among the medical professionals and paramedics in order to share experiences, to deliberate the scientific and religious matters for the benefit of all. i.e. Peer Group discussion.

5. To bring awareness and better understanding through panel discussions of the pertinent health problems affecting the youths and community members (both genders) and recommend corrective measures/programmes. Qualified professionals shall champion the sessions.

6. To explore new avenues of collaboration and co-operation with External and International Organizations in order to achieve our goals – Education and Health Care Development.

7. To initiate the establishment of expert group for counseling patients with HIV/AIDS and other diseases in our Jamaats in Africa.

For the Convention 2001 the main purpose is to bring together medical practitioners, paramedics, heads of medical institutions and others from differ-

ent parts of the world, firstly to bridge the communication gap and secondly, to provide a common platform to the participants to discuss and exchange views on the issues of healthcare, health education, social environment and its effects to our youths and community in general.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> CHB Convention is expected to focus on the medical matters and adolescent issues including the outrageous prevalence of the HIV/AIDS in the Sub Saharan Africa, and what actions and precautions we must take to protect ourselves from this dreadful virus. The Convention will also feature academic and scientific lectures from various doctors and professionals from local and overseas institutions.

Group and Panel discussions is included to deliberate on various topics and issues with particular emphasis on the health, social and religious aspects that will provide opportunities to the participants to interact individually and in groups resulting into exchange of ideas, sharing of experiences underpinning the key objective of this Convention i.e. to narrow the communication gap and provide a common platform to produce constructive and creative solutions to our problems.

The Convention will provide participants a unique opportunity to discuss various developments in the field of medicine with a focus on the health and sociological issues of our community. Several doctors from Africa, India and the United Kingdom will give presentations covering their areas of expertise in the medical science and modern technology.

Three years have passed since the 1st CHB Medical Convention was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in March 1997. This was attended by 300 participants from various Jamaats including medical professionals, academicians, students and others. The venue

(continued on page 42)



Alhaj Abdulrasulbhai was born at a place called Khod Bazaar in Zanzibar in 1887. He died at the prime age of 57 in Zanzibar in 1944 in the middle of the Second World War while holding the post of the Presidentship of the Hujjatul Islam Jamaat of the Khoja Shia Ithna-asheries. It was a smaller of the two Jamaats in Zanzibar. The other was the Kuwatul Islam Jamaat. His younger brother, Alhaj Abdullabhai Khalfan who was then 55,

## CHB holds Second Convention

(... from page 41)

for the second Convention is the Parliament House (Karimjee Hall) in Dar-es-Salaam, which will provide a rare opportunity to visitors and local participants an opportunity to meet in the famous historical building.

The Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Federick Sumaye will be the Chief Guest at the official opening. The Indian High Commissioner to Tanzania, Government officials and other dignitaries are also expected to attend. (Special seating arrangements will be made for ladies).

As the Convention coincides with the Easter Holidays, visitors will get some time thereafter to visit famous tourist and historical places in Tanzania including the Indian Ocean Islands of Zanzibar, the famous wildlife sanctuaries in the northern circuit of Tanzania and other places of interest.

Other participants may wish to attend the Triennial Conference of the K. S. I. Supreme Council in Dar Es Salaam from 13th to 15th April 2001.

Federation Samachar

## Alhaj Abdulrasul Ali Mohamed Khalfan

succeeded him to the post.

The Kuwatul Islam Jamaat was then headed by Alhaj Husein Sheriff Dewji Jamal who a year or two later died while holding the post.

The significance of that period of time for the community in Zanzibar, then the largest one in East Africa, was the beginning of a new era of a good relation between the two Jamaats after almost half a century. The fact that both the Jamaats closed their business on the day of the funeral of Abdulrasulbhai was an unprecedented reflection of the change of era.

There can be many reasons for the commencement of good relationship between the Jamaats under the new respective leadership. The foremost perhaps was the regular meetings between the top British officials and the heads of the religious communities when the Second World War was still raging on in Europe. The communities were being consulted, and co-operating with the government in managing rationing of the essential food items and *merekani* cloth, and producing volunteers who monitored the blackout.

The leadership of the two Jamaats would present proposals jointly at the meetings in the common interest of the two Jamaats and secure a fair degree of success. Examples are, the approval of release of rice and cooking oil from the government rationing pool for nyaz. This meant that the Zanzibar government in turn would get a proportionately larger allocation of import of the essential food items for British colonies. This success was achieved later during the presidency of Abdullabhai/Huseinbhai.

Another historical landmark in the relation of the two Jamaats was the agreement to organize a public annual Husain Day for the first time in Zanzibar and to do so jointly. The first occasion was under the presidentship of Huseinbhai of Kuwatul Islam Jamaat

and subsequent ones were to alternate between the two Jamaats. However, the Hujjatul Islam Jamaat in 1945 agreed to the function being organized by the Ithana-asheri Volunteer Corps (Sabile-Husain Volunteer Corps) to which all young Ithna-asheries were eligible as members without the distinction of their membership to the Jamaats.

A few members of the Hujjatul Islam Jamaat volunteered contribution to the fund launched by the Kuwatul Islam Jamaat for a substantial re-construction of their mosque at Kiponda, which signified an era of brotherhood, if not unity yet.

The new turn in the relation for the better also saw a fair number of inter-marriages between the members of the two Jamaats and this was pioneered, incidentally, by the families of Khalfan and also by the family of Sheriff Dewji. Other reasons attributed to the new era were the personal relationship of the Khalfan brothers with the Dewji Jamal family, both having married from the family of Jafferbhai Dewji Jamal of Mombasa/Bombay.

In addition, the brothers had also a large circle of friends among members and leaders of the Kuwatul Islam Jamaat. The two brothers also had a soap and oil industry plus coconut plantation in Mombasa where the younger brother, Abdullabhai, was one of the four founders of the present prestigious Jaffery Sports Club. They later shifted their industry to Zanzibar. The family migrated to Africa in about 1835 and the first local birth was in Zanzibar in 1860 - of Ali Mohamed Khalfan.

The Hujjatul Islam Jamaat though smaller of the two, is stated to have had as many as 100 trust houses and the management thereof produced a larger share of decision-making. However, the Nasser Nurmohamed Trust comprising a Dispensary and lettable residence units were managed jointly by the two Jamaats.

## Around Africa

# Nakuru to host Summer Camp

The Tabligh Sub-Committee of Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat will organize another Summer Camp at Nakuru from 21st December 2001 to 3rd January 2002. Boys and girls age between 14-20 years can participate. Each participant is expected to contribute US \$ 250.

The main objectives of the Camp includes instilling a habit of good Islamic lifestyle, raising awareness of divine values and developing spiritual growth and public speaking skills, encouraging social interaction with others from different background.

Parents are requested to encourage their children to participate, as past experience of similar camps held at Nakuru and Nairobi showed a marked change in the outlook of the children. Parents wanting their children to participate are requested to contact the Secretary of their respective Jamaats in order to get full information and for even more details one may contact: The Chairman, Tabligh Sub Committee - K.S.I. Jamaat, P.O. Box 233 - Dar-es-Salaam Tel: 00 255 22 2115119 Fax: 00 255 22 2113107 Email: [tabligh@raha.com](mailto:tabligh@raha.com) Website: [www.tabligh-tz.com](http://www.tabligh-tz.com).

## Mwanza Elections

On 21st March, 2001 the following were elected to the Managing Committee of Mwanza Jamaat:

Chairman Habib Rai  
Vice Chairman Hasnein Hirji  
Secretary Mohamedhusein Parpia  
Jnt. Secretary Asgher Manji  
Treasurer Rizwan Railey  
Members:  
Bashir Rashid  
Alihusein Jaffer  
Mukhtar Rajabali  
Mohamed Vakeel  
Abbas Khimji  
Mohamed Fazal  
Sajad Rai  
Councillor Mohamedrafiq Parpia (Past Secretary of the Jamaat).

*Federation Samachar*

# Tanga notes

from Ali Manji, Samachar correspondent

## Tanga Census

The following are the Census details for Tanga region:

	Population
1. Members	114
2. Ladies (Head of Family)	007
3. Married Women	097
4. Dependent Males	099
5. Dependent Females	079
6. Other Dependents	<u>040</u>
	<u>436</u>

## Tanga Launches New Directory

The Tanga Jamaat launched a new Directory on the wiladat of the Imam Hassan (a.s). The directory is the latest product of the Ithn-asheri Volunteer Corps. (I.V.C). This Directory contains assorted required information along with contact details. It also contains details of the Managing committee and the sub-committee, details of IVC committees from 1974, the Tanga members Census details, international and local telephone codes, contact details of selected Jamaats in Africa, and selected Jamaats and organisations around the world. The Directory is on sale for Shs. 1500/-and the response from the community is encouragingly reflected by sales.

## Dar Jamaat launches Education Trust Fund

To fulfil its objective to make education available at our school to all members of our community, the Dar es Salaam Jamaat has launched an Education Trust Fund that will provide loans and assistance to students whose families can sincerely not afford the present level of fees.

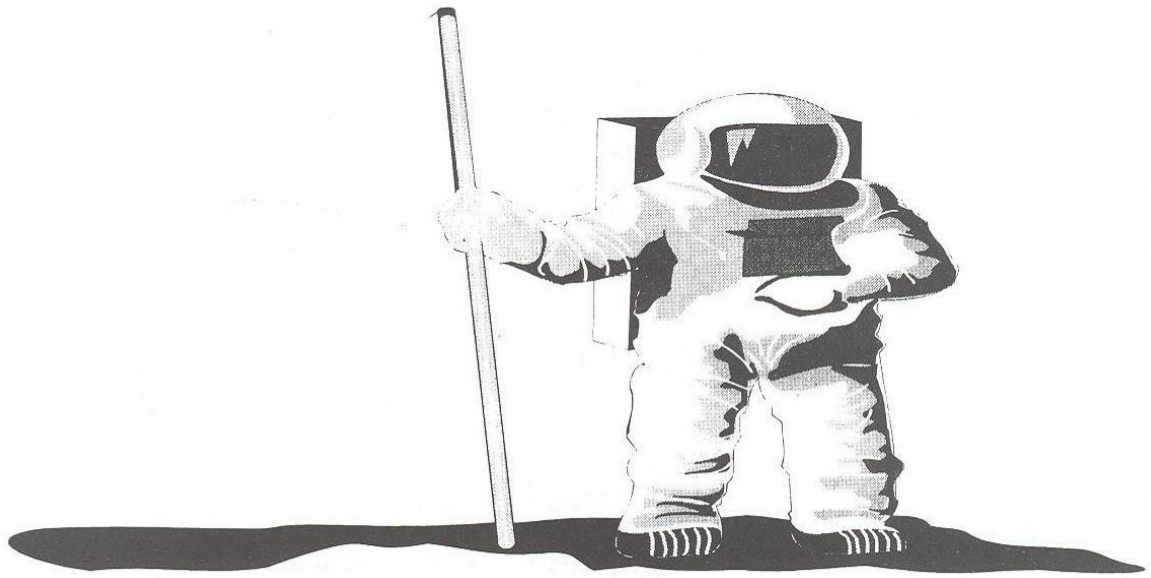
The Educational Trust Fund generates finance from philanthropists in the community who wish to assist less fortunate members of our community in paying school fees of their offspring.

The Jamaat intends to invest funds so that it can finance recurrent needs and at the same time set aside enough to ultimately increase resources to a level where the fund can become self-financing. While some donors have been forthcoming, emphasis has been made by them that funds should be utilised cautiously to ensure that only the truly needy do benefit.

In addition to covering school fees for local students it is being envisaged to extend the usage of funds received to capable students who seek financial assistance to pursue higher education. If the Fund is extended to cover higher education, priority of disbursement would be for students seeking to pursue higher education in East Africa. It is estimated that to pursue a 3 years degree course in the UK or a 4 years degree course in the USA the cost is US\$72,000. A 3 years degree course in South Africa or India would cost between US\$ 30,000 to \$ 40,000 while in East Africa the cost ranges from US\$ 20,000 to US\$ 25,000.

For education at the Al Muntazir School in Dar es Salaam, sponsors can choose between sponsoring a child for Shs. 720,000/- (to cover entrance and admission fees), Shs. 400,000/- (to cover fees only) or to pay any amount as a gesture of supporting the Jamaat's effort to promote education.

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# Dhirani ends 45 years of community service

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani ends his term in office after having served in this position for an unprecedented twelve years. He served as Chairman for two consecutive terms from 1983 to 1989 and was re-elected in 1995 during the 19th Constitutional Conference in Dar es Salaam after the Past Chairman Alhaj Habib Mulji ended his six year term. When elected in 1995, Mohamedbhai consented to serve for only one term but his popularity saw him being re-elected for another three year term in 1998.



Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani at the Supreme Council office

Mohamedbhai has been associated with the Africa Federation since its incorporation in 1946 when he was a regular young volunteer at the earlier sessions. As a dynamic young man he excelled to eventually hold more responsible posts in the Dar es Salaam Jamaat such as that of Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Member of the Managing Committee and Chairman of several sub-committees before ultimately serving as Chairman of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat from 1971 to 1972 and from 1977 to 1983. He relinquished this post when elected to take over the highest honorary position on the continent, that of the Chairman of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa in 1983.

Very few individuals in our Community have devoted their lives towards the cause of our community to the extent that Mohamedbhai has and his diligent and consecrated services will certainly be missed. He has however accepted to make himself available for consultancy when required.

As Chairman of Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat he reconstructed the Haji Daya Walji Madressa, from a ground floor structure to a four storey building and it was during his term that the Alawi flats were built in Dar es Salaam to accommodate some of our then forlorn members. During his term the ladies

*Federation Samachar*

Imambara was also extended above the gents Imambara and the Haji Ebrahim Charitable Dispensary was reopened after extensive refurbishments.

During the many years that he served the Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat, he ably represented Dar es Salaam Jamaat as a Councilor to the Supreme Council and served well as Chairman of the Higher Education Board which produced a number of professionals through scholarship schemes.

He was also actively involved in Tableegh' activities and this was well reflected in his keen participation in the activities of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania where he served as Honorary Treasurer for six years.

As Chairman of the Supreme Council, he took personal interest in the welfare of constituent Jamaats and with some of his colleagues visited almost all Jamaats with an objective of helping to solve many of their problems and also to consolidate communal brotherhood and development.

He has also represented the Africa Federation overseas during various important conferences including those of the World Federation and NASIMCO. Recently he was in Gujarat with the World Federation team fol-

lowing the earthquake which devastated the life and property of many of our community members.

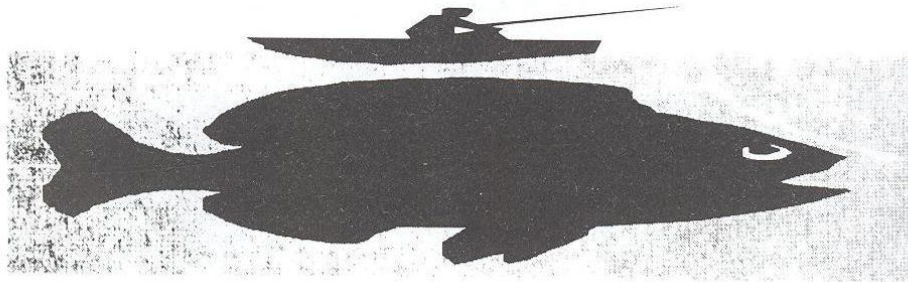
During his term in office he has repeatedly emphasised the need to make Education the community's priority and has called for youths to be encouraged towards constructive involvements. He has also spent many hours in finding ways to uplift the life of our Somalia brothers and has encouraged women to be more actively involved in community affairs.

It is a matter of pride for our Community to produce such an exemplary leader and from his forty five years of community service he is now probably the most experienced member of our Jamaat in communal affairs. May Almighty Allah (s.w.t.) reward him in this and the next world for his invaluable services.

The Editorial Board meanwhile acknowledges Mohamedbhai's deep interest in the media. During his term he took personal interest in the Federation Samachar by dotting the i's and crossing the t's for each issue.

Good luck to Mohamedbhai and the entire Africa Federation team that diligently served during the last term in office.

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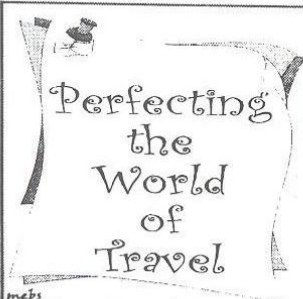


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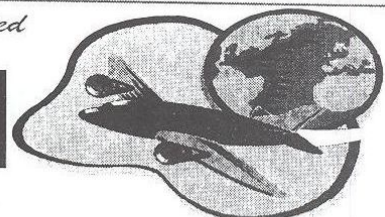
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# CASE FOR SURVIVAL

## 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

This is the final part of the article being serialised by the *Federation Samachar*. Editor.

### I.E.B. - NASIMCO.

Over the years I have been in close touch with Br. Sadik Alloo of I.E.B., Nasimco. The initial research work done some years back under the guidance of Dr. Bashir Datoos was a highly commendable project. Subsequent paper work done by this committee in connection with the Madrasah syllabus and preparation of an outline for a course of advanced Islamic Education is again a commendable endeavor on paper. The question that arises is how serious is the community and the Nasimco leadership in backing up the project with adequate resources. Without long term financial commitment and requisite moral support, we will only end up with pious platitudes to placate ourselves, while time passes by, children grow up and yet one more generation may be lost in the process.

Some of the observations made here are to be read in conjunction with my papers on the "Role of Madrasah" and the "Role of Majalis & Mimber". I enclose copies of it for your ease of reference.

We are operating Madrasah often under simplistic presumption that the voluntary teachers recruited are supposedly sufficiently proficient to teach given subjects. Given all the goodwill and while fully recognizing the great service that the voluntary Madrasah teachers are rendering to the best of their knowledge and ability, there are many inadequacies that need to be addressed. In this connection, I have following suggestions:

I - Nasimco Secretariat should make ex -gratia payment of U.S.\$: 25 per session for each Masdrasah teacher,

regardless of whether they want it or not.

II - Nasimco Secretariat should make a grant of U.S.\$: 500 to 1,000 annually to each Madrasah (according to the size of the Madrasah) to assist in defraying the cost of stationery and photocopying which many teachers are obliged to absorb themselves.

III - An in house training scheme be devised to assist the Madrasah teachers to improve their knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and also improve upon their communication and teaching skills. This call for a well considered and well formulated programs which will involve some cost factor. IEB, Nasimco has prepared some Portable Courses for the purpose. It is based on voluntary request from host Madrasah who are required to foot the bills for fares and accommodation of the personnel, who generously volunteer their time and services. If we are serious in making the Madrasah education effective and productive, not much can be achieved on this basis. Madrasah education need to be institutionalised and taken up on a much more organized basis by Nasimco and fully paid for by the Secretariat. We do not send children to academic Schools with untrained teachers. For Islamic education, since we do not have properly trained professionals, must we not do something tangible to overcome the prevalent shortcomings?

We must make the best use of the dedicated volunteer teachers. We need to organise and pay for their in- house training. If we can spend substantial sums of money to import Ulema and Zakirs only to lead prayers and recite Majalis which often do not address to the needs of the growing generation, can't we spend some money to better the quality of Madrasah education for our children?

IV - Infants and young children are of-

ten addicted to watching TV and Video cartoon films and computer games. We cannot stop them. Nor can we criticize them if we are unable to provide them with the alternatives. A lot of useful Islamic material in cartoons, videocassettes, computer programs is now available. It is beyond the means of an average family to acquire adequate stocks for their own account. All Madrasah need to be equipped with a selection of relevant material which are abundantly available in North America and also in Europe. IEB Nasimco should finance this project for each Madrasah and assist in the setting up of relevant lending library.

Sound Vision Chicago - "www.soundvision.com" have an interesting catalogue. With input from various Community members an extensive resource file can be developed.

V - All Madrasah need to be equipped with suitable reference library of requisite text books and suitable reference material for the teachers. This should be financed by Nasimco.

VI - A form of counseling/inspectorate comprising of preferably trained teachers with fair understanding of Islamiyyat be appointed to visit all Madrasah at regular intervals to monitor progress and assist in the overall improvement of the management and standards. Considering the number of Jamaats and Madrasah involved plus the wide ranging distances between the various community centres, the task cannot be effectively undertaken on adhoc voluntary basis. This might well mean engaging some one on a full time basis. IEB Nasimco should undertake the project and fully bear the cost of related expenses.

"Allah does not change the condition of a people. Until they change what is in them first" is a divine commandment. It is a challenge we have to accept.

# Television exposure could poise a health risk

From time to time a question keeps cropping up in scientific circles. Are there any health risks in prolonged exposure to TV screens? This question is mainly asked in the context of increasing child viewing.

In the late 1960s experiments on TV radiation triggered many debates on this issue. Many colour TV sets were then found emitting radiation far above the recommended level of 0.50 millirems per hour. A caution was then raised calling for protection against hazardous radiation from television sets.

Following the introduction of solid-state components in the 1970s, the radiation levels of TV sets became remarkably lower. However radiation from TV picture tubes, though much less than from computer screens, remains a subject of scientific concern.

Doctors or opticians are often asked as to what is a safe distance for children to watch TV and many will suggest viewers to sit at least 6 to 10 feet from the screen but some findings make a mockery of such advice. For example in one case, a rat breeding colony was completely disrupted at a distance of fifteen feet from a TV screen with two intervening building partitions. Ultimately the distance that would be considered safe would depend on the quality and model of one's television set.

There is then the question of how television light affects small children. Children are highly sensitive to light. Babies revel in a diet of natural light and a baby has the same thirst for light that plants and flowers have. When children watch television for over 20 hours a week, they get a diet of predominantly artificial light instead of ingesting a diet of natural light. One may call this *malillumination*.

Television light is vastly different from

daylight because it has a much narrower spectra. When parents are addictive viewers, babies are commonly put in front of or near operating television sets thereby leaving them exposed to artificial light.

When babies are kept continuously near operating TV screens there is evidence that they orient to television light and sound. Infants are capable of recognising pictorial representations such as photographs of people and objects from as early as six months.

In his book 'Health and Light', Dr. John Ott, who undertook various experiments in respect of TV radiation in the late 1960s, is critical of children absorbing excessive doses of artificial light, especially from television sets. Television light is projected into the viewer's eye by cathode ray guns behind the screen, powered by 25000 kilovolts in colour sets and 18000 kilovolts in black and white sets. These guns shoot streams of electrons at the phosphor dots on the screen. This directed light is projected into the viewer looking at the lit screen.

Again between various types of artificial light, fluorescent light is deemed more damaging than incandescent light. And what a television screen emits is a myriad of red, blue or green dots or lines. According to Dr. Ott's findings, the red fluorescent in television could have harmful effects, particularly on sensitive babies and young children.

Dr. Ott was involved in numerous experiments to verify the effects of television screens on human beings. In some experiments plants and rats were given a controlled exposure of television light to establish effects. In one experiment, he noted that bean seeds kept fifty feet away from an operating TV screen was not affected but those placed nearby for days suffered from

irregular growth.

Similarly rats exposed for long stretches to television light grew increasingly hyperactive and later on quite lethargic. A group of small children who had been watching television from four to six hours a day showed symptoms of general fatigue while some even had headaches and vomiting trouble. These symptoms faded away as viewing time was limited to two hours daily.

## From the Nahj al Balagha

### SERMON 41

#### *In condemnation of treason*

O' people! Surely fulfilment of pledge is the twin of truth. I do not know a better shield (against the assaults of sin) than it. One who realises the reality of return (to the next world) never betrays. We are in a period when most of the people regard betrayal as wisdom. In these days the ignorants call it excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? Allah may destroy them. One who has been through thick and thin of life finds the excuses to be preventing him from orders and prohibitions of Allah but he disregards them despite capability (to succumb to them and follows the commands of Allah), while one who has no restraints of religion seizes the opportunity (and accepts the excuses for not following the commands of Allah).



# Our Marriage ways

by Mohamed A. Nathani, Dar es Salaam

Way back in March 1998, an international conference was organized in Birmingham, England, by the local Jamaat on "Our Marriage Ways". A few keynote Speakers presented papers on different issues on marriage, and many papers from different parts of the world were filed for this conference. Subsequently the Birmingham Jamaat published a book containing all the papers presented in person or from a distance. The book makes a very interesting reading, covering topics from preparing oneself for marriage, choosing the right spouse, criteria for selection, traditions, problems encountered after marriage to reconciliation and ultimately divorce. Many ideas developed and suggestions were made on different aspects. What seems rather sad is that no action appears to have been taken at formal levels by the Executive Committees of various Jamaats. Or at least there is no news of what action any Jamaat has taken or even considered some of the issues presented. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say no action seems to have been taken in East Africa, the motherland for the majority of our community members living in the west and still deriving inspiration from.

It is not my intention to write a report of this conference; rather it is to highlight one area of great importance, which is of socio-religious nature- the first step of getting into matrimony.

There are problems in the community on the issue of matchmaking, choosing the right partner etc. It is a known fact that due to gender segregation, an intending boy or girl has no chance of being able to choose a prospective spouse. The only way these days is to arrange a meeting of the two in the presence of parents or some adults. This is fine, but it is not enough for either to be able to meet for a short period of time and arrive at a very cru-

cial decision as that of concluding a matrimony. One meeting is surely not enough to enable either the boy or the girl to reach an informed and calculated decision. If a decision is made, it is more of an emotional one, placing one's judgement on physical features and the reputation of the individual and family in the community. Subsequent meetings are generally not held, sometimes resulting in secret meetings between the two, a situation that parents of both would not encourage. Even at the initial stage of arranging a meeting between a boy and a girl, there is a hesitation that after the meeting if the boy decides not to propose, he fears the girl would feel rejected and would offend her sensibility. Hence he had better not ask for such a meeting.

There is a cry from various directions that our youths are going in the wrong direction due to late marriages and a more serious matter, marrying OUTSIDE the community. Such a situation was reported by Dr. Amir Lakha of London (once the President of Stanmore Jamaat) in his paper, when he mentioned that "in September 1997, 5 of our young girls and 1 young boy married outside the community. In November 1997, of the 5 weddings that took place in one particular week at Stanmore Imambada, 2 girls and 2 boys were getting married outside the community." Dr. Lakha finds this shocking, just as many others must have found it equally so.

We surely ought to respect the decisions of individuals to marry whosoever they like, presumably they would have converted their spouses to Muslims if they were not, or brought them closer to Shia beliefs if they were. However there must be a core problem that has not been tackled sufficiently for such a situation to arise so often or in such numbers. One likely reason to explain this trend is the

lack of a proper opportunity for eligible boys and girls to get to know each other. Some readers might immediately recoil and say "But this is haraam!" well, is it?

For some time now, and indeed in various papers, it has been suggested that we should arrange seminars, debates or other formal gatherings where both boys as well as girls would participate, all within Shariah, and participants would get a chance to know one another in their formal roles. This idea cannot sound revolutionary because many people who have asked our Mara'ja have been told clearly that such gatherings are in principle permissible.

Some might argue that it is enough for an intending boy, for instance, to get a chance to see and meet a girl once and come to his conclusion, and vice versa. But seeing a person in a more articulate role, involving himself/herself more of their personality enables one to get a better picture of the kind of person one is looking for in marriage. If both boys and girls engage themselves in such gatherings in "the respectful exchange of character and conversation to avoid putting themselves in any sin or situation of corrupt conduct" (Ayatullah Seestani) why should we hesitate? Interaction would only be allowed during such formal gatherings. Not only have such gatherings been legitimized by Sheria according to Ayatullah Seestani, but our Marja' permits two individuals meeting, with the girl without Hijab, and there is no ceiling placed on the number of meetings.

How to ensure that strict observance of Hijab is enforced is upon the organizers. Such gatherings are being held in other countries in our community

(continued on page 50)

## Feature

(...from page 49)

and in Africa we can do the same. Children of today, the youths of both genders, are constantly exposed to "mixed gathering" situation either in a co-educational school or at work. Very forceful external pressures create a situation in which youths find themselves getting closer to members of the opposite sex who are outside the community, with no chances of being able to meet those within the community. Result? The reader knows it. As a vibrant community, we must improvise our ways to keep interest of the youths within the community, allowing for legitimate interaction, especially when marriage is being contemplated.

Not infrequently do I hear in either meetings or private chats that we are a very organized community, a comment often made by other Shia communities about the Khojas. Traditions in any society have an important role to play. They bind individuals together, and the more predictable a pattern of behaviour, the more cohesive individual members of a society, community or tribe are. But traditions can also be repressive, when, as it sometimes happens, the socio-psychological functions these were meant to serve no longer do so, have become dysfunctional, but continue to linger in a community. At this point, some individuals with foresight need to come out in the open and declare that some changes in certain aspects of our communal behavior must be allowed to take place, in the long-term interest of its survival. If positive changes are not allowed, a community can disintegrate slowly over a period. And for a small community like ours, this can be disastrous. Remember what Imam Ali (a.s.) said about not trying to raise your child like he was of your times, but that he is born of a different time? There are certain inherent changes that come about with each generation and it is because of changing times that *ijtihad* helps us to interpret events, *ahadith* and indeed certain passages of the Quran in a contemporaneous manner.

See what one bold lady has openly written in one of the papers: the "waiting game" an expression made popu-

lar by Abdullhusein Akbar in an article many years ago in Stanmore Jamaat's newsletter. Have we stopped to think of the plight of spinsters who reach marriageable age but who have to keep on waiting until a message from some boy comes home? I wish to quote this lady who says: "We all have a dream, a dream of marriage, the marriage of our daughters who share our dreams shyly and secretly but who at the same time harbour apprehension that their dream could easily be shattered for lack of suitable partners.....Our daughters too share the agony but again silently and secretly. They wait and still keep on waiting for a suitable partner. In the meantime that time which waits for no one passes and so does the marriageable age"

Traditions arise or evolve in order to fulfill some purpose in a society. It is traditions that keep communities, tribes, groups of people bound together. When traditions cease to fulfill their overt or covert functions and are not changed to be in tune with different circumstances or situation, such a community becomes imprisoned in the very behaviour its forefathers had created for their purpose. Traditions become goals in themselves, an end rather than a means to an end. Ancestors' long dead, whose circumstances were or may have been different from the present, will have determined life situations in such a case. Hence it is not uncommon to find members in a community getting disenchanted with its outdated customs and to ultimately rebel and do their own things. The extent to which our community will remain a cohesive group and not disintegrate will depend upon how the chiefs of our tribe envision the present and try to shape the future.

Will our community be so blinded by our repressive customs that we must wait for a rebellion rather than systematically change them to suit changed conditions? Our youths may not rebel openly, or hesitate to do so, but must we sacrifice the legitimate dreams of our girls and boys in order to maintain our anachronistic traditions which are not only doing us no good, but are actually a hindrance to the healthy growth of our new generation?

It is now upto the leaders of our vari-

ous Jamaats to take the initiative and organize such functions. I can see initial resistance from some quarters, but perhaps the first step the Jamaats can take is to organise debates and dialogues on this topic in men and ladies' fora separately. The reaction can easily be gauged and support sought and consensus arrived at. I believe this is the least we can expect our Jamaats to do on this issue, busy as they are on other issues facing different Jamaats. I take the liberty to state, at the risk of offending the powers that be that if this matter is not given the serious consideration it deserves, the leaders will have let down the community. May I reiterate that no one is asking our Jamaats to undertake any activity not within the shariah.

My postal and email address is mentioned below. I would be happy to see some form of dialogue started on this topic in the *Samachar* and those who wish to air their views privately to me, either way, by email messages.

Mohamed A.Nathani  
P.O.Box 20350,  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.  
Email: [abbas@twiga.com](mailto:abbas@twiga.com)

### For the information of community members

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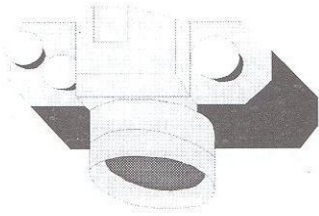
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# DOWN MEMORY LANE

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From left sitting: Haji Asgherali Bharwani, Haji Mohamedali Merali, Ebrahim (Kamadiya), Haji Habibbhai Walji, Haji Yusufali Karmali (Vice President), Haji Sultanali G. Dattoo (President), Roshanali Darweshali Rashid (Hon. Secretary), Haji Pyarali Khimji (Jnt. Secretary), Akbarali G. Sabur.

From left standing: Haji Mohamed Hussein A. Nathoo, Husseinali M. Meghji, Haji Roshanali G. Jamal, Gulam A. Sajan (Hon. Treasurer), Haji Mohamed Jaffer G. Jamal, Amirali A. Kassam, Haji Mohamedali Kara Walli, Anverali R. Jagani, Fidahussein A. Merali (Secretary to the Committee).

## Madressa - Our enduring institution

The madressa remains the enduring institution of the community. Children of the community partake religious instruction and education through it. They are run on a voluntary basis by committed and dedicated group of teachers who, quietly but with determination, carry out this important duty for the community. They make it their life long mission.

One such teacher that comes to the mind is Alhaj Mulla Abdulrasul Mulla Hassanali in Mombassa whose life-long mission has been to serve the cause of the madressa. Practically in every Jamaat we have some highly dedicated individuals like Mulla Abdulrasul. They take this responsibility out of love for Islam and make sure that the essentials of Islam reach our boys and girls. This is an important responsibility taken on by them, which really belongs to parents. **Parents have the first responsibility of making sure that their child puts the Islamic values in to practice at home, in school and at work places.**

Our communities throughout the world have madressas, some well established, self-sufficient and of good standard while others lack resources and basic facilities. Over the years, the Islamic Education Board has played a facilitative role in bringing madressa administrators and teachers together, provide financial assistance, organise teacher seminars and more importantly, provide books and other resource materials to our community madressa, religious institutions outside our community and secular schools and institutions.

However, more needs to be done. Challenges facing us today are different from those that existed even 10 years ago. The demands will change even further over the coming years as globalisation entrenches us even further in our lives. As a result, the problems facing our children living in the

west may become almost identical to ones in the east and they need to be approached collectively. Unfortunately, the lack of co-ordination between madressas worldwide is a real setback and this, undoubtedly, will need to be addressed.

Additionally, classroom teaching alone cannot be sufficient. The activities carried out within the community centres have to be made more relevant for the children of our community. Furthermore, we need ample supplies of supplementary reading material in the form of textbooks and storybooks. This is a specialised art and cannot be effectively carried out on a purely community basis. While we could select the material outline, suitable writers can undertake the task of writing the books, which are reviewed professionally before publishing them. Here, there is room for the pooling of resources with other organisations for the common good. The community will have to rise to these challenges vigorously and meaningfully by putting adequate resources at the disposal of madressa teachers who are best equipped to provide concrete proposals and substantial guidance to the community. In his forthright paper - 'The role of Madressa in the community' presented at a symposium organised by the Council of European Jamaats, Alhaj Hassan Ali M. Jaffer stated:

*" As a community, we give much lip service to religious education. Little concrete and constructive commitment however is made to upgrade the standard of religious education for our children compatible with the requirements of the time. This is an issue that has to be deliberated upon calmly, dispassionately and professionally.*

*We spend huge sums of money in recruiting Ulema to serve Resident A'lims, mostly to lead congregational*

*prayers only; we recruit renowned Zakereens for the months of Muharram, Safar and Ramadhan, and we spend colossal sums of money for Niyaz, all in the good name of religion. Necessary as these endeavours are, how much resources do we expend to effectively upgrade the role of Madressa education and in training potential Madressa Muallims, in introducing modern teaching aids for religious education and in supplementing the income of madressa teachers to make them economically self supporting and consequently more devoted in their assignments.*

*The challenge is to give Madressa education the same level of importance that we give secular academic education. Given the choice of exercising one option only, the first priority must go to madressa."*

Over the past few years, the Islamic Education Board of the World Federation has produced, printed and distributed many books. Some of these are as follows:

1. Al-Islamu Dini - A set of 11 manuals for Madressa students
2. Ahsanal Qisas - Stories for children
3. Kalimatum Tayyiba - Majalises for children including Khutba and Masaib Workbooks for children
4. At Islamu Dini - Key stage 1 and 2 for secular schools according to Islamic Religious Education Syllabus in Harrow, Baling and Hertfordshire schools.

In addition, audio cassettes on many subjects are available from its resource centre. The IEB has distributed more than 10,000 copies of these books to individuals and institutions worldwide.

The World Federation along with other Federations and community organisations need to initiate a system to encourage more co-ordination between madressas worldwide. This would ensure that the smaller communities benefit by way of text-book and information intake. The co-ordination of Madressas world-wide would also ensure a more organised approach to teaching, qualifications of teachers, syllabus etc.

# A crusade from within

There are some topics that are important and concern seriously the Muslim Umma of the present time. Unfortunately, these never appear to feature in our *majaalis*. There can be three reasons: either the preachers have no ability to discuss them, or they do not agree that they are important, or they are not even aware of the pertinent situation.

It cannot be denied that Islam is more than a religion. Islam is *deen*; and *deen* is not confined to worship only. It is a code of life based on the faith. Therefore that faith is not only professed but also practiced in our daily life, much more outside the mosque. Acquisition of knowledge, including that of science and high tech, is in this context as much *ibaadat* also as is earning a living.

In fact, any issue, which helps Muslims to survive and thrive as united and progressive Umma and strengthen thereby the root and spread of Islam, is an Islamic topic. In the history of the human race, never has a time dawned as now when a single factor can be the cause of a total downfall of Muslims and then the cause falsely attributed to Islam in order to undermine it. That factor is our dismal failure not only in the global "competition, but also sharing in the acquisition, mastering and exploitation of high-technology" as part of knowledge and better life.

Glorious is the history of Muslims when the knowledge of basic science and the discovery of its principles and characteristics were in the domains of Muslims. The renowned scientists of the world during that period of history were Muslims. It is important for the Islamic preachers of the present time to note that many of these scientists were Ulemas also by their own right. Islam then was synonymous with the world civilisation, the only one that reigned from the borders of China in the East to Spain in the West for seven

centuries.

Then came the beginning of downfall when any knowledge or inventions which originated from non-Muslims in the West, however beneficial to mankind, were slapped as Satanic. The purposeful and significant hadith of the holy Prophet, which directed Muslims since the sixth century to acquire knowledge even if it were as far as in China, became very conspicuous by its non-observance as if it was never relevant to Muslims.

The history of the Ottoman (Usmania) Empire may have taken a different course if there had been no ban by clerics on new avenues of knowledge in the fields of science and machinery as a prelude to technology. The religious ban for a number of decades on the importation, copying and use of Printing Press invented by the West, and

liberally used by the West is one example.

Japan alone today is said to be having more universities and UK alone is known to be producing more graduates than the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) combined though the first university ever was established by Muslims about one thousand years ago - in Cairo.

With the globalisation of economy, those who are the masters of the high-tech and its exploitation will be the masters over the entire world. The convention of the protection (patent) of the intellectual right will ensure that even the acquisition is in the controlled and monopolised form of a commercial clientele. Imagine the fate where instead of acquisition, there happens to be a "crusade" against high-tech in the name of Islam!

But then who have the ears of the followers of Islam if not the preachers? What are their credentials to preach the topics of knowledge; and the unity of purpose for knowledge if they and the institutions, which graduate them, are oblivious to and unconcerned with the situation?

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Kidney Beans  
Maize

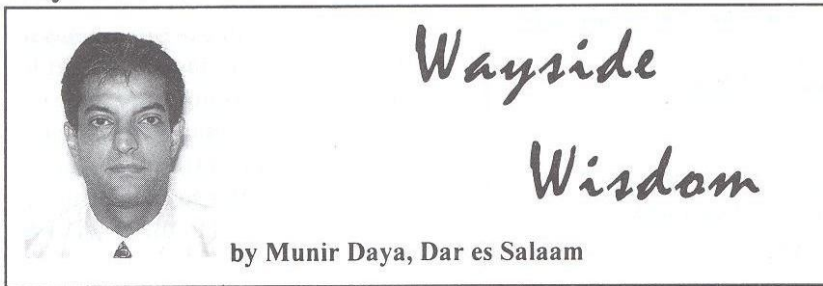
Pigeon Peas  
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Soya Beans  
Sunflower Seeds  
Teak logs  
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## Anti-smoking move is timely

The move by the Central Health Board (CHB) of the Africa Federation to make the year 2001 as the Year of 'Campaign against smoking' is welcome and goes well to suggest the nature of human beings in general. When human beings get involved in a vice it is difficult to make them discontinue because they become so weblocked in their indulgences that withdrawal becomes almost impossible.

Some smokers in the community are likely to term the CHB resolution as harsh and we may have some who may even say that this resolution will keep smokers away from the Mosque or from social functions or community meetings.

Its request to all Jamaats to put up anti-smoking signs and to immediately stop allowing smoking in public places may inconvenience a few but this inconvenience is a healthy price to pay for the safety of the community at large. What smokers need to understand is that the move and publicity of this adversity will help keep many of our young ones away from the vice while at the same time may help in reducing the smoking habit of present smokers.

Tobacco is possibly the most preventable causes of premature death and disability in our community. Yet we have been taking a rather cynical attitude to this vice that continues to bedevil our society. We may have launched anti-smoking campaigns in the past but these were more by way of raising awareness on the subject rather than encouraging pragmatic ways of making life more difficult for smokers.

The proposed guidelines by the CHB to constituent Jamaats take into consideration the plight of non-smokers

who are often affected by secondary smoke from smokers. Today tobacco kills four million people a year in the world. By 2030, it will kill 10 million people a year, more than the combined death toll from malaria and other major childhood killer diseases. Over 70% of these tobacco induced deaths will happen in the developing world.

So powerful is the addiction of nicotine and so blinding is the advertising appeal of tobacco products that most consumers, even highly educated ones, believe that somehow they will be spared. Here is what might befall them:

- Cancer of the brain
- Cancer of the nose
- Cancer of the throat
- Cancer of the mouth
- Cancer of the Larynx
- Cancer of the pharynx
- Cancer of the kidney
- Cancer of the stomach
- Cancer of the bladder
- Lung cancer
- Blood cancer and Skin cancer

People know pretty well that in most cases cancer cannot be cured unless detected early. And there is much more to the killer tobacco. Tobacco harms just about every part of the body it touches — on the way into, around and out of the smoker - from the skin and lips to the bladder. Here are some tobacco related ailments:

- Increased coughing and sneezing
- Shortness of breath
- Chronic Bronchitis
- TB
- Peptic ulcer
- Heart disease
- Stroke

Community members should avoid falling prey to the marketing of tobacco companies worldwide that reportedly spend \$6 billion a year to entice youth to smoke. These companies make you believe that if you smoke, you are going to be sexy, attractive, successful and cool. What they will not tell you is what happens in one's body after smoke is inhaled.

As a matter of fact the manufacturers even warn smokers on each and every pack that 'smoking is injurious to your health' which actually is a great understatement and a masterpiece of bureaucratic fudging. This conceals a self-inflicted epidemic of untold dimensions and infinite enormity. Still we continue to shut our eyes to the gloom that tobacco unfolds around us. If smoking is dangerous why allow it in the first place.

While increasing 'no-smoke' zones is a fine way of controlling existent smokers, more serious consideration needs to be given to youngsters who need guidance and encouragement to stay away from this vice.

Preachers should punctuate their majlises with some mention against smoking while Educational institutions under the Jamaat should fervently discourage smoking as a habit. Similarly our social organisations can hold anti-smoking dramas or awareness programmes.

As smoking decreases in the West, the tobacco industry is making huge investments in developing countries, targeting women and girls with seductive advertising, exploiting ideas of independence, emancipation, sex appeal and even slimness.

According to the WHO the experience of the developed world shows, the tobacco epidemic among men is usually followed by a tobacco epidemic among women. Take the example the two countries with the highest percentage of women smokers, Denmark-37% and Norway-35.5%. Here women have attained virtual equality with men in smoking. Smoking is an addiction that few can quit at will. Hitting hard with mortal facts may discourage some but most of those who want to quit need support and encouragement from family and friends.

## 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.



**Q:** Is it permissible for a person to delay his prayers from their earliest time by participating in the commemoration ceremonies (*majalis*) of (Imam) Husayn established during the ten days of *Muharram*?

**A:** It is permissible, but it is best to perform the prayers at their earliest time, and the organizers of the *majalis* ought to arrange them in such a way as to avoid conflict with the performance of prayers at their earliest time.

**Q:** Is it permissible for a person who wakes up a few minutes before the time of morning prayer to go back to sleep if he knows or considers it a strong possibility that he will not wake up again before sunrise?

**A:** If this is considered a sign of contempt or trivialization with regard to prayers, then it is not permissible.

**Q:** A woman is performing prayer and she is unaware that some of her hair is outside of her head-cover. Is it obligatory for me to inform her of this during or after her prayer?

**A:** Certainly not. It is not obligatory for you to inform her. Even if she does not become aware of it until her prayer is complete, her prayer will be valid. If she becomes aware of it during (the prayer) and hastens to cover it (her hair), again her prayer will be valid.

**Q:** What about another (woman) who offers prayer while the upper part of her feet are exposed.

**A:** This is permissible for her since it is allowed for the upper part of the feet and the soles to be exposed in prayers. (FM, p. 431)

**Q:** What is the ruling on a person who used to pray and fast but committed several mistakes in the ma-

mor ablution (*ghusl*). He is absolutely sure now that some of his previous *ghusls* were void, but he does not know how many. As a result he is not aware of how many invalid prayers and fasts he offered with them.

**A:** His fasts are valid even if his *ghusl* is invalid. However, it is obligatory for him to offer *qada* of all the prayers he offered with the invalid *ghusl*. If he is unsure about the minimum and the maximum, he may limit himself to the minimum. (FM, p. 399).

**Q20:** A person fasts in the month of *Ramadan* for several years and he does not know, due to ignorance, that the *ghusl* of *janabah* is obligatory, so he does not perform *ghusl*.

**A:** His fast is correct and no expiation (*kaffarah*) is obligatory for him. (FM, p. 402)

**Q:** Some allergy sufferers use an apparatus which we call an "inhalator" to assist them in easy breathing. After its placement in the mouth and pressing it, this apparatus emits what is like pressurized gas. Can this apparatus be used at the time of fasting?

**A:** Yes. One who uses this (apparatus) remains on his fast and his fast is valid. (FM, p. 402)

**Q:** Food or serum in a plastic bag containing water, sugar and some medication is administered to a patient by injection directly into the blood — due to sickness or some other reasons such as to provide nourishment. Is the fasting person obliged to avoid it?

**A:** It is not obligatory, although it is more appropriate (for him) to do so. (FM, p. 403)

**Q:** Is it permissible to offer meals to those who are not fasting — that is, those with and without an excuse for not fasting in the month of *Ramadan* — whether in restaurants or in homes, if this offering is not considered disrespectful to the sanctity of the noble month?

**A:** It is permissible (to offer meals) to those who have an excuse (for not fasting) [but not to the others]. (FM, pp. 402-3)

**Q:** A man is wearing a watch whose strap is made of natural leather imported from a non-Muslim country and he does not know whether the leather is from the skin of an animal slaughtered in the Islamic manner or not. The belt on his pants is made from the same kind of leather. Does he have to remove them when he intends to offer prayer?

**A:** His prayer is valid with them as long as there is a strong probability that the strap or the belt is from the skin of an animal whose flesh is edible and that was slaughtered in the *shar'i* manner. (FM, pp. 397-98)

**Q:** What about a wallet placed inside the pocket during prayer if it is made of the same leather as the strap previously mentioned?

**A:** One is permitted to offer prayer with it. (FM, p. 398)

**Q:** Suppose that he is confident that the strap or the belt is made from the skin of an animal that was not slaughtered in the Islamic manner but he prays with it due to forgetfulness and then remembers while praying, and immediately removes his watch or belt.

**A:** His prayer is valid unless his forgetfulness is due to carelessness and not giving due importance to the matter [in which case he is obliged to repeat his prayer]. (FM, p. 398)

**Q:** The bodies of some types of fish are not fully covered with scales. Is it permissible to eat them?

**A:** Yes, it is permissible for you to eat them if they have but a single scale. (FM, p. 414)



## Your Questions Answered

by Maulana Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi from  
his book by the same name



**Q.** What is the difference between Nikah and Mut'aa? Why is the institution of Mut'aa not being widely used in Africa?

**A.** The differences between permanent and temporary marriages are as follows:-

(1) A woman married by Mut'aa cannot be divorced. The parties become absolutely separated upon the expiry of the period agreed upon.

(2) But the husband may dissolve the marriage of Mut'aa by making to the woman a gift of the remaining term, i.e. to waive his right to her.

(3) The wife, married by Mut'aa cannot be subject to 'Ila' or 'laan'.

(4) A Mut'aa marriage created no right of inheritance in either party. But, if there is an express condition stipulated in the formula (Segha) of 'Ijaba' and 'qubul' the parties would inherit from each other if the death occurs during the period of Mut'aa or its Iddat.

(5) In Mut'aa marriage, the woman's iddat period extends for two full terms of her monthly course, if she is not pregnant. But if she is pregnant, the Iddat lasts until the delivery of the child

The Iddat of a widow is four months and ten days, like a widow of a permanent marriage, if she is not pregnant. But if she is pregnant, the Iddat of death lasts until the delivery of the child, or four months and 10 days, whichever is longer.

If she is in the age of having her monthly course, but does not have it owing to any reason other than pregnancy, her Iddat will be forty -five days.

**Q.** Is Mut'aa Forbideen?

What should a young person do if he finds it difficult to control his sexual

*Federation Samachar*

desire while he refrains from sexual immorality and masturbation? He can't afford to marry, but though he can afford to marry temporary (Mutaa) for a least 3 days, he cannot perform this Mut'aa as it is not recognized by the Marriage Law of Tanzania.

**A.** Non-recognition of Mut'aa does not mean that it is a crime. It just means that if there is any dispute the courts will not recognize the parties as husband and wife.

**Q.** *Mut'aa, Adultery and maintenance of Wife - some questions.*

(a) Mut'aa amounts to nothing but adultery?

(b) If a woman married in Mut'a is in a better financed position than her husband and refuses to accept maintenance from him, is it allowed in Islam?

(c) In the above case, if the woman is married in permanent marriage, can she forego her maintenance?

**A.** (a) Is not the "marriage" (in all its forms) just legalized adultery? All conditions which are necessary for a Permanent Marriage are necessary in "Mut'aa" (Temporary) marriage. Even the word "Permanent marriage" is misleading, because in Islam no marriage is a "permanent". The husband can terminate the marriage by the simple device of Talaq. So where is the "permanency"? A Sheriat which recognizes Talaq, cannot ridicule Mut'aa, because Marriage and divorces = Mut'aa.

(b) There is no maintenance in Mut'a marriage, so this question does not arise.

(c) The wife of permanent marriage is entitled to maintenance. It is her right. But every right may be waived by the right-holder, and the wife may, accordingly forego this right if she so desires.

**Q.** I am a healthy 27 years old man with normal sexual desires. Due to some extremely serious unavoidable circumstances, it is virtually impossible for me to marry at present. In East African environment at present it is impossible to do 'Mutaa' with a woman.

Now in order to relieve my sexual tension, without involvement with a prostitute or committing adultery (Zina); is there anything wrong if I do masturbation? I know Islam forbids masturbation but then in the circumstances mentioned above, is it not the best solution? If not, why?

**A.** You better try to find some woman for Mut'a.

**Q.** Is playing cards haram if money is not involved?

**A.** Only such games and sports are allowed in Islam which build or increase the strength of your body. This essentially means outdoor games.

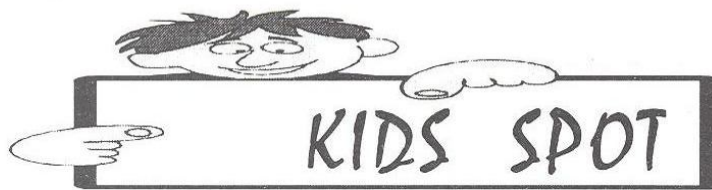
So far as playing of cards is concerned, if a game is generally played for gambling purpose, then that game is Haram even if you play it without gambling because it will create a familiarity with such games and may even lead to the gambling stage.

**Q.** As you know our weddings are very traditional and some of our customs are unIslamic. But it is sometimes difficult to distinguish if some of the things we do during the wedding ceremony are Islamic or not. For example, the bride and the groom have to step on the blood of a freshly slaughtered chicken or goat. Is this allowed in Islam?

**A.** This rite is unIslamic and should be discarded.

**Q.** I lend a sum of money to a man and he, out of his own free will, promises to give me a gift of say 10% in addition to the amount due. Is this haram?

**A.** It is haram if it was spoken or understood before you gave him the loan. On the other hand, if nothing like this was spoken at that time, and at the time of repayment he gave you more money through his own free will without your asking him in any way to do so, then it is allowed.



# PRIZE CROSSWORD

As the term of the current Editorial Board comes to an end with this issue the prize crossword has not been carried to ensure continuity especially in the selection of winners and subsequent distribution of prizes

There were no correct entries for the last puzzle but we have exceptionally decided to award 11 year-old Miss Muntazirah H. Versi of P.O. Box 1329, Dodoma, Tanzania with the winning prize as she had just one error on the puzzle she submitted. She put the name of the Mother of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) as Sulel instead of Salil. Well done Muntazirah.

Look forward to yet another exciting crossword in the next issue.

## A SHORT MORAL TALE

### Suspicious can be sinful

It is narrated that once an old man seated outside the Jame' Masjid in Delhi was repeatedly saying: "You are not my Allah and I am not your slave." As people passed by and heard his statements, rumours began to spread. Some called him a kaafir while others passed various other insulting remarks. Eventually one person stopped and asked: "Can you tell me what you mean by this statement." The old man sighed and exclaimed: "At last one intelligent person has come along."

He then said: "My nafs (base inner-self) was urging me to commit sin. I was thus addressing my nafs that neither is my nafs my Allah that it has the right to command me, nor am I it's slave that I should obey it." Among the striking lessons to be learnt from the above incident are:

- \*Never jump to conclusions.
- \* Until there is no solid evidence to the contrary, give the person the benefit of the doubt and do not harbour evil thoughts about him.

If these lessons are taken to heart and adhered to, the number of conflicts and disputes that take place time and again will be greatly reduced.

#### DESTRUCTIVE SINS

Harbouring suspicions or ill-thoughts is a serious malady that leads to various other destructive sins. Suspicions and ill-thoughts, after having settled in the heart and mind, yearn to be expressed. Eventually these thoughts are expressed to others. If the thoughts are unfounded, one becomes guilty of slander. If there was some truth in it, it will be backbiting.

#### TRANCE

If one does not have concrete evidence about any person having done any wrong action, it is haraam to harbour any suspicion or ill-feeling about him. Thus to formulate any opinion about somebody on the basis of hearsay or just because so-and-so mentioned it, is not permissible. Likewise, to pass judgement against any person due to a dream or because some "ta'weez" brought up his name, is baseless.

#### JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

We also often jump to conclusions and harbour suspicions and ill-thoughts

about others on the basis of some totally unfounded aspect. For example, two people are engaged in conversation. While they are talking somebody suddenly passes by. Upon seeing him they hush their tones or stop talking.

Shaitaan immediately whispers the suspicion in that person's heart that these people were backbiting about him. In the same vein, we sometimes become convinced about an individual's or group's wrongdoing simply because we overheard it in some gossip at some function or gathering. The questions to ask ourselves at such a time are: "Have I verified the truth of what I have heard?"; "Have I enquired from the source?"; "Is there no exaggeration in this news?" If one has not established the truth with firm evidence, to harbour ill-thoughts about the person spoken about is sinful.

#### RISK

In order to refrain from harbouring suspicion or ill-thought, always reflect on the following: If one gives somebody the benefit of the doubt, or gives a positive meaning and intent about any person's action or statement, he is not answerable for this in the court of Allah (s.w.t.) even if he was wrong in his judgement. However, if he harbours suspicions or ill-thoughts and he was wrong, he will be taken to task for it. Hence, why take the risk?

Harbouring ill-thoughts about somebody else is one of the very serious social maladies and a grave sin. Refraining from it will save us from much misery and from many other sins.

## Pen Pals

**Sabikah Versi (15) of P.O. Box 1329, Dodoma** would like to have pen pals from all over the world. Her hobbies are reading novels, swimming, writing computers and general sports.

Her email address is [sabikahu@hotmail.com](mailto:sabikahu@hotmail.com).

**Those seeking pen pals can write to Pen Pals Section, Federation Samachar, P.O. Box 6710, Dar es Salaam.**

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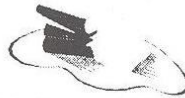
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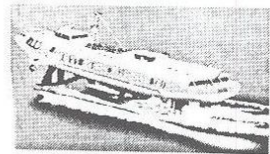
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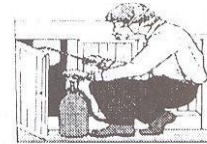
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## KARBALA IN THE EYES OF RABAB (A.S)

By Ghulam Abbas Sajjan, Toronto

A poet has said, "Islam gains rebirth after every Karbala". What is so important about Karbala? Why is it that the enemies of Islam are so scared of the genuine Karbaliac revival?

The fundamental principal taught to us by Karbala is, "If you have accepted genuine Islam, you have accepted struggle". Allah (swt) has told us, "stronger your *iman*, the more severe will be your test". And the strongest test of *iman* was in Karbala.

It was in Rajab 60 AH. when a child was born to Rabab. His father, Husain (a.s.) named him Ali – like all his other children. We know him as Ali Asghar (a.s). It was a joyful occasion but only a few knew what was to happen to him in six months time. Like all other mothers, Rabab was much attached to him.

The little infant grew, smiled and cried like all babies. Gradually he began to sit and then crawl. This child then arrived in Karbala. He was nourished by the milk of his mother and children of all ages were excited to play with him. Rabab watched in happiness and she had dreams for him.

Like other mothers she thought of the days ahead when her son would grow up, get married and have children thereby making her a proud grandmother.

The days of Muharram went by. Up to the seventh day hostilities had not yet peaked. Ali Asghar (a.s.) and his elder sister Sakina were still comfortable but suddenly things changed.

On the seventh of Muharram, the small band of Imam Hussain (a.s.) was moved away from the banks of the river Furat. Rabab becomes anxious but was still comforted by the thought that her children were with her and would grow up.

Then the water was cut off and Imam Hussain's group gradually ran out of

water in the heat of the desert. Then came Ashura day. Like the rest, Rabab and Ali Asghar had been without water for three days. Rabab was unable to feed the little baby. Time passed by and Ali Asghar lost consciousness through thirst and intense crying. Then came his father's cry "*hal min nassarin*". The unconscious baby leaped out of his cradle. There was hue and cry and when Imam Husain (a.s.) came to the tent he found Ali Asghar all restless. He took Asghar to the battlefield and asked the enemy camp for water for him.

This little baby almost created a revolt in the enemy army as a good number felt very sympathetic. Soon an arrow was shot at the little baby's throat whose thirst was only quenched by death. He would cry no more and Imam Hussain (a.s) was truly traumatized. After much hesitancy he gathered courage to take the little Ali Asghar to his mother. She was astounded by the trend of events.

"What! Is this how a little child is treated by those who profess Islam.?" Rabab was dumbfounded but when seeing the plight of her husband she immediately realized that he was in worse condition than her. He had taken Ali Asghar to quench his thirst and felt guilty that he was not able to fulfil this purpose. He had also had an extremely torturous day on the battlefield and would soon be going out to fight his final battle.

Rabab was heavy hearted and for Imam Husain (a.s.) the suffering continued. Rabab struggled to get up with the little Ali Asghar in her arms but realized that she could not walk because her feet had become numb. She prayed to Allah (s.w.t.), "give me strength". She remembered her father-in-law, "Oh Ali, help me". She struggled while Imam Husain (a.s.) dug

a small grave. Together Rabab and Imam Husain (a.s.) buried little Ali Asghar. Rabab realised that she had to have a strong will. She suffered in silence and while she wanted to cry she did not do so while Imam Husain (a.s.) was alive. She knew he needed her maximum support in his last few moments.

Then came the raid by the enemies of Islam who professed to be Muslims. They dug out the grave of Ali Asghar and their actions showed that they surely were subscribers to *jahanam*.

Subsequently Rabab was tied with other members of the household. They were taken from place to place. Her grief had no bounds but she maintained her dignity and during the course of events also consoled Sakina. The little child was suffering but Rabab hoped that the captivity would soon end and she would return home with her Sakina. But this was not to be.

It was in Sham where Sakina saw her father in her dream. The little child cried and soon she was still and silent. Was she unconscious? Was she frightened that Yazid's men would start beating her again?

Zainab approached Sakina. She found the little girl was not breathing. She realized Sakina was no more. She had gone to where her father was. Everyone cried.

Rabab cried, "Ya Allah, I have given all in Your cause. I have nothing more to give. Please accept my sacrifice and make these Muslims understand Islam". Rabab, once again had to control herself. Zainab and Ali (Imam Zainul Abedeen a.s.) needed support. She could not afford to cry because they had already suffered what no human being has suffered before.

This is the story of a mother who had two children – too young to fight but who carried out jihad that no one else will match. This is the story of the mother who never complained and did *shukr* until she breathed her last. How did Rabab do it? Rabab was the daughter (in-law) of the one who said "*fuztu-bi-rabbi-kabba*".

Yet when asked, "who suffered the most in Karbala and after"? her response was always "Hussein and Zainab, Hussein and Zainab".

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ISLAMIC EDUCATION BOARD OF THE WORLD FEDERATION

Dar al Tableegh, Jackets Lane, Harefield, Middlesex UB9 6PZ, UK

Tel: +44 (0)1923 823 606 Fax: +44 (0)1923 823 132

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