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**FEDERATION
SAMACHAR**

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COVER PICTURE

The writing is on the wall
*"Why the Africa Federation
didn't say NO to
compulsory pre-marital
HIV or AIDS testing."*

STOP PRESS

**Marja rules on the writings
of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina**

Commenting on the writings of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina, Ayatullah Sistani has said: "I have looked at the presentation of the writings and statements of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina that was sent [to me]. Whereas his views on issues presented are based on incorrect understandings and are incompatible with religious and academic standards, and cause confusion in minds of the Mumineen, all the brothers and sisters in Iman are enjoined to refrain from inviting him for lecturing at religious gatherings and not to approach him for seeking answers to questions pertaining to beliefs. And Allah is the Guide to the right path."

Ali as-Husayni as-Sistani
[signed and sealed].
28 Rabi ath-Thani 1419
[21 August, 1998].



From the Editor's Desk

**Have we been jesting
ignorantly on April Fools Day?**

When life is punctuated by a little bit of fun and joy it becomes enjoyable and Islam also encourages followers to be cheerful at all times while ensuring that fun and enjoyment is not made at the cost of others or through sacrificing Islamic values. Bearing this in mind, there appeared to be no qualms when, in the name of fun, people played jokes on April Fools Day marked on the 1st of April each year. However an article recently carried in one Bangladesh newspaper raises concern on the history of the April Fools Day, which if true would change the Muslim perspective and outlook towards jesting or joking on the first of April each year.

According to the Bangladesh newspaper, the April Fools Day dates back to the 15th Century when the decline of Muslim power started in Spain. At that time the Forces of the Spanish rulers, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella encountered very stiff resistance from the Muslims in the city of Granada. The valiant Muslim soldiers gathered at Granada and though besieged for a long time they did not give up. The losses suffered by the Spanish Force in Granada kept on mounting and the Spanish King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella then resorted to deception. They gave a declaration that if the gates of Granada were opened for peaceful entrance of the Spanish Force, Spain would guarantee peaceful and unhindered exit of all the Muslim Forces and Muslim civilians. No one would be harmed.

For ensuring that there would be no rebellious behaviour, the Muslim Forces and civilians were requested to assemble in the central mosque premises unarmed while the Spanish Force was also to enter Granada unarmed. About 40,000 Muslims of Granada believed the declaration and all assembled at the central mosque unarmed and opened the gates for the Spanish to enter. However the Spanish Force is reported to have entered with arms and after surrounding the Muslim Forces and the civilians, they reportedly massacred all the unarmed people - young and old ; boys and girls ; men and women without any consideration except that of ensuring that the victims were all Muslims. Then they celebrated the day as a day of joy having fooled the Muslims.

That day was 1st of April 1492 , when mere trickery and deception gave the Spanish an easy but cruel victory. From then onward for hundreds of years, till today, 1st of April is celebrated as the " April Fools Day". This culture has been accepted ignorantly by the Muslim population in many countries as a day of fun and joy. Could any Muslim in a right frame of mind celebrate such a day of heinous crime against his fellow brothers as a day of joy and fun ? Certainly not unless one was ignorant, as many of us have been over the years.

Other than the article under reference in the Bangladesh newspaper I have not been able to obtain any further historical evidence and probably one way of obtaining further data would be to revisit Spanish history and verify on the reported incident which led to the ruthless killings of 40,000 unarmed innocent people by mere deception.

Considering the gravity of the reported massacre, we cannot dismiss the reported April Fool Day killing so easily and as a matter of caution would be better off refraining from jesting on this day unless the historical facts provided are proved incorrect. Surely such an unethical act of deception cannot be observed as a day fun and joy.

Munir Daya



Your letters

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

Dear brother,

On the stand off between AF and WF*fault lies in the very make up of the two organisations*

To a dispassionate observer who has followed the recent debate, without caring much about who did what to whom, the mischief seems to lie more in mathematical figures than human frailties. It seems that the fault lines for recent eruptions are to be found more, in the very make up of these two organizations, than a real swing in people's attitudes.

First of all, there can be no doubt that both, the World Federation (WF) and the Africa Federation (AF), draw their powers from the annual conferences, and not the constitution as we are led to believe. It appears that the constitution is more subservient to the whims and wishes of a particular conference, than vice versa.

Whoever runs the conference successfully, and garners enough votes has his day. Therefore, we need to look into the formula of representation and make changes to the structure from within. It is not surprising that the Africa Federation finds itself in double jeopardy. On one hand, it has to contend with the *de facto veto* of the Dar es salaam Jamaat, the largest voting bloc. On the other hand, when it goes to a World Federation Conference, it loses its privileged status, when confronted by votes from fledgling organizations which carry a larger voice by mere virtue of *pro rata* representation.

For those working on reforming both the organizations, I would suggest they revisit the formula issue and come up with a counter balancing mechanism, so that we are saved from future debacles of this sort.

Wassalaam.

Shabbir Jeraj
Toronto

Dear brother,

Please update Obituaries Section on the AF Website immediately

I was pleased to go through the Africa Federation Website but feel that the Obituary Section must be updated regularly. For example the death of Mulla Bulbul (Kanji) of Mombasa on May 22, 1998 was a shock to us but this was not carried on the Obituaries section of the Africa Federation Website.

If you can update this section immediately, it will be possible for people living millions of miles away to recite *Namaze-e-Wahshat* or *Hadiya*. Please look into this and continue with your good efforts.

Sister Kaniz Mahmood Mavani
Mombasa.

Your point is valid. However we cannot report a death until we are advised of the same. All Jamaats need to appoint someone to undertake the responsibility of informing the Web Secretary immediately after a death occurs.

Federation Samachar

Dear brother,

Let's boycott UPS

Recently I wanted to send my passport together with my visa application form to the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa for a visa to visit Iran for Ziyarat. The UPS Courier advised me that they cannot accept packages or letters addressed to the Iranian Embassy or any company dealing with Iran as UPS is an American Company and the United States has an embargo on Iran.

Well brothers and sisters it is our humble request that all Muslims should stop using this courier company which openly discriminates against Iran.

M. and Z. Habib, Organizers, Hajj Assistance Committee, North America.

Dear brother,

Shocked on moon misinformation

I was shocked to discover the following paragraph in an article "*Space odyssey no longer a dream*" in the Dawn Magazine of Pakistan. It read: "*While we back home are unable to sight the moon on the occasion of Eid, here in the United States, landing on the moon is an old event, which at that time was not believed by our learned Maulanas. Now ordinary people here are gearing up for a trip to space.*"

This paragraph is a mere accusation against Islam contrary to reality and I do not know to which "*learned Maulanas*" the writer was referring to. There are two verses from the Holy Qur'an: "*And the moon in her fullness. Ye shall travel from stage to stage*". These verses have been taken from *Surah Inshiqaq*, which is Surah 84, verses 18 and 19. The verses refer to the spiritual as well as physical travels of man in space. They predict even more triumphs in space travel, as verse 19 clearly states. I call upon our brothers and sisters to check the *tafseer* of the Holy Qur'an for further reference.

A. Kamil,
Pakistan.

Dear brother,

Dr. Kalbe Sadiq is a great inspiration for us all

The interview of Dr Kalbe Sadiq that you carried in your last issue (April 1998), apart from being extremely inspirational, articulated very effectively the Shia problem in India. It was the best piece I have read on the plight of the 60-million strong Shia community there and few could match Dr Sadiq's incisive analysis of the issues facing them.

His main point was that so far, little attention has been paid to rejuvenating the community in India. Demographically, the Hindustani Shia rank second to Iranian Shia. Culturally, they are the greatest and most prominent of the various sub-cultures that comprise the global Shia community as can be evidenced from their contributions to the Ashura culture and impact on religious thought (the other Shia sub-cultures being Arab, Hazara, Azerbaijani, Malay-Indonesian, Tatar, Bashkir, Chinese and now European and Black African). But the Islamic Revolution in Iran has catered to the myriad needs of the Shia of Iran while those of the Sub-continent have failed, for one reason or another, to harness resources towards uplifting their conditions.

This is despite their tremendous contribution to culture, politics and social life in bygone ages in Hindustan (most evidently witnessed by the the most historical and largest Imambara in the world - the Asefi Imambara in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and the resting site of prominent Shia saints and leaders such Qazi Nurullah Shushtari [Shahid-e-Thalith] in Agra and the Wali Muniuddin Chishti in Ajmer, Rajasthan). This is where our very wealthy and tightly-knit

community comes in.

Herein lies our greatest challenge, namely to channel relevant religious and charitable contributions to awaken the community and to cause them to return, in cultural terms, to the state in which they were prior to the British colonisation of India. For instance, it is an undeniable fact that Lucknow, prior to the partition, was the cultural and spiritual hub of the Shia world east of Iran. Not only was it one of the major centres of learning of Shia Islam but it was also the home of Urdu. Our usage of Urdu and the various artistic and cultural expressions and forms of the Ashura culture stems from this place.

Dr Kalbe Sadiq's regional representatives should stop resting on their laurels and must take up the cudgels by catalysing implementation or aiding both projects which Dr Sadiq mentioned as well as other programmes depending on need, India-wide. I hope they read this piece explicitly and clearly. A portion of the Khums and Zakat from this community must also be utilised to lift the people of the Subcontinent from poverty. The amount of Sehme Sadat being generated by our community resident in Africa is enough to lift - if properly utilised and accounted for - all the sayyids now living in utter poverty in India.

Let us aim at this goal. It is not an unattainable one.

Shabbir Bashir Versi
P.O. Box 32739
Nairobi, Kenya.
Email : versinbi@nbnet.com

Dear brother,

Samachar serves a true cause

May I fervently pray to the Almighty s.w.t. to grant long life to your esteemed, honourable Islamic Magazine and may the Almighty bestow you and all those who serve the da'wah work with sincerity, great strength and perseverance to render services for the cause of Islam.

It is indeed inspiring to work for the real cause which gives serenity to the believers and as I am a regular reader of the *Federation Samachar*, I feel I am indebted to congratulate you for the arduous efforts put in creating a true vision of Islam and awareness to the nation of Islam.

In the past I was the editor of The Guide magazine which is published by the Cultural Council of the Embassy of Iran, Nairobi and am very much familiar with the sort of world you work in. Presently, I do contribute articles for various Islamic periodicals and if need be, I would appreciate to serve you.

By the same token, I concentrate on Women's Issues, Imam Khomeini's virtuous works and on many contemporary burning issues within the nation of Islam. If there is any chance for me to render my modest services please do let me know for any little I can do to uplift the status of our community globally through my humble pen.

Ms.Naseem Walji
P.O.BOX 46325
Nairobi, Kenya.

Thank you for your encouraging comments. You are welcome to send us your articles for publication in future issues.
Editor.

Dear brother,

Enjoyable.....

I wish to inform you that I really enjoy reading the *Federation Samachar*. Keep up the good work.

Muslim H Khimji
E-mail: pickauto@nbnet.co.ke
Nairobi, Kenya



AF RESOLUTION: *An Assessment of its worth???*

Now that the dust has settled, let us see if we can assess the value of the resolution of Africa Federation on Dr. Sachedina. In order to do this, we have to acquaint ourselves with the facts. Some facts can be seen on the video, whereas others cannot.

1. I am informed that the Daressalaam Jamaat consists of nearly 7000 (seven thousand) people of whom there are 1799 members. (This probably means heads of families, who pay the subscription and become members).

2. Three months before the conference, the Dar es salaam Jamaat called a general meeting to discuss about the resolutions which were to be presented to the Africa Federation. I am informed that 41 (forty one) people only attended. The general meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum, and reconvened after half hour, to get round the quorum provisions.

Thereafter a discussion ensued on the various resolutions which were to be presented to the Africa Federation, and by the time the matter came to a vote, some people had gone home. Only 30 people were left to vote, out of which there was at least one abstention, if not more. This means that at the most, 29 were in favour of the resolution in question. On a percentage basis, this is less than half percent of the total population of Dar es salaam, or 0.01612 percent (one and one half percent) of the voting members (As I did not get information from the minutes book of the Jamaat, there might be some differences in numbers or dates, but these are not significant. If one wants the exact information, it can be obtained from the Jamaat).

3. Dar es salaam Jamaat forced its delegates on this issue by ignoring the abstention and saying that since the voting was unanimous, all the delegates

had no choice but to vote in favour of the resolution, rather than voting according to their conscience. The reason given was that it was a block vote, and therefore Daressalaam Jamaat would use its muscle to exercise its block vote of 77 delegates out of a total voting of all Jamaats in the conference amounting to 110 delegates. The Daressalaam Jamaat would use the provisions of the constitution to block any voting by one's conscience or conviction. Every delegate of Daressalaam was compelled and forced to vote in favour.

Many delegates must have been nominated after this general meeting, even if they were absent at this general meeting (as I was).

4. This also meant that the outcome at the Conference was a foregone conclusion, since (a) out the total voting of 110 votes, 77 votes (i.e. seventy percent of the total votes) belonged to Dar es salaam Jamaat alone, and (b) Dar es salaam Jamaat compelled its delegates to vote in favour of the resolution. The whole discussion on the subject was hence nothing more than an eye wash.

5. The implications of this move were clear: Less than half percent of the total population of Daressalaam Jamaat (or one and one half percent of its voting members) influenced, controlled and determined the fate and outcome of the meeting of all the Jamaats of Africa put together. Was this really democracy at work. Certainly not.

6. Even if all the Jamaats of Africa (apart from Dar es Salaam) had voted against the resolution, they would still be defeated, because they had only 33 votes out of a total of 110 votes.

7. Prejudice: For the past four years or more, some people in Dar es salaam have constantly spread rumours, back

bite and accuse Dr Sachedina. They would either quote a half sentence out of a whole paragraph, or offer their own interpretation of what Dr Sachedina was saying, thereby making it appear that his book was blasphemous. Listeners, most of whom have not read the book, thereby began assuming that the fellows talking about the book had read and totally understood Dr. Sachedina, and would thus normally accept what they were told, thus forming a mental block against Dr. Sachedina. This was how prejudice spread.

This prejudice reached its climax at the Conference. The whole atmosphere permeated with it. One could hardly count a few who could be said to have come to the meeting with open minds or ready to listen to arguments before passing judgement, although less than five percent of those present could be said to have read and understood the book of Dr. Sachedina. Were they anything other than blind followers, having been convinced by prejudicial statements?

8. The extent of this prejudice can even be gauged by what one delegate said at the Conference. He said words to this effect: *I do not know Dr Sachedina, I have never met him, I have never talked to him, I have never read any of his books, I have never heard his majalis, but he is bad. So we should condemn him.* (Why? Because others say so?) When an educated delegate utters such words, what should one expect from the rank and file? Had prejudice given rise to so much hatred? Another person was heard saying privately that if Dr Sachedina touched him, it would be wajib for him to do Ghushl. Can anyone imagine the extent of such ignorance and prejudice?

9. This prejudice also gave way to wrath against Munir Daya, Editor of

(...continued on page 7)



LETTERS

(.....from page 6)

Federation Samachar, when the *Samachar* paper was being discussed. Munir had interviewed Dr Sachedina and carried it in the *Federation Samachar*, and the interview portrayed Dr Sachedina in a fair vein.

This was embarrassing to the prejudiced lot and in a later debate, though not associated with the Sachedina issue, an unsuccessful effort was made to snatch away the Editorial independence showered upon Munir Daya, simply because he has been impartial and has presented both sides of issues for readers to draw their own conclusions.

An Editor is the voice of conscience, and has a duty to criticise even the President, if need be. (I was myself an Editor for London Jamaat for eight years from 1984 to 1992. My record during those years speaks for itself as to how outspoken, forceful and original I was in my writings).

I will be doing an injustice to the office bearers of those days if I do not add here that although both the President and the Secretary were on my Editorial Board, I was given complete and total Editorial independence, a credit to the then President, Mustafa Chandoo, and his Secretary, Ahmed Dungersi.

10. On several occasions during the proceedings, there were calls by various people that it was entirely unfair and unjust to have the discussion in the absence of Dr. Sachedina. It was said that he should be present and be allowed to have an opportunity to speak so as to explain himself and defend, if need be, before passing judgement. This call for fair play was also augmented by the observation that those present in the conference were playing the multiple role of prosecutor, judge and jury, and executioner, all in the absence of the defendant concerned, which was totally unjust.

I believe it was within the power of the Chair to stop this discussion on the above grounds. But this power was not exercised as was done with the case

with the resolution of Mombasa Jamaat pertaining to the World Federation (item 13 on the agenda) which was disallowed on the grounds that it was *ultra vires* and against the constitution, because the committee was already dealing with it. Therefore there was to be no discussion and no voting on it, until the committee had finished its job. Or was it that if the power was exercised twice, it would give rise to questions?

At the request of some delegates, the wordings of the resolution of Daressalaam Jamaat on Dr. Sachedina were changed. When the changes were accepted, I then pointed out to the Chair that the block vote was demolished because the wordings were changed, and he should announce that every delegate was free to vote as he wished, and not necessarily in favour, since Daressalaam Jamaat had lost the advantage of a block vote. But the Chair refused to make this announcement, saying that it was an internal matter. I refuted this statement, saying that it was a matter of principle and not an internal one, and every delegate should be made aware that he could vote according to his conscience.

When Kampala Jamaat proposed an amendment to the resolution of Daressalaam Jamaat, the Chair ruled that the amendment be treated as a new resolution.

The Chair refused to allow a vote on the amendment first which was contrary to globally accepted and acknowledged procedures of meetings and resolutions. (This amendment asked for the matter concerning this issue to be referred to the Marja' for a decision, rather than taking a decision there).

In his book "The Twelfth Imam", Murtaza Lakha wrote on page 72 that backbiting will be conducted in holy places. Did not the Khojas of Africa prove him right by deliberating, rendering accusations and resolving against an author who was not even allowed an opportunity to defend himself?

Abdulhusein Akbar
Dar es Salaam.

Dear brother,

Zulfiqar Weekly on air

By the grace of God we launched a new daily Gujarati publication 'Qoumi Pukar' from 27th of November 1997 which can now also be read on the 'Internet'.

Another publication, 'Zulfiqar' weekly is also on air. Please inform your readers on these sites so that they can surf through them on the Internet. We also welcome any community or general news.

The Web Site address is <http://www.pukar.com>.

Mehboobali Vazir
zulweek@cyber.net.pk
Karachi,
Pakistan.

Dear brother,

Interested in the Samachar

I am very interested to receive the *Federation Samachar* and as such request you to enrol me on your mailing list which should then enable me to receive the said magazine regularly.

My UK address is as follows:

Hussein J.A. Janmohamed
8 Bayhurst Drive
Northwood
Middlesex HA6 3SA
United Kingdom
E-mail: ntc@webstar.co.uk

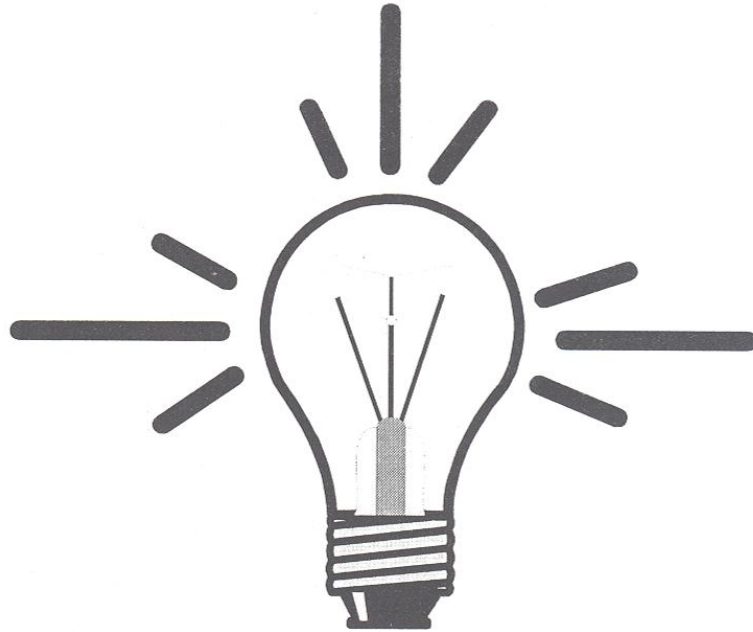
I also would like to have your past issues from August, 1997 to March 1998.

Hussein J.A. Janmohamed
Middlesex, UK.

The *Samachar* is a quarterly magazine which can be read on-line on the Internet. Postage rates in Tanzania are very high and we only mail copies to subscribers. The subscription rates have been stipulated elsewhere in this issue.

Editor.

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Dear brother,

DEAD HAJIS DISGRACED ON SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

This is an APPEAL to fellow Muslim brothers and sisters to protest on this issue. On the 11 April, 1998 Saturday Night Live programme on NBC, 150 dead Hajis were disgraced and made fun of. I usually don't watch SNL but as I was flipping through the channels I saw the picture of *Khana Kabba*. I thought that probably NBC was showing something on Hajj but to my disgrace it was actually the "Funny News Section of SNL."

I don't remember the exact words that were used, but this is what I remember the newscaster said: "This year the Muslims from all over the world gathered to perform their pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. In an annual ritual of the pilgrimage, the Muslims perform an act of stoning the devil but this year 150 people died, little did these people know that the Devil was performing his annual ritual of stomping them to DEATH"

There was also another article related to Eid which was made fun of, but I can't recall that. This is unacceptable and we should ask NBC for a public apology and protest this form of ridicule. To begin with we can send them a protest e-mail on snl@nbc.com.

Secondly, I will try to approach CAIR who take care of such issues for Muslims so as to get this to be a national campaign.

Pirmohamed Bandali
pirmohamed.bandali@swipnet.se

Dear brother,

Samachar archives not accessible

Very good work on the Africa Federation web page. I tried to access the archives but could not read or see any thing. It might be a good idea to put the old *Federation Samachar* in pdf format for us to download and read offline after registering the user. If you need ideas on this please let me know.

Mustafa Juma
mjuma@webstar.co.uk
mjuma@compuserve.com

The *Samachar* archives are generally accessible on the internet. However if you still have a problem please liaise with our Web Page designer Fatema Alloo who can be contacted on fatema@alloo.net.

Dear brother,

Seeking distributorship in Orlando, Florida

I love your magazine. It was the right time to bring the magazine online. I would like to distribute the *Federation Samachar* to our brothers in Orlando, Florida. Could you please let me know how much it costs for 30 copies. Thank you in advance and may Allah (s.w.t.) help you in your endeavours.

Altaf Karim
Orlando, Florida

Please send us your mailing address. We can then arrange to send you the requested number of copies for each issue after determining costs from the local postal authorities.

Editor

Dear brother,

Samachar ought to become a monthly

The tremendous improvement in both the content and presentation of the *Federation Samachar* is laudable and worthy of praise, more so in view of the fact that much effort has been expended to attain this. It is not wrong to say that at this stage a review of the publication strategy is needed.

Federation Samachar ought to become a monthly. The scope and quality of articles must continue to improve and it is my contention that issues such as the existence and location of all the myriad Jamaats, the number of community folk in every town and the critical social problems facing them be highlighted.

With regard to format or presentation, we must not lose sight of the fact that this premiere community magazine be eventually modeled on the U.K. based Impact International, or something akin to it.

Shabbir Bashir Versi
P.O.Box 32739
Nairobi
Kenya.

Dear brother,

A legal column?

I recently read the *Federation Samachar* for the first time. It's wonderful and I take this opportunity to offer my free voluntary legal services to all my brothers and sisters anywhere in this world.

I also suggest you include a legal opinion column in your magazine.

M. HASAN AKBER, ADVOCATE & LEGAL CONSULTANT
M.A (I.R); L.L.B; CERTIFIED HYPNOTHERAPIST, KARACHI.

A law in one country may not apply to another thereby restricting the usefulness of such a column. However you are welcome to send us any article worthy of publication

Editor.

Dear brother,

The 7% Administrative Fees....

I acknowledge receipt with thanks of the *Federation Samachar* vol. 30, no. 7 which shows that you are keeping up with the high standard of substance and the good quality of printing. I would also like to congratulate you on the Web site which is of a high standard.

In the same issue, on page 23, under the heading *London hosts 2nd Executive Council Meeting*, a reference is made to the accounts, namely "*presenting the quarterly accounts, the hon. treasurer elucidated on the 7% administrative fees and the manner it was being successfully utilised to bring about a reduction in the deficit of various funds.*"

The following question arises in my mind -- under Islamic rule of jurisprudence, can an organisation or for that matter any individual, charge any percentage on the *huqooq* of *sahme sadaat*, *sadaqa*, *fitra* or any other *huqooq*.

I personally feel that one may be allowed to deduct 7% or more or for that matter less from *sahme imam a.s.* but not from the other above named *huqooq*. I remain to be enlightened.

Concerned Khums payer
London

The Messenger of Allah (S.W.T) has said: "There shall come a time upon my followers when they will love five things and forget five things:

- 1) They will love the world, and forget the hereafter.
- 2) They will love themselves, and forget their Lord.
- 3) They will love wealth, and forget the accounting.
- 4) They will love palaces, and forget the graves.
- 5) They will love women of this world and forget the pure companions of the hereafter."

Dear brother,

We have reacted wrongly to Sachedina

I refer to the general communal reaction to Dr. Sachedina's works. I have seen him speak on a number of occasions and from the attacks that have been laid against him, it seems that many of us are weak in our faith, sorry to say. What makes you think that the work of one man is going to topple our entire faith and belief and mess up the younger people's minds??? This is one man and one book, yet we make it seem like an entire community and a revolution. Have we become so degrading that we cannot bear to accept those who don't conform with our ideas? By the way, don't compare his work to the Satanic Verses if you are going to reply to this. Dr. Sachedina did not condemn Islam and Prophethood. My point is just that we have degraded a man beyond the point of repair, sorry to say.

The Prophet was a mercy to mankind, Allah is the Beneficent, the Merciful, and WE are the cowardly people who have forgotten how to tolerate our differences. We've become too trigger happy to become like those wahhabis we make fun of for saying "*bid'ah! bid'ah!*". We have become like them, sorry to say, and the only difference is that we portray our fear and arrogance in different, more flowery words. Shame.

I just wish that we would stop being so arrogant and insensitive every time a person seems to go "against the flow". What makes us so sure that their intentions are bad or evil??? Ya Allah, my brothers and sisters, these are fellow MUSLIM SHI'AS!!!! Even more, they are fellow HUMANS who have FEELINGS. Seems that some of us have forgotten what feelings are; pride increases our enemies, but puts our friends to flight. Pride, joined with many virtues, chokes them all.

Behavioural lowliness is just as repulsive as bodily dirt. Thus, it is just as important to cleanse our bodies from dirt as it is to purify our manners of filth. Some people exercise before and/or after sleeping; reflecting on our manners and thoughts is just as important as these exercises. By studying the way we should act and struggling to observe the borders of our designated limits, we can see our realities without any barrier. Our success in decision making is directly related to our inner-selves. It is incumbent upon every one whether young or old, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, to realize what he or she has done by way of daily expenditures and earnings just as scientists write down results of their experiments. By applying such methods with scrutiny and patience, our souls and bodies change for the better. First and foremost, this specifically applies to how we deal with others.

No big surprise then why the awaited Imam hasn't reappeared yet. What a joke that would be, with our present situation where we don't even bother to at least TRY to understand each other. I am disgraced to be associated with some of my elders on this forum. That's the cold truth, and nothing but the truth. We have tossed aside the family atmosphere and instead have adopted the army way of life, where you either conform with the majority or you are disgraced beyond belief. We have forgotten that the Ahlul-Bayt are our leaders.

Islam is a religion of mercy and tolerance, not the fascism we are presently seeing on this forum. Let this be some food for thought. *Fee Aman Allah.*

Hussain
Toronto



Dear brother,

Communal reaction to Sachedina was right

Some people are of the opinion that the communal action against Sachedina is too stern. How Ironic? They compare those who stand up for Imam Mahdi and the Wilaya of Imam Ali with the Wahhabis! Do they know any Wahhabis who vigorously defend our 12th Imam and the Succession and Wilaya of Imam Ali?

The text "*Islamic Messianism*" is being used by the Wahhabies in Madina Islamic University to discredit us and question the existence of our 12th Imam, from the point of view of a Shia Scholar! If people think that this has NO EFFECT, then they are sadly mistaken.

To sum up, Dr. Sachedina's works are very easily and convincingly used to prevent people from coming to the path of the Ahlul-Bayt!

Mahmood Kara
Toronto.

Dear brother,

To quote or not...

Please confirm if I can quote news items particularly relating to Africa Jamaats from the *Samachar* in the London Jamaat Newsletter. The Jamaat Newsletter is published bi-monthly and circulated to 1500 households.

Liyakat Jaffer
Editor
Newsletter of KSIM
London.

We have no objection to any extract being taken from the *Samachar* for republication. The objective is to spread the message of truth to as many as possible. Editor.

Dear brother,

Lets Not Treat AIDS patients with apathy

It was very interesting to read the above article by Munir Daya on the Weekly Thoughts of the Africa Federation Internet Page and let me assure you that this disease is now ripe in our community. In the last Executive Council meeting of the World Federation, Dr. Walji presented in his report that to date over 80 deaths of our community members have been recorded by the Medical Advisory Board (MAB). These were cases that were diagnosed as AIDS positive. This is of course a tiny fraction of what the real figures are. Majority of the reported cases are from Africa. Please do not misunderstand me, that I am referring this as an AFRICAN problem. Many more are infected in the west but as they are not treated by MAB due to health facilities available here, the pertinent figures are not available. According to Dr. Walji, the figure of positive cases within our community could be as high as 1000 infected world-wide.

What I find odd is that whenever this subject is raised, people tend to behave like ostriches and wait for the sand storm to pass. The storm is here to stay and will stay for as long as mankind survives or until research work comes up with suitable antidotes. The question then is, how should the community educate its members? Jamaat's should take this issue seriously and before passing any resolution, leaders should get together and prepare a strategy.

Recently I read an article that in Holland, university girls have a badge which reads "NO Sex Please." What we need is awareness rather than imposition in not only our African Jamaats but in all our GLOBAL Jamaats. On this issue we should unite and work hand in hand leaving out political differences aside to discuss issues openly. Remember, AIDS IS A KILLER. It kills individuals, families, generations and societies.

Mohamed. R. Dahya
London.

Dear brother,

Islam despises ideas that cause *fitna*

To those who think the community acted wrongly against Sachedina, do they not also think that the same argument also applies between Ayatollah UI Uzma Khomeini and Salman Rushdie? Or are they also of the opinion that Ayatollah Khomeini was rash in his judgement since Salman also acted alone? Ibn Muljim harmed Islam by murdering Hazrat Ali A.S.. But he was alone. Yet we curse him year in and year out. WHY? He was also alone and what purpose does it serve since Hazrat Ali A.S. was immediately replaced by another Imam.

Islam despises ideas that cause *fitna*, despises actions that cause *fitna*. Islam does not stone an adulterer because it is barbaric as so many western educated scholars love to portray, but it does do so to see that such actions do not persist in society. All its actions are to purify society. Ayatollah Khomeini did not have anything personal against Salman Rushdie nor was his action in anger. His action was based on purely Islamic principles - whatever the West or western minded Shia scholars may state.

Dr Mahmood Hameer
Dar es Salaam



Dear brother,

THE SAGA OF WF AND AF REVISITED

You were generous. You exceeded my expectations. You spared me a whole page of *Africa Samachar* (vol. 30, No 6, January 1998), the prestigious magazine, to express my views!

However, your personal comment was that readers should be allowed to analyse the situation and that forgiveness will not bring a lasting solution. I have now heard rumours that AF (Africa Federation) will soon be calling a meeting to discuss its future relationship with the WF (World Federation). WF will not be invited to attend the meeting. I am therefore prompted to express my personal opinion on the whole saga.

The people or the personalities involved have not been asked to express their opinion. They have not been interviewed as was done in case of Professor Abdulaziz Sachidina to clear possible misunderstandings. Unless they refuse to be interviewed, justice demands that they be given a right to express their opinion on this matter. I, as a reader of *Africa Samachar*, would like to hear their side of the story. I would also like, and perhaps so would others like me, to find out where the mistake lies? Are we not making a mountain out of a molehill? In what circumstances would the mistake occur again?

In the absence of guidance and as the parties have not come forward with their own views, I am being forced to review the whole situation. In doing so I might offend either one or both of them and therefore I am asking their forgiveness in advance.

Should the leader of WF have chaired the meeting? Personally, if in his

position, I would not have. But from past experience Mulla has allowed democracy to prevail by allowing full participation from anyone without fear or favour. Not to do so in this particular case would have been at his peril. I see this to be the main reason that no objection was taken in him chairing the meeting in the first place. In actual fact taking the Chair disadvantaged Mulla, as he had to remain neutral and choose not to speak.

To interrupt a speaker for a minor factual mistake is unfair to the speaker, as it disturbs one's thought. The leader of AF cannot be blamed, as I would have also been tempted. It is due to human nature and not because of habit. But then one has to take the consequence.

Had one of the speakers not made an error pertaining to some figures, the President of AF would not have interrupted and *ipso facto* he would not have been admonished by the Chairman. Had the President of AF, before the starting of the proceedings, raised his objection and not in the middle, the President of WF might not have chaired the meeting. Similarly had he not used the words 'the incumbent chairman was the beneficiary of the chair,' it would have not infuriated the President of the WF into making a harsh remark.

AF was trying to fight a losing battle. Many delegates were in support of removing clause 20.1 from the WF constitution. Mulla Saheb had not made up his mind whether or not to stand for the Presidency. Indeed an attempt was made to force Mulla to show his hands. It would have very well suited AF had Mulla stated he was not going to stand, since then the need to delete the clause would perhaps not have arisen.

Granted the delegates from the AF came prepared with a proper mandate and were represented by a lawyer, the argument put forward on why the said clause should be retained looked little convincing. The fact that AF had similar clause proved against them, because if the incumbent President was not re-elected, WF would face an administrative problem. This fact also reflects to the President of AF. While in Dar-es-Salaam, I vividly remember that there were occasions when Mohamedbhai wanted to take a rest and let a new person be appointed. But when no one was prepared to take up the Presidentship of Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat, at the eleventh hour and with a lot of persuasion from well-wishers, Mohamedbhai had to take up the reins. We are all indebted to him for which Allah (SWT) will surely reward him for his loyalty in this world and in the life hereafter (Amin).

Mohamedbhai is highly regarded in Africa and so is Mulla Saheb in England and perhaps in Europe and America also. Why are they both so highly regarded? The obvious reason is because of their vast experience in leading the community to a better future. They are prepared to listen, learn and accept new challenges. The added quality of Mulla Saheb is that he is well versed with Islamic laws and practice. Therefore his decisions during leadership are not expected to conflict with religion.

Mulla Saheb has become synonymous with the WF. The majority of Jamaats represented in the WF are content for Mulla to serve. And if Mulla Saheb is prepared and willing to lead the community and earn the pleasure of Allah (SWT) then let him do so. Surely a time will soon come when you the Editor will become synonymous with *Africa Samachar*. Like Mulla Saheb you have the good qualities of acting impartially and allowing democracy to prevail. You have allowed readers the freedom to express their views without fear or favour. If in the future readers still want

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you to serve as Editor and you are willing and able to do so, should we readers be deprived of your services simply because some may want a new person to take the post of Editor? Would this be fair to the majority of the readers?

The worst scenario I can envisage is that AF might decide to pull out from membership of WF. I am sure WF would like to retain AF as its member for it has contributed to the development of constructive ideas and criticisms. What will be the consequences if (God forbids) AF withdraws? The WF will continue in its present structure with members drawn from Europe, United States and other countries but without Africa. By retaining its membership AF will have the right not only to actively participate in the discussion of important matters but also will be able to influence the future course of WF. In my view by abstaining from attending WF, AF will be accepting defeat. Once again I insist let bygones be bygones. I am sure everyone has learnt a lesson and it will not be repeated again. We are all adults and mature. We need to impress the present youths, the leaders of tomorrow, with our maturity by setting a good example.

Yours sincerely

**Mohammed Baker Hemraj,
Birmingham, England.**

As things stand, the Africa Federation (AF) has no intention of withdrawing from the World Federation (WF) and neither is a meeting planned to discuss future relationships.

The AF stand at the meeting pertained to Clause 20.1 rather than to Mulla or any other personality. The AF stand followed deliberations on the Clause that ensued at its annual meeting in Kampala.

The media has been open to the WF as it has been to anyone else and for that matter the AF has written an explicit letter to the WF a few months ago outlining that the issue be discussed candidly with both Presidents involved. The AF letter has not been responded to.

Editor.

Dear brother,

Africa jumped the gun on resolving against Sachedina

The recent resolution passed by the Africa Federation against Sachedina was grossly unfair because it availed him no chance to defend himself. This is different from the situation where the late Ayatullah Khomeini ruled against Salman Rushdie because first, Rushdie never sought forgiveness and secondly Khomeini was a reputable Ayatullah who had the knowledge and ability to make correct rulings on sensitive Islamic issues. Did any one of those who voted for the resolution have similar qualifications as the Late Ayatullah Khomeini to judge in the way they did. Certainly not! And can any one of them tell us what the Islamic ruling is for writers who err and subsequently seek forgiveness?

I believe Islam is a religion of forgiveness and even at The Open Forum in Toronto, Sachedina was told that the Mimbar needs him but that because his book contains sensitive issues, he should not defend it.

Thereafter our brethren began sending him e-mails and letters to question his book. When he opted for silence his silence was interpreted as defeat and publicised so on the Internet. When he then chose to reply to questions raised, it was claimed that he is defending his book.

In the interview carried between the Editor of *Federation Samachar* and Sachedina, he clearly admits that his book is not perfect and even sought forgiveness from Allah (s.w.t.) for anything he did not place in the correct context.

It should be interesting to see how the Marja rules on this issue, that is assuming that the issue will now be forwarded to him. If he decides that the book is in order, it will prove to the Africa Federation why their resolution was premature. If he decides to the contrary, the Africa Stand will be interpreted as correct but the very fact that a further clarification is being sought should be a good indication to the Africa Federation not to jump the gun on such crucial issues in future.

**Mahmood Jaffer
Dar es Salaam**

Dear brother,

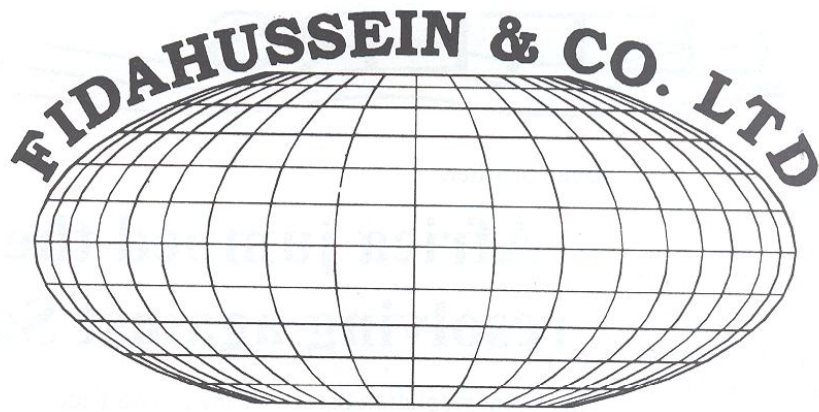
How were Uganda Asians helped?

I refer to the *Federation Samachar* Vol. 30 No. 7 Zilhajj 1418 A.H. of April, 1998.

Under the heading, "Noteworthy Developments of the Africa Federation in the 52 years gone by" penned in by Brother Hassan A.M. Jaffer of Mombasa, Item no. 7 says that the Supreme Council helped Uganda Asians before the World Community came to their rescue.

I shall be highly obliged if more details can be given on this subject of rescue and what sort of help was given to Uganda Asians during the time of Idi Amin.

**Mohammed Husein Nathoo
Toronto.**



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Dear brother,

If you are given stones, build a bridge instead of a wall

~~~~~  
 "Love us, for it is love for Islam. May your love for us never cease even if it becomes a public disgrace."  
 - Imam Zainul Abideen A.S.  
 ~~~~~

There has been a request for objectivity on the issues that revolve around A.A.Sachedina's work. Well, the following is one of the invaluable postings from the recent past by respected brother Sajid Ali (ze@giasbm01.net.in). He has quoted many sources and has rationally gone through the arguments. If you have further questions, I suggest you can put it to him directly. (Since I am interested in learning the truth, I would request Dr. Sachedina to comment on what is written below --- Your participation is needed very much. I have also heard that you will revise the words of the Enc. of Bio Ethics. Please let us know what the changes are and when they will be implemented).

Finally, I request that we all step back and look at our history (as outlined below) and understand it. We may then be able to make better judgements on what is written in Sachedina's book. Perhaps there would then be less arguments and all would then be clear, inshallah.

Imam Ali (a.s.) EXPLICITLY appointed!

On the succession to the Prophet's "religious-political authority", Sachedina wrote that there were no EXPLICIT (that is, distinctly expressed, clearly stated, not merely implied) instructions in the matter of succession to the "Prophet's religious-political authority." He stated that "...it asserts by implication that there

was an IMPLICIT (that is, necessarily involved though not plainly expressed) direction in the matter. This implicit direction of the Prophet was expressed on several occasions in his life-time, including finally at al-Ghadir. It was also because of this absence of explicit statement on these occasions that Imam 'Ali never used any of these occasions, including al-Ghadir, to put forward his candidacy as the only rightful successor of the Prophet." (Sachedina's words end).

The Holy Prophet (saw) said: "Whoever nurses a doubt concerning the Imam and Mastership of Hazrat Ali (as), he will be raised from the grave with a chain of fire around his neck." (Manaqeb Ibne Maghazeli p 18; Manaqeb Khaarazmi p 2290). This tradition is an evidence that the belief in Imam and Mastership of Hazrat Ali (as) is an ESSENTIAL criteria for achieving the pleasure of Allah (swt) and salvation and consequently entering paradise.

If this is such an important criteria, how is it possible that the Holy Prophet (saw) left this matter ambiguous? Islam is the only religion till the day of Qayamat, how is it possible that such an important matter would be left unclear?

Well, let us understand this discussion in the light, whether Ameerul Momineen (as) was EXPLICITLY "APPOINTED" or not. Remember, the question is his explicit APPOINTMENT and not unanimous acceptance. Even the *Beyat* of Rasoolullah (saw) was EXPLICIT, yet the disbelievers have denied.

For establishing whether his appointment was EXPLICIT or not, we need to study history. Let us skip all the ap-

pointments, and directly talk about the occasion of Ghadeer. Allah ordered the Holy Prophet (saw): "*O Messenger (of Allah) convey what has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message (at all), and Allah will protect you from the people. Surely Allah will not guide the disbelieving people.*" (5: 67)

The Holy Prophet (saw) ordered a stop, and called those who had gone ahead to come back and those behind to hurry while a pulpit was erected. The gathering was 114,000 to 124,000 or maybe even more!! There he stood and questioned the people, "*Am I not having more authority upon you than you yourselves.?*" One voice came, "*Certainly you have more authority*". Then he (saw) announced "*Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master.*"

Interestingly, 64 Sunni traditionalists like Ahmad ibne Hambal, Ibne Majah, Nisaai, Tirmidhi, Hakim Neshapouri, Ibne Katheer, Suyuti et al have quoted the initial utterance (*Am I not having...*). Now, in a gathering of over 100,000 people and with quotations available in renowned and prominent Sunni scholars works, wouldn't we say the declaration was EXPLICIT?

After the announcement, the Qur'anic verse, "*This day I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My bounties upon you, and am satisfied with Islam as your religion.*" was revealed.

This incident has been recorded by many Sunni scholars, including Tabari, Waheedi, Sa'labi and others. Even the Sunni Quranic exegetists have recorded this, Qazi Abu Bakr Baaqelaani (Kitabut Tamheed), Qazi Abdur Rehman Eejee Shar'ee (Al

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Mawaqef), Sayed Shareef Jorjaani (Sharhul Mawaqef, Beizaawi (Sharhul Maqasid) etc.

After this announcement, the Holy Prophet (saw) crowned Ameerul Momineen (as) with his Amama called "Sahaab". What would we call this, the CORONATION ceremony in the presence of over a hundred thousand people?? Doesn't this make the appointment EXPLICIT?? (Tawzeehul Dalaael by Shahabuddin, Arbaeen by Jamaaluddin Shirazi and Nazm Dararus Simtain by Zarandi).

So having established that the announcement at Ghadeer was EXPLICIT, let us see whether people present at the occasion also saw it as an EXPLICIT announcement of MASTERSHIP AND SUCCESSORSHIP or not.

The Holy Prophet (saw) was asked, "What is the meaning of 'Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master'. He (saw) answered: 'God is my Master. He has more authority upon me than myself. My will and authority has no value when compared to His will and authority. Similarly, I am the master of the believers. Their opinion and will has no value when compared to mine. And of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is having equal authority over him. Ali's authority is more over them than they themselves. Nobody's will is valid and binding when compared to Hazrat Ali's (as)'" (Shamsul Akhbaar by Ali ibne Hamid e-Quraishi, p. 38).

There is ample evidence about the poem Hassan ibne Thabit composed in praise of Ameerul Momineen (as) immediately after the incident: "Then he said to him, 'Stand O Ali...For certainly I am contended to have thee as a leader and guide after me."

And even Umar ibne Khattab acknowledged Ameerul Momineen (as) as his master, "O son of Abu Talib ..congratulations!! You have become the master of every believer, men and women." This has been narrated by

sixty well-known Sunni scholars. Details available in Al-Ghadeer Vol. 1, page 271.

Sayed Ali Hamadani after narrating a part of the sermon of the Messenger of Allah (saw) at Ghadeer writes in Mawaddatul Qurba, "O People is not God my master? He gives me commands, orders prohibitions and I have no authority over the Almighty?" Everyone said, "Yes O Messenger of Allah." Then he (saw) said, "Of whomsoever God and His messenger are masters, this Ali is his master. He will give you orders and command prohibitions. You don't have any authority to command or prohibit him."

The great Sunni Quranic interpreter, Zamakshari in his book "Rabiul Abraar" narrates the following incident, "One year Moawiyah went for Haj. There, he called a black but brave woman named Akromiyyah and inquired, "Why do you like Ali and hate me?" That lady replied, "Will I be safe if I give a true reply?", Moawiya replied in the affirmative. The lady answering his question said, "I like Ali because on the day of Ghadeer, when you too were present, the Holy Prophet (saw) announced his mastership. Further, because he loved the poor and respected the religious people. But you indulge in killing Muslims, creating rifts between them and acting unjustly in your judgements."

DID AMEERUL MOMINEEN (AS) EVER USE GHADEER TO PROVE HIS SUCCESSORSHIP?

It was thirty five years after hijri, twenty five years had passed since the occurrence of the event of Ghadeer. Many early-day Muslims had either died or were martyred or had migrated to other cities. Some had told the truth while others hid their identities due to the fear of enemies. The situation was such that those who were not present in Ghadeer, nor firm in their beliefs started doubting about the event of Ghadeer. Noticing the gravity of the situation, Hazrat Ali (as) gathered the companions of the Holy Prophet (saw) and the Tab'e'en. After delivering a sermon, he asked ONLY those people to stand as

witnesses who had THEMSELVES heard the Holy Prophet (saw) on the occasion of Ghadeer. Approximately 30 people (12 of them participants at Badr) stood up and witnessed that they had themselves heard the Holy Prophet (saw) say: "Am I not having more authority upon you than yourselves?"

We said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah. Then he (saw) said, "Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too." Amongst those who testified were Aby Ayyub Ansari, Abu Zainab Ibne Auf, Sahl ibne Hanif, Abdur Rehman bin Abdur Rab, Abu Huraira and others. But, Zayd ibne Arqam, Jurair ibne Abdullah, Anas ibne Maalik and some others present in the crowd, refused to be a witness. Hazrat Ali (as) said, "If they have concealed the truth on the basis of enmity and malice may God incur His wrath on them." Due to this curse Buraah and Zaid ibne Arqam became blind, Anas suffered from leprosy and Jurair became Murtad (apostate).

This incident is famous as "YAUMUR ROHBAH" and has been narrated through four Ashaab of the Holy Prophet (saw) and twenty-four Tab'e'en (those who had seen the companions but not the Holy Prophet (saw)) in famous and reliable Sunni books like Nisai in Khasaaes, Ibne Kathir in Kaamil Vol 5 p 211. Ibne Atheer in Usdul Ghaba Vol 4 p 28, Imam Ahmad ibne Hambal in his Musnad Vol 4, p370. Al Maaref of Ibne Qutaiba p 251, Al-Arbaeen of Jamaluddin Shirazi vol 1 page 211 and many other books.

With the above analysis is it not clear that the announcement of MASTERSHIP AND SUCCESSORSHIP WAS EXPLICIT? May Allah (swt) hasten the reappearance of the Last Successor of the Holy Prophet (saw) and include us all among his servants and helpers. And for the community at large, let's not forget that if given stones, one should build a bridge instead of a wall.

**Zaheer Abbas Karim
Toronto.**



Dear brother,

Is Sachedina rightly blamed?

I have been following part of the debate around Dr Sachedina and was not very sure what position to take. Well, he was recently there at the Imam Khomeini's (RA) conference in Columbia university in NY City and according to many attendees who did not know him before, his speech was the best, and indeed it was a truly inspiring and brain-stimulating one.

However, after the Conference, I approached Dr Sachedina with other brothers, and asked him very frank and direct questions. These included:

Q: do you believe in Imam Mahdi (atf), and our duty to await ?

A: "yes of course" (smiling), "otherwise I wouldn't be here".

Q: what about "wilaaya" and the fact that the Prophet (saw) appointed Imam Ali (as)?

A: I believe that the Prophet appointed him, explicitly, with no doubt. There were strong hadiths, and *nusus* (texts) that the Prophet told people that Ali is the *wali*. People misunderstood my words, and others have twisted them and attacked me personally... I said there was an explicit designation of Imam Ali (as), but I said there was not an "explicit instruction" from the Prophet to the people as to how they should obey and follow the Imam.

Q: What does it mean? should not they just follow whatever the Prophet said? what about the interests of the elite who refused because of their interests....

A: yes of course, they acted out of their own desires and each group wanted it for themselves...etc..

I cannot remember every word and the above quotes are not a 100% literal transmission, but they are as close as I can remember and describe. My opinion about him is unimportant, but the bottom line is that:

1. we should not accuse people of anything we are not sure of.

2. whatever issues are considered controversial about him might be open for open-minded debate rather than personal attacks and hiding or escaping away from anything that looks "new" to us.

3. His case resembles how people treated Dr Shariati in the beginning, but later tried to understand him open-heartedly.

Hussein A Sharafeddin
USA

sharafeh@er4.eng.ohio-state.edu

Dear Brother,

NASIMCO has a role to play to address the plight of North American Muslims

I am a regular reader of your esteemed magazine. It is not very often that a reader comes across a thought-provoking letter of the like that I enjoyed reading in the April 1998 issue.

The one in question was by "Practising Doctor", captioned "*Muslims have no voice in North America*". I wish the author had revealed his or her identity not only for a direct communication of appreciation but also for more exchange of views on this important subject at the historical cross-road of the Muslims' settlement in this continent.

What Muslims now urgently need, however belated, for the US and Canada are apex organizations of the regional organizations spread out across North America, of which NASIMCO is one. What is suggested are the likes of a Muslim Parliament which is presently functioning in the UK very effectively and has registered its presence in the political, social and educational fields in the context of its religious identity at the national British level.

So Brother Editor, the letter by "Practising Doctor" was THE LETTER OF THE ISSUE. Let us see what initiatives NASIMCO may wish to take in establishing a report with other sister Muslim organizations on the subject and perhaps they will respond to the letter for the information of your readers.

Baqir Alloo
Toronto.

Write to the Samachar

The Federation Samachar invites letters expressing constructive opinions or suggestions from readers. Letters should preferably be short and to the point. Letters are subject to editing but at all times effort will be made to maintain the original theme of a letter without distorting the subject matter.

Dear brother,

Sachedina fell prey to Dar's voting strength

After the last Supreme Council Conference in Dar es Salaam you sought my views on the RESOLUTION that was passed on AZIZ SACHEDINA AND ITS LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS.

The tragedy today is because of the big voting strength/power of Dar-es-salaam Jamaat (assuming that the official figure is about 7000 - I am told this could be more!), which is 70 delegates and 14 Councillors which along with the voting strength of the secretariat makes any resolution, which they bring almost a walk-over.

Therefore the opinions of the other Jamaats, if they are contrary to that of Dar es Salaam Jamaat will only be of academic importance (and waste of time in discussions etc.!!) but will have no bearing on the implementation of any RESOLUTION itself.

I believe that the passing of the Sachedina resolution was mainly because of the apparent anomaly in the voting strength of Jamaats making up the Africa Federation. This really means that the majority of the Jamaats were not in favour of this resolution *per se* but all I believe were in agreement that the UNISLAMIC WRITINGS OF PROFESSOR AZIZ SACHEDINA SHOULD BE CONDEMNED.

The reason for not supporting the second part of the resolution of debarring him from an official platform of the Jamaats was that this resolution would bring about DISUNITY and DIVISION AMONG OUR COMMUNITY. There would be Jamaat leaders outside Dar es Salaam who would at least like to listen to PROFESSOR SACHEDINA on other non-conflicting issues etc., and they would invite him. This would make a mockery of our resolution.

As a result of the passing of this resolution there are two camps in our community world-wide -- THE PRO-

SACHEDINA AND ANTI-SACHEDINA CAMPS. I do not know and cannot predict if PROFESSOR SACHEDINA CAN OR WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE of this division TO further his own aims and objectives!!! This will only depend on his NIYYAT!!

The biggest danger of the above controversy is that our youths will remain gullible, especially those who do not have a solid RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION. The solution would have been to refer this matter to our MARJA-E-TAQLEED and seek his opinion and guidance. Any ruling or guidance coming from our MARJA would not have divided our community as everyone would have respected the decision of the MARJA.

My personal feeling is that the resolu-

Dear brother,

Samachar is male chauvinistic...but we enjoy the unbiased coverage

I am a keen reader of the *Federation Samachar* and enjoy your unbiased coverage. However a lot of male issues are discussed and debated and I feel women are not getting enough coverage.

I therefore propose a *Womens' corner* in each issue whereby we women can share views, personal experiences of our lives in order to learn from each other and also to benefit others. I am willing to run this section for you, if you approve of it. Please consider this proposal and do let me know.

Mrs. S. Peera Alidina
Nairobi.

Thank you for your proposal. As a matter of fact we have attributed between two to four pages of each issue for women issues but do agree that this may not be enough.

We appreciate that women of the community currently do not have their own forum to exchange ideas or viewpoints in print. At the 1996 Supreme Council Meeting in Nairobi the *Samachar* Editorial Board made a special appeal to all Jamaats to encourage women to be more involved in the print media by exchanging their opinions, complaints and suggestions in the *Samachar* with the intention of uplifting the status of women in the community as prescribed by Islam.

You are welcome to send us articles on women issues which offer analysis through an Islamic perspective. The material could also cover real-life incidents or problems being faced by our womenfolk, if any. Confidentiality can be maintained by replacing real-life names by pseudonyms but it is absolutely necessary to ensure that the narrated incidents or reports are true. Editor.

Dear brother.

Islam did not advocate slavery....

I enclose a cutting of a reader's letter from a local English Weekly. You will notice that the reader offers some useful corrections to certain statements with regard to the proclamation of Allah (S.W.T.), OIC membership, slavery and Islamic public religious preachings which had appeared in a feature article earlier. I am sure that your readers will find the letter enlightening, especially those who reside in the West.

Mohamed Khalfan
Dar es Salaam.

"God could not have manifested Himself to the Arabs as Allah (S.W.T.) as mentioned by the author when he claimed that God manifested Himself in other different names to others. The Arabs were engaged in the worship of idols for centuries until the advent of Islam in the sixth century. To the Arabs then, the God known to them was "Llaah".

The name "Allah" provides a unique concept of a unique "GOD" to all Muslims - non-Arabs included - unlike the God known to others. The concept is of that God who is one in His absolute unity with no associates and none besides Him.

It is for this reason that mostly the name for Allah for God is used by Muslims, even if the language He is mentioned in is other than Arabic.

The memberships of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) is no acknowledgement that a member is a Muslim country. Uganda is one of the few examples in Africa which has a small minority of Muslims but is wise enough to avail herself of membership and draw economic benefits in purely a secular relationship.

OIC membership is said to be extended generously to any country which has a small Muslim population, however small, on the Islamic philosophy that all Muslims spread out across the world

are one "people" (ummah). The country they live in can also benefit from the OIC membership.

As for public religious preachings, one cannot preach Islam without informing and expounding the Islamic concept of Allah - who begets no sons nor is he begotten. And then the Qur'an was revealed after the advent of Judaism and Christianity. It therefore, discusses their beliefs and reasons out disputation of the beliefs.

On slavery, Islam does not advocate it. On the contrary Islam placed restrictions on the acquisition of slaves, imposed obligations for their welfare no different from that for the family-members and what is more, it provided canonical laws for the liberation of slaves to attain penance or expiation of a number of sins.

To quote a few examples of the practices rampant in other parts of the world, but negated and nullified by Islam: the captives in wars could no longer be enslaved unless the enemies were idolaters who had provoked the wars. The enslavement served as a guarantee for the preservation of their lives and avoided death. And yet they would be released with or without ransom.

A chief or ruler could not at his will enslave any person residing in his chiefdom as of right. Parents could not sell or gift their offsprings as slaves and debtors could not be turned into slaves.

Islam also eased the matrimonial conditions for slaves to facilitate their integration into the masters' families. It is no wonder therefore that there is little or no trace of any existing identifiable communities of the descendants of the former African slaves (apart from former Arab slaves) in the Arab lands, as are seen in America. They are now racially Arabs.

Slaves were given a right to ransom

themselves on certain easy terms, if not freeing them, for the pleasure of Allah (S.W.T.). Islam is the first and the only religion which has prescribed liberation of slaves as a virtue and a manifestation of genuine faith. Chapter ninety of the Holy Qur'an is quite eloquent in this respect.

History testifies that among the early converts and adherents to Islam, despite their persecution as a minority by the Meccan idolaters, were a sizeable number of slaves who included Africans. Some were bought off from the masters and freed by the Muslims. The first person to hold the enviable position of Muazzin (herald of the daily prayer call) in the history of Islam was Bilal, a former African slave."

Dear brother,

The missing Federation emblem.....

I refer to the letter written by Husein Khimjee of Toronto in the *Federation Samachar* Vol 30, No. 7 of April, 1998 on Page 18, Paragraph five.

He writes, "...even these scholars have made mistakes." I would like to ask him whether these scholars have made mistakes with regard to *Usoole Din* or *Foorue Din* or history?

After all Sachedina's writings have created misunderstanding and confusion on fundamental Islamic issues. I believe this is not a mistake.

Meanwhile may I point out that the Federation Emblem has suddenly disappeared from the cover page of the *Samachar*.

Habib H. Haji
Tanga.



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Disaster in Gujarat (Kutch and Kathiawad)

A recent cyclone, which hit Gujarat, India has resulted in widespread disaster, affecting areas like Jamnagar, Lalpur, Maliya, Miyana, Nawlakhi and Mandvi. According to reports received from Indian Press, thousands of families have become homeless and many people have died.

The Council of Gujarat has confirmed the heavy losses suffered by the public living near the harbours in Gujarat. Members of our community have had to move away to the nearest locality to save their lives, after having totally lost their possessions. The reports received do not indicate any loss of life in our community.

The World Federation requested the Council of Gujarat to embark upon a relief programme so that the affected families can be provided with necessary supplies to assist them to be rehabilitated.

The World Federation estimated that this emergency relief exercise would require about Indian Rupees 500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand). Members of the community are requested to assist our brethren living in Gujarat.

AIDS in Pakistan - moment of truth

Medical experts, worried about the growing incidence of AIDS in Pakistan, disclosed at a seminar held in August, 1998 in Rawalpindi that over 800 victims of the fatal disease have been detected in the country while the number of HIV virus carriers has increased to 50,000.

The deadly disease has been insidiously making inroads into the country, infecting the unwary and claiming more and more lives over the past few years.

Many undetected AIDS cases are believed to exist in far-off areas where, because of poverty and lack of awareness, people are particularly vulnerable.

LOS ANGELES MEMORIES

from Yasmin Kermalli

Eleven youths from the Abbassi Madressah travelled from Paris to Los Angeles accompanied by their Principal, Sabir Charifou and two supervisors, Riaze Vasram and Sr. Naznin Vasram. The youths, five girls and six boys, age 11 years to 14 years were on vacation and this trip was primarily to familiarize them with youths from the USA who share common religious beliefs but are yet worlds apart. Accommodations were graciously provided by members of the Los Angeles Jamaat who warmly welcomed the youths and made them feel "at home."

On April 11, the Los Angeles Jamaat witnessed a unique program (in five languages) during the celebrations of Eid-al-Ghadeer. The program included a welcome speech by the Jamaat President, Iqbal Somji, an introduction of Paris Madressah-Jamaat by Br. Sabir in Gujrati, and a presentation by Abbassi Madressah youths, Dua Tawassul and a short speech on the events of Ghadeer in French and Urdu on Imam Ali A.S. The Huseini Madressah boys wrapped up the evening by presenting a skit in English.

The Huseini Madressah arranged for a visit to the Islamic Cemetery in Adelanto. The visitors were in awe to see a full Islamic Cemetery and mosque in California. Imam Sh. Zaid Assfy led the noon prayers followed by a lecture and lunch. Sh. Assfy is also the Commissioner of Police in the city of Adelanto and he proudly displayed his police badge for the youths to admire. All the youths were presented with gifts by the Shaikh.

The youths visited the Islamic Center of Southern California where a French guide had been arranged to show them the facilities which include an Islamic school and a bookstore and media center. They also visited the City of Knowledge, a full-time Shia school, where Salaat-ul-Juma'a was offered by Syed Ali Al-Qazwini. The visitors were all given gifts. Later they visited Br. Pyarali Hasanali's Signs and Screen Printing factory. The youths were fascinated with the technology as demonstrated by Br. Pyarali.

The youths were also taken to Disneyland in Anaheim and to Universal Studio in Hollywood. They spent a day at SeaWorld in San Diego and had the privilege of taking a bus tour to Hollywood and Sunset Blvd. A soccer match was also arranged at As Sadiq Foundation by Dr. Murtaza Khaku, Principal of Huseini Madressa.

Sabir Charifou and Riaze Vasram expressed deep gratitude and thanks to the the Shia Ithna-Asheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles and its Huseini Madressa. The hosts were astonished at the way the youths blended so well despite some language barriers. The visitors found this to be a wonderful experience and finally on April 20, 1998 the host families bid *au revoir* and *bon voyage* to the visitors.



Muslim Unity Conference accentuates on need to do away with Sectarian differences

The importance of Muslim unity, the preservation of the Ummah against international plots, the support for the Intifadah in Palestine and the Islamic resistance in Lebanon as well as condemnation of Zionist attempts to usurp the holy city of al-Quds were major themes discussed at the Eleventh International Conference on Islamic Unity in Tehran on July 10-12, 1998. The Conference also raised concern for the plight of Muslim minorities, especially in Europe and the missionary activity in Muslim countries like Central Asia, Afghanistan and Bangladesh while it condemned attempts to suppress Islamic Movements.

The unity of the Ummah and the necessity of the Qur'an was reaffirmed by delegates who came from all over the world. The Congress was held in the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Conference Centre, an impressive hall with excellent facilities. Last year, foreign ministers of Muslim countries had met in the same Centre in preparation for the OIC summit.

Repeatedly, speakers—both Shias and Sunnis—reaffirmed their commitment to Islamic unity and warned against the plots of the enemies of Islam. Attendees included ulama, muftis, scholars, teachers, students and Islamic activists and among those who participated were Muslims from Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Western Europe, Albania, Bosnia, Serbia, North America, Sudan, Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa.

As is customary at such Conferences, a large number of speakers were accommodated. This necessitated limiting each speaker to 10 minutes although a few were allowed to speak longer. The inaugural address was delivered by former President Hashemi Rafsanjani, who now heads the Expediency Council. He welcomed delegates and talked about the *fitrah* of man which he said has been created

pure by Allah (swt). This was a reference to the Qur'anic verse (30:30), which states that there is no altering of the [pure] nature in which Allah (swt) has created human beings.

In his remarks on the last day of the Conference, Ayatullah Muhammad Ali Taskhiri, head of the Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication in the office of the Rahbar, also drew attention to this. He reiterated what the Rahbar, Ayatullah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had said earlier on the issue of the Judaisation of al-Quds by the Zionists. He also referred to the address by President Mohammed Khatami who had stressed on the importance of the *Majma-e Taqrib* Conferences. He concluded by emphasising that "Islam has all the features which fulfil the needs of humanity."

Earlier Ayatullah Taskhiri's paper on the first day about '*Balance, leniency and ethics in Islam*' drew much interest. Other speakers not only talked about the importance of Muslim unity but also highlighted some of the problems faced by Muslims in their societies. In the morning session of the first day, speakers included Ahmed Muhamed al-Khalili (Yemen), Shaikh Sabri Coci (Albania), Ayatullah Jafar Subhani (Iran), Dr Yusuf Kettani (Morocco), Shaikh Ali Shay (Kenya), Shaikh Yaqu' Ismi (Philippines), Shaikh Ahmed az-Zain (Lebanon), Dr Abdallah al-Nafisi (Kuwait), Ayatullah Ibrahim Jannati (Iran) and Dr Jibril Aminou (Nigeria).

The afternoon session speakers included Shaikh Habib Khojeh (Saudi Arabia), Maulana Ishaq Madani (Iran), Shaikh Abubakr Siddiq (Bangladesh), Wahba al-Zuhaili (Syria), Ayatullah Ahmed Asifi (Iran), Mufti Shafqu Omar Basic (Croatia), Imam Muhammad al-Asi (US), Allama Sajid Naqvi (Pakistan), Abdullah Azmi (India), Syed Munawwar Hassan (Pakistan), Dr M. Taufik Ashawi (Egypt), Shaikh Mahmoud Siyam (Palestine) and Dr Mustafa Ceric (Bosnia).

The first day's session ended after 11

pm. On the second day, the delegates were addressed by the Rahbar on the occasion of the birthday of the noble Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace. In addition to foreign guests hundreds of Iranians were also present.

When the formal session resumed in the late afternoon, Ayatullah Baqir al-Hakim addressed the issue of the crimes by the Iraqi regime against innocent people. Other speakers included Ustad Fadhil Noor (Malaysia), Ayatullah Amid Zanjani (Iran), Mufti Hamdi Yusuf (Belgrade), Omar Madani (Jordan), Nooru Musa Habib (Ethiopia), Shaikh Hussain Gabries (Lebanon), Shaikh Abdur Rahman Mullahzehi (Sistan-Baluchistan, Iran), Sister Safynaz Kazem (Egypt), Zafar Bangash (Canada), Professor Mukashifi Taha Qabashi (Sudan), Dr Abdul Aziz al-Tuwaijari (head of ISESCO), Dr Anissa Abdul-Fattah (US), Shaikh Nur Baba Nuri (Sulaimaniya, Iraq), Hasan Abdul Karim (Nigeria), Dr Amel al-Bayati (Iraq), Professor Vaezi (Afghanistan) and Shaikh Abdul Razak Rahbar (Turkmenistan).

Informal sessions that followed enabled participants to meet and greet each other and to exchange views. This year, there was a strong presence of Muslims from Europe, especially those parts which face a direct threat to their very survival like Bosnia, Kosova, Albania and Serbia. A plea by the Mufti of Belgrade to establish an Islamic army in defence of Muslim minorities, though appreciated, was considered impractical. Similarly calls by some delegates to establish an Islamic common market to enhance economic co-operation between Muslim countries were discussed but it was deemed that more time is required for this to materialize.

Delegates were urged to convey the message of unity to their respective communities and to eliminate misunderstandings between different *madhahibs* in Islam. It was also proposed that branches of *Majma-e Taqrib* be established in other parts of the world.

First Islamic Website on Imame Zamana (A. T. F. S.) is launched on the Internet

The first Islamic Website on Imam-e-Zamana (A.T.F.S.) has been launched on the Internet. The name of the Site is AL-MUNTAZAR Islamic Web Centre and can be accessed at <http://members.xoom.com/almuntazar>

The various topics included in the site include:

- 1) Articles on Imame Zamana (A.T.F.S.)
- 2) Duas & Ziyarat of Imame Zamana a.s. (including Ziyarat-e-Nahiya, Doa-E-Ahad, Doa-E-Faraj, etc.). All the duas are in arabic.
- 3) A very good section which was not earlier available on the net is of TABARRA (audio).
- 4) Islamic multimedia (including photos & Calligraphies).
- 5) Some important traditions from the Usool-E-Kafi book.
- 6) Islamic Wallpapers & Screen Savers.

Previously the site had some links which were not working but these have been subsequently corrected and the site has also been updated.

HOLY QUR'AN FROM UNDER THE ASHES

A copy of the Holy Qur'an which was believed to have been burnt in flames that destroyed a Mosque in the Philippines 22 years ago, was retrieved intact from under a layers of ashes.

According to a despatch carried by the German News Agency, DPA, a Filipino army commander was quoted as saying that the 400 year old copy of the Holy Qur'an was in the possession of a Mosque in a Muslim populated town near Manila, which caught fire and sustained heavy damages 22 years ago during clashes between Government forces and Muslims.

It said that three days after the discovery, army Major, Ramo Arseno found the Holy Qur'an unburnt and surprisingly unscathed.

UN to close for Eid

The Reuters News Service announced in the first week of April this year that the UN General Assembly had on March 30, 1998 "approved making two Muslim holidays mandatory for all staff." On these days, the United Nations buildings will be closed to the public and no United Nations meetings are expected to be held.

The document to have the two holidays recognized was proposed by about 100 non-aligned countries and China. During the committee session, Qatar's ambassador, Nasser Bin Hamad al-Khalifa, argued that more than a third of UN Members and more than a billion people worldwide subscribed to the tenets of Islam. The Syrian representative also pointed out that the UN recognizes other religious holidays.

Reuters reports that US Ambassador, Bill Richardson told the Assembly, "We remain deeply concerned that the current decision to make mandatory the observance of two religious holidays at all UN duty stations is not in conformity with the secular nature of the United Nations." He also opposed increasing the total number of holidays to 10 for UN staff, saying it did not bode well for the efficiency of the organization. "The perception alone of such a move is contrary to reform," he said.

More to get visas through US lottery scheme

The US lottery scheme for "Green Cards" for the year 2000 will be launched on Oct 1 to 31 this year. Officials said the total number of immigrants to be allowed in the US in year 2000 would be 50,000 — 5,000 less than the current number as a special quota of 5,000 has been set aside for Nicaraguans.

In 1997, about 3.4 million qualified entries were received during the one-month application period. The mail-in period will be from noon on Thursday, October 1, 1998, through noon on Saturday, October 31, 1998.

The countries likely to be declared ineligible for the lottery visas for the year 2000, are: China (mainland and Taiwan), India, Philippines, Vietnam, South Korea, Poland, UK and dependent territories, Canada, Mexico, Haiti, Jamaica, El Salvador, Colombia and Dominican Republic.

Officials said the criteria for eligibility of a country was the number of normal immigrants coming to the US from that country and those with 50,000 immigrants annually were barred from participating in the lottery.

The visas will be apportioned among six geographic regions. A greater number of visas will go to those regions that have lower immigration rates. There is a limit of 3,500 visas to any one country.

Officials said an entrant into the lottery must be a native of a qualifying country. He or she must also have either a high school education or its equivalent, or in the past five years should have two years of work experience in an occupation that requires at least two years of training or experience.

There is no initial application fee or special application form to enter. Applications must be typed or clearly printed in English on a sheet of plain paper and must include the applicant's full name; date and place of birth for both the applicant and for the spouse or any minor children who might also wish to immigrate; the applicant's mailing address and, if possible, a telephone number; the applicant's native country if it differs from the country of birth; a recent (preferably less than 6 months old) photograph (1-1/2 inches by 1-1/2 inches) of the principal applicant with the applicant's name printed across the back of the photograph.

The applications have to be mailed to a US address that will be provided.



ON MOON SIGHTING from the World Federation

The calculations for forecasting the sighting of the moon is a complex one and depends on the time of the year, time between moonset and sunset, age of moon at sunset, position on earth of the person watching, pollution in the atmosphere etc.

The World Federation has been calculating the time and place of moon sighting since 1987 and has then declared a new month AFTER the sighting has been confirmed.

The place of first possible sighting of the new moon is announced one month in advance on the following Internet address:

<http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/wcrescent.htm>

On this site, other interesting sites on the topic of moonsighting can also be accessed. For example, one can access the criteria used by the Saudis in declaring the new month on:

http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/saudi_date_system.htm

Another related article can be read on:

http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/allah_universe.htm

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid of standing still.

Examine what is said, not him who speaks.

Fear less, hope more,
Eat less, chew more,
whine less, breathe more,
talk less, say more,
hate less, love more,
and all good things will be yours.

He is rich who owes nothing.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a step.....without the first step nothing can be achieved.

Never write a letter when you are angry

Canada Jafferries deprive New York of second consecutive volleyball win

Twelve teams from the cities around North America participated in the Easter Volleyball Tournament hosted successfully by Allentown Challengers in Allentown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The two day tournament featured five teams from Allentown, Challengers 'A', Challengers 'B', Allentown Union 'A', Allentown Union 'B', and Young Muslims and three teams from New York, Union Islanders 'A', Union Islanders 'B', and Union Islanders Juniors, a team comprising of young brave kids. Three teams came from Canada, namely United Stars, Jafferries Stars 'A' and Jafferries Stars 'B'.

One could feel the excitement, the anxiety and joy in the massive compound at all times. New faces were everywhere. The tournament saw the return of some old faces such as ever-popular Najaf Dhirani of New York Union Islanders 'A'. The weather was good, the food was excellent, the event challenging and the people very nice.

Orlando Union, which had hosted the first ever tournament in Orlando back in December, participated for the first time in Allentown. However, most of the players representing Orlando were not new to the surroundings. In fact, three players, Riyaz Jivraj, Raza Dhanji and Sajjad Dewji, were members of the victorious New York Union Islanders last Easter when they won the championship in New York. The captain of Orlando team was a veteran but one of the most popular players in North America, Shabbir (Johnny) Bhojani. The team also comprised of former secretary of New York Union Islanders, the always exciting, Mustafa Jacksi. Faisal Virjee played after thirteen years of absence while Sikander (Chiku) Kermali, who until last year played for the New York Union Islanders juniors, made his debut with the big boys! Abbas Virjee, Raza Meghji and Murtaza Rahim were over whelmed as they participated for the first time.

Last year's Easter champions, New York Union Islanders had different players from their last year's championship side. Gone were Riyaz Jivraj, Raza Dhanji, Sajjad Khimji and Sajjad Dewji. Their replacements were Najaf Dhirani, Mohamed Kermali and Shabbar Fazel. This team was as good as last year's. With Najaf Dhirani, Fayaz Dewji and Aliraza Manekia at the back and Sajjad Juma, Mohamedraza Kermali (Kabana), Shabbar Fazel and Fuad Jacksi in the front, this team was one of the favorites to win the tournament. Mohamed Kermali played in net center, a position currently dominated by youngsters. However, he proved that age has not caught up with him as he won the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award for the tournament.

Other favorites to win the tournament were Jafferries Stars 'A' who had G. G. Merali brothers, Muna and Mehboob; Jafferries Stars 'B' who had Hussein Rai and Hasnain G. G. Merali, Allentown Union, who had one of the top players in Mohamed Bhanji, and Allentown Challengers with Kausar and Sameer Hirji.

The two of the best and most exciting games of the tournament were the semi finals. New York Union Islanders 'A' beat Allentown Union while Jafferries Stars 'A' beat their younger team Jafferries Stars 'B' in the other semis. Both these games were long, exciting and tense. At one point some players also lost their cool and tempers flared due to the intensity of the game. However, no love was lost and the integrity of the game remained. In the finals, Jafferries Stars 'A' beat arch-rivals Union Islanders 'A' in a hard fought battle that avenged their last year's defeat.

The tournament was a great success once again and there were bonds of friendship as participants bode farewell after the presentation ceremony and dinner. In August, United Stars are expected to host their tournament in Toronto. And who knows maybe Union Sports Club will host their tournament later this year in the sunshine city of Orlando.

The Islamic Education Board (IEB) presents annual report at Toronto session

The Islamic Education Board (IEB) of the World Federation presented its report for the period October 1997 to May 1998 at the Jafari Islamic Centre, Toronto on Friday 19 June 1998.

The Board is made up of the following members:

Mulla Muhsin Jaffer	Chairman
Mustafa Jaffer	Resources Manager
Naushad Mehrali	Audio/Video Library
Semiz Seper Abdullah	Bosnia Desk
Ummulbanin Merali	Madrassa Resources

The report covered the following :

Dhakhir's Seminar

The first Dhakhir Seminar was held in Toronto by the Islamic Shia Ithna-asheri Jamaat of Toronto in Nov 1987. Since then several have been held in different regions to discuss issues related to those regions. The last seminar was held on 14 March, 1998 at Birmingham, UK. This seminar was chaired by Mulla Asgharali M M Jaffer.

After the delivery of two papers, one by Mulla Bashir Rahim and the other by Mustafa Jaffer, several issues were discussed and the following were proposed:

- * The Dhakhir should understand the importance of being consistent in words and deeds.
- * Young and upcoming Dhakirs to be encouraged.
- * Majlis recitation competition amongst the young ones be organised.
- * Training seminars in all fields related to Dhakirs be organised.
- * Every Dhakhir/Dhakira should write a brief report after a visit to any guest Jamaat which would be for future reference by Dhakirs/Dhakiras visiting the same Jamaat.
- * The difference between a Dhakhir and an Aalim should be understood and differentiated by the public.

* References in English, particularly relating to the tragedy of Karbala, should be made available for Dhakirs/Dhakiras

* Focus on contents of Majalis be shifted from less to more practical issues

The papers presented in the seminar can be seen on the World Federation Internet site. All the attending Dhakirs/Dhakiras were presented with a Dhakhir's Compendium containing the method of reciting Namaz-e-Mayyit, Talqeen and the Khutbas of Namaz-e-Juma. This was to help Dhakirs who assume the role of Resident Aalim in guest Jamaats.

Budding Dhakirs

To encourage the training of children to become Dhakirs, the Islamic Education Board has published 6 books containing a total of 78 short Majalis. These have been produced in draft form and a feed back is awaited from Jamaats for further development of the project.

Madrassa

In conjunction with the Council of European Jamaats, the IEB organised a meeting of Principals of all UK Madrasas on Sunday 26th April 1998 at the premises of IEB, Dar al Tableegh.

Principals and a few individuals whose contribution to the institution of Madrasa is renowned were invited. 15 people attended and the meeting was facilitated by Brother Yaseen Rahim.

The purpose of the meeting was to exchange ideas and experience, enable learning and networking and avoid duplication of efforts. The IEB also wanted to hear from the Principals what support they needed in their challenging task of making the institution successful.

The theme was 'Building on Excellence' and the first part of the meeting heard all the Principals sharing their

achievements. A list of 57 items, without repetitions, were recorded. After a break, the Principals got together to suggest that IEB support them in the following manner:

- * Prepare Information Packs on Sex Education; Madrasa Starter Pack; GCSE requirements in Arabic; Rights of students in secular Schools; Education for children with special needs;
- * Facilitate common examinations;
- * Train teachers on how to teach;
- * Maintain a database of teachers specialized in certain subjects/age range;
- * Commission people to write books for use as textbooks by Madaris;
- * Organise teachers' conferences;
- * Arrange for external facilitators to help individual Madaris achieve goals.

The above is but a brief list of the fields in which Principals of Madaris in UK need assistance. The Principals expressed their willingness to help in any way they can to fulfil these proposals. The IEB is meanwhile studying all the above proposals.

The Council of European Jamaats has carried out some work on the issue of common examinations. A paper had been presented to the Principals and together, the IEB and COEJ are now working to translate the recommendations presented in the paper so that they can be implemented.

It was also pointed out that Mustafa Jaffer who visited New York for the *Ashra* of Muharram met the Madrasa teachers there on 2 May, 1998. The meeting was chaired by Haiderbhai Ladha, the representative of IEB NASIMCO in New York. Among other things, the teachers voiced out the problems they face in New York. The main problem highlighted in the meeting was the lack of proper resources and

(continued on page 26)

(continued from page 25)

personnel in teaching. The IEB has promised to extend assistance.

Bosnia

During the course of the last six months, 2 issues of *Muslimanski Zivot*, a quarterly in Bosnian language published by the IEB was printed and distributed. Moreover 1000 copies of *Sahifa-e-Sajjadiyya* in Bosnian language purchased by the IEB from Bosnia were distributed selectively among the Bosnian Mumineen worldwide who are in contact with the IEB.

Haji Semiz Seper Abdullah, the brother in charge of the Bosnian desk, visited Bosnia during this period. He was well received by the indigenous Shias in Bosnia. His report can be found on the World Federation Internet site in which he has commented on the state of the local Shias. They need continuous support by way of Islamic literature in Bosnian language. The form of Islam practiced even by the Shias has been distorted with their cultural practices being misconstrued as Islamic ones. Haji Semiz is in contact with them and is arranging to send literature regularly.

Multifaith & Interfaith

The Islamic Education Board has always been a recognised participant in all Interfaith activities. Through the co-operation of Al Haj G.D. Musa of Gloucester and more recently, Brother Yaseen Rahim, the IEB has stretched its representation.

The University of Derby recently launched a Multifaith Net which is in actual fact, Interfaith network on cyberspace. The site is at <http://www.multifaithnet.org/> and the IEB has been appointed as a consultant of the Islamic faith in the network.

Brother Yaseen Rahim, on behalf of the IEB, attended a 'World of Faith Seminar' organised by Radio 2 and BBC World Service. In the seminar, Brother Yaseen was asked to facilitate a discussion group and submit recommendations from the group. The recommendations the group made were:

- * To ensure that BBC Radio 2 and World Service both pick on the different books of faith in their programme;

- * To ensure that speakers from the various faiths cover topics that contextualise the faith;

- * To share how the faith is lived today in this country;

- * To ensure the speakers from various faiths who speak on the faith are experts in the faith;

- * To undertake voluntary media training for the different faiths.

The organisers requested for names from our community who would be willing to take part on the Radio 2 or World Service 'Pause for Thought' Programme.

Insight Magazine

The IEB has launched a new magazine, 'The Insight'. This is a forum of the IEB to facilitate discussion on issues that concern the community and Islamic education. The first issue was launched in Muharram 1419 and the theme of the issue was 'Dhakiri'. The magazine has been posted to all Jamaats worldwide and has also been sent to Madrasas and Dhakirs. Anybody interested in reading the magazine can access it from the World Federation Internet site.

The term 1997-2000

The present term of 1997-2000 has been dedicated for the Islamic Education Board by the Triennial Conference of October 1997. The IEB has published a booklet on this topic and distributed 4000 copies to households worldwide. The appeal is for the cost of a loaf of bread a day (Canadian dollars 180 per year) to be spent by each member of the Community on Tableegh work. It is hoped that Mumineen will respond to this appeal so that Tableegh work can be advanced further.

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Iran defends Press freedom

Iran's moderate government of President Mohammad Khatami is determined to protect the freedom of press and expression in the Islamic Republic, Culture Minister Ayatollah Mohajerani recently pledged.

He told a press conference during the Fifth Press Fair held in Tehran, "We defend all publications which perform within the law."

Since taking over as Culture Minister last August, Mohajerani has relaxed restrictions on the press and has allowed a record number of independent publications to run.

Hardline conservatives have however expressed fear that this liberty will undermine fundamental principles of the 1979 revolution and some groups have even attacked newspaper offices they deem anti-Islamic.

Khatami said that he was "worried about methods used by certain groups to defend Islam and the revolution."

He said, "with a negative conception of freedom and democracy, some people want to create an atmosphere of terror. But this will lead to separation of religion from society," he warned.

The press fair is part of the Government's efforts to promote the status of the print media in Iran. About 600 publications of all political tendencies took part in the six day Fair.

A total of 991 newspapers, magazines and periodicals are published in Iran and the deputy Culture Minister, Ahmad Burqani, a former journalist with the official IRNA news agency said that the Government sought to increase the number of publications.

He said, "UNESCO estimates that a country like ours should produce six million copies of newspapers a day, while we are only publishing around 2.4 million copies."

Undergraduate Sponsorship Programme bears fruits

Over 10,200 boys and girls are at present (figures based on May, 1998 data) being sponsored through schools by the Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme of the World Federation. The rate for sponsoring is £90; Can \$ 180; US \$ 144 per student every year.

The scheme has been in existence since 1981. As time goes by, more and more students are entering Universities. To date, 90 young men and women, Sadats and Non-sadats, have qualified and are now earning their own living, supporting their families, as well as serving their local communities. Another 207 are currently studying. The table below gives details of what these young men

and women have chosen to pursue to enhance their careers.

Until recently these students were supported from surplus funds of the Zainabiya scheme. As the numbers increased, the financial burden on Zainabiya became very onerous. Zainabiya therefore evolved and launched an Undergraduates Sponsorship Programme. Through this Program, for £500 (Can \$1000; US \$ 800), one can support a student in University for one academic year. One has a choice of committing support to a time between 2 and 4 years.

A glance at the table below shows that sponsors' support is bearing fruit.

Undergraduates and Graduates of ZCSS as at 31st May 1998

	Undergraduates (207)				Graduates (90)			
	Male	Female	Sadat	Non Sadat	Male	Female	Sadat	Non Sadat
Aalim	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Architecture	3	-	3	-	-	1	1	-
BSc/MSc	21	5	14	12	4	1	3	2
Chartered								
Accountancy	4	-	1	3	1	-	-	1
Commerce	12	2	4	10	7	3	5	5
Dentistry	4	-	2	2	-	-	-	-
Computer								
Science	15	5	6	14	17	2	7	12
Education (BEEd.M Ed)								
PHB	44	26	54	16	8	5	10	3
Engineering-								
Automobile	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Aviation	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Civil	1	1	-	2	9	1	2	7
Electrical	3	-	2	1	1	-	1	-
Electronics	5	1	2	4	5	3	6	2
Mechanical	18	-	13	5	6	-	4	2
Television	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Hotel								
Management	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Fashion	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Law	3	1	1	3	2	-	1	1
Medicine (MBBS)	13	7	14	6	4	7	6	5
Pharmacy	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	2
Physiotherapy	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Total	158	49	127	80	67	23	46	44
Total	207		207		90		90	

JIBA Ontario Chapter launches its own Web Page

JIBA's Ontario Chapter have now got their own Website on the Internet which is accessible on <http://members.xoom.com/JIBA>.

The site, designed by Shabbir Mohamed, contains a wealth of details about JIBA's Ontario Chapter. It is also planned to include the proposed JIBA newsletter on this site.

Iran protests to film

Iran filed a protest note with the French embassy in Teheran over an anti-Iran film aired on French television and demanded an official apology, the official Iranian News Agency *Irna* reported.

A statement by Iran's Islamic Human Rights Commission said, "the move was detrimental to the morale of the Iranian soccer players in the World Cup games, and we demand that France punishes the parties responsible for the episode" — and furthermore demanded an official apology to the Iranian athletes and nation over the incident.

"The emphasis given to sports internationally is an instrument of enhancing understanding and compassion in the world, but the behaviour by some countries contradicts their claim of subscribing to these slogans and this is totally unacceptable," the protest note said.

"The move constituted a violation of Iranians' rights besides (being an) insult to the sanctities of Muslims and the Iranian nation's traditions," the statement further said. It added that the movie, *Not without my daughter* presented a backward image of Teheran.

Irna further reported that the head of the Iranian Football Federation, Mohsen Safaie Farahani, and members of the Iranian national soccer team had earlier handed a protest note to the International Football Federation (FIFA) and the World Cup organising committee over the incident.

FIFA however responded by saying that the airing of the film was not within its scope of activities and that it did not have the authority to intervene in such issues.



Iran's World Cup Coach...and putting religion before sports

On Wednesday 17 June, 1998 during a press conference held at Yssingaux, Jalal Talebi, Iran's football team coach was the focus point of questions asked by American journalists. The questions mainly concerned his life in the USA.

Jalal Talebi said that he has three sons. The youngest, 17, is still at school. The eldest, 25, is a university art student. Both live with their mother in the USA. In this friendly atmosphere, Talebi said that he had a peaceful and comfortable life in California.

A Persian dinner specially organised for the Iranian delegation by M. Barot, Mayor of Yssingaux, prolonged the pleasant evening. He was accompanied by the Prefect and the under-Prefect of the Haute-Loire, as well as 700 other guests, mostly Iranian.

The players and their executives were able to taste a dozen specialities from their country prepared by an Iranian chef, with the help of three French cooks. These young sportsmen were able to relax in spite of the World Cup tension. As a gesture of appreciation, a national team shirt was given to the organisers of the evening, who had also arranged a projection of slides showing the main Iranian tourist sites with some traditional Iranian background music.

Iran's preparations took a unique turn when on one day, players held a three-hour religious mourning ceremony to mark the death of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Players beat their chests and wept in a ritual that ended around midnight, about the same time that some 200 English fans were causing trouble in Marseille. This was at a time many teams were getting a good night's sleep before their forthcoming games.

Meanwhile Iran's Coach, Talebi resigned from his post in mid August, 1998 saying that this was due to "family reasons." He will however continue to be the technical advisor of the team. He was a member of Iran's national

DATELINE IRAN

Soccer Diplomacy

The olive branch recently held out to Iran by US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright has come as a surprise and it is reasonable to assume there is more to it than meets the eye. Evidently, her remarks were timed to generate diplomatic synergies from the soccer world cup tie, the first major international sporting encounter between the two countries in years. Though Iran won the match, the US administration will not be too worried, since an Iranian defeat would not have made the task of repairing relations between the two countries any easier. Now that Teheran has scored a victory of immense symbolic value against the USA on the soccer field, it is believed that there will be room for magnanimity on the political front.

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's liberal outlook and his desire to normalise relations with the US are well known. Washington's recent decision exempting European companies dealing with Iran from the sanctions mandated by congressional legislation indicates that it is willing to recognise how counterproductive its approach of 'containment' has been. It is likely that the slight softening implicit in Albright's speech is a response to the new situation created in West Asia by South Asia's recent nuclearisation. The warm support Pakistan's nuclear tests commanded among the Arab states has alerted Washington. Though it is foolish to think of Chagai in terms of an 'Islamic Bomb', it is clear that Israel's nuclear dominance over the entire region has ended. Washington knows it can no longer act in the old way.

Given its suspicions about Iran's nuclear ambitions — and its failure to detect the preparations for the Indian tests — the Clinton administration is realising the folly of trying to isolate Iran. With Chinese long-range missiles in Saudi Arabia and Chinese-assisted nuclear weapons in Pakistan, Iran is bound to feel extremely vulnerable. Despite the Clinton administration's permissiveness towards Chinese proliferation activities, there are influential sections in the US foreign policy and intelligence establishment which consider China's policies to be aimed at countering Washington's influence in the West Asian and Gulf region. One way for the US to attenuate the impact of China's power projection is to normalise relations with Iran. Iran is the shortest export route for Central Asian energy resources and the US may now be inclined to reconsider whether the pipeline from Central Asia to the Sindh-Baluchistan coast is in its best interest, given the China-Pakistan nuclear axis.

Objectively speaking, a nuclear Pakistan backed by China poses more problems to the US than a nuclear India or an unfriendly Iran. No doubt in the short run the US may not want to annoy Pakistan since the latter can always threaten to proliferate nuclear weapons. However, in the longer run, the US will find it has no alternative but to cultivate ties with Iran. Certainly its attempt to isolate the country will prove counterproductive. The present divide between 'radicals' and 'moderates' — exemplified by the trial of Teheran's mayor and the impeachment of interior minister Abdollah Nouri — has more to do with internal liberalisation than external relations. If the US sheds its fundamentalist anti-Iran policy, major sections of Iranian society are likely to respond positively.

On the internet....

Iran has for the first time put majlis, nawha ('nawhe'), taziya, history, etc. pertaining to the Kerbala Epic on the Net. It is accessible through Netiran.com and also directly through www.irna.com/ashura.

soccer team in the early 1960s and then coached club sides in Iran, the UAE and Singapore as well as the Indonesia Olympics team in 1996.

In the World Cup, Iran impressed many observers by losing narrowly 1-0 to Yugoslavia and 2-0 to Germany after they beat the United States 2-1.



Book Review:

A Guide to Islamic Medical Ethics: Based on Authoritative Contemporary Sources

Translator: Hamid Mavani

Price: CDN \$5 plus postage for CANADA

All others— US \$4 plus postage

Available from Mihrab Publishers, Tayyiba Publishers or O.A.I.K. & H.S.

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H3G 2M7

Canada

E-mail: hmavani@nls.net

This booklet is an English translation of a Persian monograph on Islamic medical ethics that was composed on the basis of the rulings (fatawa) of three eminent jurists, namely, Ayatullah Khumayni, Ayatullah Gulpaygani and Ayatullah Araki. It examines many issues that have been raised in the scientific community on account of rapid advancements in the field of bio-technology. Issues such as doctor-patient relationship, liability, professional fees, euthanasia, organ transplantation, sex change, abortion, surrogate motherhood, autopsy, experimentation, blood transfusion, and dentistry are among the many subjects dealt in the booklet. It is an authoritative guide and easy to read. It is useful even for those who are in the taqlid of other mujtahids as there is generally a consensus among the jurists on these issues.

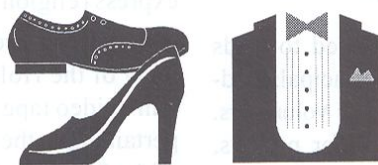
Alarming disclosures from Pakistan

A Report released recently by the UN Drugs Control Programme about drug abuse in Pakistan makes alarming reading. It says that the use of heroin is increasing at a horrifying rate. According to the report, the number of drug and heroin addicts (1.5 million of the latter among 3.7 million total drug-abusers) is the highest in developing countries. These disclosures indeed are mortifying and would lead one, not unjustifiably though, to believe that narcotics control was not deemed a priority issue in Pakistan. In addition to thousands of lives, mostly young, being destroyed by drug addiction, the country's image and reputation is also being tarnished in foreign lands as a supplier of narcotic drugs. The number of Pakistanis languishing in jails in foreign countries or who have been executed for drug-related offences is by no means small.

The domestic aspect of the problem of drug menace is most disturbing. It is true that the country is not wanting in laws against drug-related offences. Yet the menace is spreading, testifying to the fact that laws are not being enforced strictly while publicity on the dangers of drug abuse are inadequate --- it is necessary to drum into the ears of the people the colossal damage drug abuse causes the nation. The most disturbing fact is that the majority of the country's addicts are under 35 years of age which should be a matter of serious concern to leaders and administrators.

Pakistan cannot let the youth who are the bloom of the population to wilt under the pernicious influence of narcotics. Not only there should be adequate number of rehabilitation centres for those who wish to come out of the evil influence, there should also be enough effort to dissuade people, especially those who are likely to be more prone to fall under the influence, through extensive and effective propaganda by all possible means. What is needed is a well thought out and well executed campaign to raise the people's awareness about the problem. To be effective and useful, such campaigns should be sustained and should be relentless. However as things stand now, one is pained to note the absence of even a sustained campaign on the audio-visual media against drugs abuse.

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IEB and NASIMCO initiate unique lecture facilities for Madrasahs

The Islamic Education Board and NASIMCO have initiated a series of lectures and workshops targeted to all Madrasah personnel, youths and the community at large that can be held at any location.

This pilot project has been initiated after several requests and suggestions by members who have attended these courses and found them very useful. Those who have previously participated are convinced that the lectures and workshops should be made available because of the immense benefits they offer.

These Portable Courses will:

- * Make available to all Madaris the tremendous resources and information that exists within our communities.
- * Invest in substantive education for the teachers and youths of all our communities.
- * Facilitate and allow the Madrasah to benefit from the dedicated volunteers who can be used as resource persons and as consultants in their area(s) of expertise.

These experienced presenters have graciously agreed to conduct their popular lectures and workshops on a voluntary basis, upon request.

All the courses are geared towards Madrasah Personnel: Principals, Administrators, Teachers, and Volunteers. Some are also suitable for parents, youths and the community at large.

The Course titles include:

- *Comparative Religions
- *Teaching Techniques.
- *Crisis of Conscience
- *Electronic Medium as a Madrasah Resource
- *Teaching Qur'an

To organize Portable Courses at one's Madrasah or Jamaat, the following needs to be done:

1. Identify 2-3 possible dates for holding the Portable Course at your site. (Allow at least 4-8 weeks advance notice to facilitate adequate planning and

Shia Ithnaasheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles hosts Husein Day Program

from Yasmin Kermalli, Los Angeles

A Husein Day program was successfully organised by the Shia Ithnaasheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles at the Huseini Imambara on 13 June, 1998. In attendance were, the honorable Mayor of Pico Rivera, Mr. Garth Gardener, Hujjatul Islam Syed Mustafa Qazwini, resident Aalim and founder of the Islamic Center of Orange County, Brother Hassanain Rajabali, visiting speaker from New York, members of the Southern Baptist Church and several friends and neighbours from other religious backgrounds. The attendance was over 200 people and the program lasted about two hours, after which dinner was served on the lawn.

The program began with the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, Sura Al Fateha recited in Arabic by Naushad Khakoo and subsequently translated in English by Emil Ali. The next 20 minutes were spent viewing an edited version of the tape "Introduction to Islam".

Syed Mustafa Qazwini spoke for about 20 minutes on the significance of the sacrifice of Imam Husein and how that event, which occurred only 50 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., shaped the future of Islam. He talked about the freedom to practice religion, which we enjoy in America and the erosion of morality in our society.

Brother Hassanain also spoke for 20 minutes on the actions we Muslims should take in our daily lives. The message of Imam Husein a.s. should not be ignored and the essence of his martyrdom is the fact that when falsehood battles with truth, truth always prevails.

The Master of Ceremonies, Hasnain Khaku, then introduced the Mayor of Pico Rivera, Garth Gardener, who expressed his pleasure at attending our meeting and offered the services of his office at any time. He assured us that his office would always uphold the two guarantees in the American constitution, namely the separation of Church and State, and the freedom to express religion.

Iqbal Somji, President of Los Angeles Jamaat, presented the Mayor with a copy of the Holy Qur'an in English and a copy of the "Introduction to Islam" video tape. The audience was given about 10 minutes to ask questions pertaining to the topics of the day and the program concluded with the Ziyarat of the Prophet and his holy progeny recited in English by Alijawad Kermalli.

Dinner was served in the lawn at about 6:30 p.m. under the clear skies of Southern California. The members of our community had the opportunity to mingle and acquaint each other with our guests.

This is the first time in Los Angeles, where the Husein Day program was entirely in English. Over 100 invitations were delivered door to door to our non Muslim neighbours in the area surrounding our Imambara in Pico Rivera.

An essay competition based on the proceedings was organized by Dr. Murtadha Khakoo, Principal, Huseini Madrasah and Br. Khalil Dewji. The competition was divided into three age groups with prizes earmarked for the winners. Generally the Husein Day program was extremely successful and was funded in its entirety with the help of our community members.

notifications).

2. Select the Course(s) of your choice.
3. Find out the availability of presenters and make the necessary arrangements.

The host community is expected to arrange for fares and accommodations of the presenter(s). The volunteering Presenters do not expect to be paid.



Zohra Habib, 15 wins 'Democracy' essay competition

A 10th-grade Myrtle Beach High School, USA student, Zohra M. Habib, 15 won \$ 300 for an essay "My Voice in Democracy" which won first place in the Voice of Democracy contest sponsored by local veteran groups.

The daughter of Mazaher and Fatima Habib, Zohra plans to attend the University of South California and pursue a career in pharmacy.

In her essay she wrote:

"Democracy. What democracy? Democracy is the form of government in which a substantial portion of the citizenry directly or indirectly participate in ruling the state. The term democracy is derived from the Greek word *demos* (the people) and *kratia* (rule). The first forms of democratic government developed in the Greek city-state during the sixth century B.C. Democracy has attracted support from the time of ancient Greece until today because it represents an ideal justice as well as a form of government.

Being a US citizen and living in this great country, quite frankly, I have not given serious thought to the word "democracy" until now even though I live in the midst of the world's best democratic country and enjoy its fruits in every walk of my life. In this great country of ours, I have the complete freedom to choose where I live, what school I wish to attend, what friends I want, what clothes I want to wear, what kind of books I want to read, who I want to vote for (that is when I am eligible to vote) and above all, what I want to be when I grow up. These are some of the fruits of democracy I enjoy and whose provisions are guaranteed and safeguarded by our Constitution and included in our famous "Bill of Rights."

On the other hand, this word democracy and its benefits are either unknown or a complete anathema to citizens in those dictatorial, military or communist regimes like Zaire, Algeria, North Korea and many others. How very fortunate we are to be living in this country.

I have friends and relatives living in different parts of the world like Africa, Latin America and South East Asia where in many countries the only "rights" the citizens have are "no rights at all." Might is right and numerous volumes of citizens are made to succumb to the dictators who kill and loot their country's wealth and heritage for personal gain. Contemporary history has a record of brutal dictators like Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Mobutu and Sadam Hussein.

It is inconceivable to imagine how we in the western hemisphere, in countries like the United States, Canada, England, Germany and Japan, live in such abundance of freedom and economic splendour while our brothers and sisters exist in such "brutal and squalid conditions." Like when we go to school, a nutritious lunch is given to the children while the children from third world countries are roaming the streets looking in garbage cans for food to eat. Hearing, reading and seeing tales of human atrocities committed on fellow human beings in places like Bosnia, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, Cambodia and other places makes it even more imperative that the civilised democratic nations utilise all their combined might, especially their economic might, to ensure that certain freedoms such as human rights must be observed.

Free and fair elections must be held and finally the light of freedom and democracy should be spread all over the world. It is not impossible to achieve this goal. Single voices and collective aspirations like those of Nelson Mandela proved this possibility in South Africa.

Wouldn't it be a much better place if the sun were to rise and shine on happy smiling faces of children rather than on sad tear-stained ones? It can be achieved ---through the power of democracy. Democracy is not a destination, it is a journey; an all humans have a right to travel this journey."

Iranian team conquers Mount Everest....saves two lives

On June 16, 1998 President Mohammad Khatami of Iran honoured a 17-man Iranian team which reached the world's highest summit, Mount Everest on May 20 this year.

In a meeting with the Board of Directors of the Iranian Mountaineering Federation and members of the team who conquered the 8,848 metre high peak, President Khatami said that paying due attention to sports is the requirement of a developed community.

He said the government has plans to promote sports in various ways so as to attract and encourage youths who have a good potential to enhance their high talents. He said that those who stepped on to the world's highest peak were symbols of powerful men as well as the symbol of superiority of man to nature.

He added, "*the human power which is superior to that of mountains should be put at the service of humanity. For us, the Muslims, the power should be employed for submission to the Almighty God and for freedom in the face of powers other than God.*"

The President also thanked the Iranian climbers for saving the lives of two other mountaineers who they found stranded on the mountain.

Referring to Iran's role in the World Cup in France, President Khatami said, "*for us, victory or failure is normal. The real victory is that the man (sportsmen) do their best.*"

No revenge is more honourable than the one not taken.

Extravagance is a waste ---- a man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two watches is never exactly sure.

Avoid the evil and the sinful and vices will then avoid you.

Listen or your tongue will keep you deaf!

MUHARRAM 1419 IN TRINIDAD AND GUYANA

A Report from the Secretary of Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas

"This year Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas participated in Muharram Commemoration in Trinidad and Guyana from 1 May to 15 May, 1998. This the fifth year that BMMA participated. Alhamdulillah all went well. Here are the details.

I arrived in Trinidad on May 2. The *Azadari* of Aba Abdillahl Husayn (a.s.) has already started at our center in Port of Spain. Unfortunately BMMA could not get a suitable lecturer willing to go to Trinidad this time. I continued with the majlises at the center and also visited the various *chowks* where the *tazias* are constructed. I could not attend to all the *chowks* at the same time and therefore had to restrict my talks to a couple of them. Br. Gulam Abbas Jaffer joined me from Orlando.

On Monday morning I was accompanied by Br. Luqman from Barataria mosque at 6.00 a.m. to participate in a morning edition television program which was aired live. This was a very interesting half an hour program and by the Grace of Almighty Allah we managed to cover a lot of ground in educating the public of Trinidad and Tobago on the significance of *Azadari* and the Hosay Procession in St. James in Trinidad. Another TV program was scheduled at 11.00 a.m. This time I was accompanied by the Emir of Imaame Zamana Mission, Br. Karim Ebrahim. This was a live program also and our segment was for seven minutes only. We however took advantage of this situation in promoting the school of Ahlul bayt.

The procession in St. James began on Tuesday night. It began with a Flag Night for Hazrat Abbas (a.s.). The small Hosay Procession came out on Wednesday night and the big Hosay Procession, known as *Qatal Ki Raat* was on Thursday night. These events started with prayers at around 7.30 p.m. in respective *chowks* conducted by Sunni mullahs followed by a ten minute talk on the significance of these programs by a representative of BMMA. Nivaz was served (usually was *seero*

which they call '*malida*') and at around 11.00 p.m. the *tazia* procession came out from the *chowks* on the western main road in St. James. The procession continued till around 3.00 a.m. when the *tazias* returned to their respective *chowks*. 200 books on Imam Hassan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.), 100 books on Islam and 10,000 flyers were distributed by BMMA during these processions.

The majlises and *Azadari* at the center continued every night and on Thursday, the day of Ashura, we performed the aamal of Aashura at the center, participated in an afternoon procession in San Juan which was organized by our brothers in Barataria, returned to the center for maghribain prayers, recited *Dua Kumail* and then proceeded to St. James to participate in the procession with the *tazia* by the St. James and Cocorite Hosay Association. The procession from the center to St. James commenced at 9.00 p.m. This procession arrived at St. James by 9.45 p.m. and we congregated at a Square which was made available to us thanks to the efforts of Br. Hamdu Emamali, the local representative of BMMA in Trinidad and Tobago. This was turning point in the history of Trinidad with Shias clad in black chanting '*Ya Husayn, Ya Husayn*' and doing *maatam* at the Square. Then Br. Emamali gave a speech followed by Br. Luqman and finally by Br. Karim Ebrahim. Ziyarat was recited Br. Luqman and then food was served to the participants. For the first time in the history of St. James, *sharbat* was served to the public. By 11.00 p.m. this program was over and at that point and time the *tazias* with drums poured out on the street. This event was hosted and financed entirely by Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas.

On Friday morning, Br. Gulam Abbas and I drove to Santa Cruz to the School for the Blind in Trinidad. This was a milestone achieved by BMMA on the humanitarian agenda. Br. Gulam Abbas Jaffer donated the much needed Braille Paper to the school on behalf of BMMA. This gift was received by Miss. Borneo, the CEO of the Trinidad

Association for the Blind. BMMA has promised the school to upgrade their computer equipment and supply them with latest Braille machines for the blind children. BMMA will also supply the Holy Qur'an and other literature in Braille to the school. Donations are welcome for this purpose.

After Jumaa prayers, *sharbat* was served to the public in the vicinity of the center. Br. Gulam Abbas and I then proceeded to a place called Karbala where the *Tazias* and the *moons* had gathered to conduct afternoon prayers there. Again history was made. For the first time in the history of Trinidad, prayers were conducted by a foreigner, a representative of BMMA. This time the prayer was not on the format of *Janaza* prayers as was previously conducted. It was a simple recitation of the Holy Qur'an and duas for and on behalf of the participants. The whole process was very well received and appreciated by the local Shias and was televised in the evening on a program called 'Panorama'

Majlises were held at the center in the evening of Saturday and Sunday. The *chowks* held the '*tija*' majlis on Sunday afternoon. I could attend only two *chowks*. Br. Gulam left for George town, Guyana and was scheduled to wait for me there. BMMA donated Islamic calendars, *turbas*, *tasbeehs* and prayer mats to the center. All the *niyaz* for the 12 days of Muharram and other expenses were financed by BMMA. It was noted that computer equipment in the center needs upgrading.

I arrived in Georgetown, Guyana on Monday afternoon and was received at the airport by Br. Muhammad Zanjibari from Linden. I stayed the night in Linden where Br. Zanjibari is running a madressah called Madressah AsSadiq under the auspices of Tablighate Madaris. BMMA presented Islamic Calendars and other books to Br. Zanjibari. His request for other books will also be met. Br. Gulam Abbas and I proceeded to Berbice on Tuesday afternoon and visited Br. Latif Ali, the President of Pioneer Shia Islamic Association of Guyana at East Kanje where he is running a madressah which is financed completely by BMMA. Maghribain prayers are held daily and all the *wafats* and birthdays and other

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Shia events are also conducted. BMMA hosted one *niyaz* and presented calendars and other literature including *turba* and *tasbeeh*. A computer donated to Pioneer Shia Islamic Organization of Guyana by BMMA was seen to require upgrading.

We were fortunate to be introduced to an organization called Guyana Sad'r Islamic Anjuman who are sympathetic to Shias and deadly against the Wahabbis. This organization gets food and other gifts from the USA Embassy in Guyana for distribution to the needy and has gladly agreed to share these with us. BMMA has coordinated the pick up of the food for onward delivery to Linden and Berbice where they will be distributed to the needy. BMMA is exploring other humanitarian avenues to help the needy in Guyana. Another milestone was thus achieved by BMMA.

The present population of Shias in Trinidad is approximately 350. This includes the Indian and African ethnic Trinidadians. Our center is flourishing. There is still some work to be done. The shops have to be rented to responsible persons so that the income generated could offset the very high utility bills. The vocational training center needs to be equipped and furnished. So is the case with the Walk in Clinic. Informal meetings have been made with various ministry officials including the Minister of Education.

With financial help and assistance BMMA will be able to achieve its targets Inshallah. Guyana is also in desperate need of a Shia center. There are more mosques per capita in Guyana than anywhere in the world. This is in the Guinness book of records but sadly not a single mosque is Shi'te. The Wahabbis have proliferated and millions of dollars are pouring from Saudi Arabia. Their main theme is to stop the commemoration of Prophet's Birthday and denigration and ostracizing the Shias. The former has earned them the wrath of the majority of Sunni brothers and the latter has earned sympathy for our brothers and sisters. BMMA wants

Khomeini's daughter blames media for undermining the ideal role of Muslim women

A two-day seminar held in Mumbai, India by the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai to commemorate the 9th death anniversary of legendary Iranian revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had a distinguished keynote speaker, his youngest daughter.

Clad in a stark black silk *chador* and flaunting a chunky gold ring on the middle finger of her left hand, 66 year-old Khanum Farideh Mostafavi presented a paper on *The Role of Khomeini in Womens' Activities in Society*. In her presentation, translated from original Persian into English for the local audience, Mostafavi extolled her father's appreciation of the crucial role played by women in Iran's Islamic revolution.

Later, this daughter of Khomeini, who had led the 1979 Islamic Revolution that overthrew the Shah of Iran, spoke to the Mumbai press through an interpreter at the Y.B. Chavan Centre.

Recalling her childhood, Mostafavi said, "I was born in Qum, a small town in central Iran not far from Teheran. Ours was a compact family of five children, two sons and three daughters all deeply devoted to Islam. Our father was a warm and sincere man who practised his religious principles with zeal, but he never tried to impose his views on us. As children, we held him in high esteem."

While highlighting the dignity and respect bestowed on women by Islam, she lashed out at the Western media for what she charged was their anti-Islamic stance. "The Western media's propaganda against Islam betrays their hatred for the religion," she fumed.

She exalted Islam's liberal and progressive role in Muslim womens' lives, claiming that Iranian women are far more advanced, better educated and dedicated to their families than their counterparts in other Islamic countries. "At the time of marriages, they can lay down certain conditions and they have a legal right to divorce," she stated.

She credited the enhanced status of Iranian women to her late father. "He did not believe in the exploitation of women and treated them with dignity. As a result of his efforts, the women in my country are today as free as men and can make great strides in their respective careers," she observed.

Asked what attributes would define an ideal woman, she retorted, "One who follows her religion with utmost devotion, is highly educated, an exemplary mother and is prepared to go even to the battlefield." With a Ph.D. in Theology and Islamic Studies and being a lecturer on this subject at Teheran University, Mostafavi is conversant in only the Persian (Farsi) language. She has one daughter. At her brief encounter with the press, she exposed only her face.

to capitalize this situation and proliferate the teachings of Ahlulbayt through the *salaam* and *ta'azeem* of Prophet Muhammad(s.a.w.) YOU CAN HELP BMMA HELP OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN GUYANA AND FLY THE FLAG OF PANJATAN THERE. For more information please contact

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Minnesota Retreat a success

The US Memorial Day weekend brought our community members from across North America to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Anjumane-e-Asghari Islamic Center was the host Jamaat for the Curriculum Development Process (CDP) Retreat held from Friday, 22 May to Monday, 25 May, 1998. Of the 65 participants, 48 delegates were from out of town representing 12 different Madaris.

The Retreat was sponsored by IEB-Nasimco and co-sponsored by the Africa Federation and the Council of European Jamaats which also sent a representative. The Retreat was designed to achieve three objectives:

- Elicit input for the Curriculum Development Process (CDP).
- Facilitate networking amongst various Madaris.
- Give glimpses of available resources that can be of use readily by the Madaris

The Retreat revealed the Minnesota Jamaat's skill and professionalism in meticulous planning. The set up and organization were excellent. What was heart warming was that each member of the community was involved and volunteered to do whatever it took, from transporting guests to and fro, preparing and serving snacks and meals, general arrangements, to audio visual equipment set up, in making the Retreat a success. The local cost of the Retreat was borne by the members of the Minnesota Jamaat with their amazing individual contributions of time, effort, and materials. Even the sightseeing tour was sponsored fully by a local community member. All of these were achieved under the seasoned leadership and wise counsel of the President of Anjumane-e-Asghari, Brother Hussein Walji, his Executive Committee, and the commitment, hard work and professional executional abilities of Brother Shabbir Karim and his dedicated team of volunteers.

The Saturday morning session started with an inspiring welcoming remarks from the host Jamaat President, Brother

Hussein Walji, who focused on the need to collectively invest in the well being of our future generation. He reiterated the commitment of his Executive Committee and the community members to the cause of our children, of which the excellent facilities of Anjuman-e-Asghari was a testimony. He welcomed the guests to enjoy the Minnesota Jamaat's hospitality and wished the participants a successful Retreat.

Dr. Liyakatali Takim, Chairman of IEB-Nasimco, followed by inviting the participants not only to fully engage in the CDP but also to provide their continued support to all the projects that IEB-Nasimco has undertaken. He mentioned that the curriculum had been raised as the most pressing issue during his recent visits to all the Nasimco member Jamaat Madaris in North America. Hence, the April Conference in Toronto and this Retreat in Minneapolis focused on the Curriculum Development Process to address some of the issues that were raised.

Dr. Bashir Dattoo of Princeton, New Jersey gave an overview of the proceedings. He went on to explain the suggested ten steps in the Curriculum Development Process. To make the process manageable, the initial focus was on two courses, Akhlaq (ethics) and Tarikh (history). The idea is to take the process to the point where the broad outline of the courses are formulated but details may be filled in at a later date. The April Conference in Toronto had done some of the groundwork. The two Saturday workshops were designed to elicit input for the conceptual framework for Akhlaq and Tarikh, while the four Sunday workshops sought input to identify themes and sub-themes that should be folded into the framework. The participants provided a wealth of information and ideas during the workshops. This was truly an attestation to the commitment, caliber and resourcefulness of the participants in these workshops.

The presentations on Saturday afternoon focused on Madrasah Resources. The sessions were very educational and

were designed to give relevant and useful information that the participants could apply to their own Madrasah immediately.

Shaykh Hasnain Kassamali of Vancouver gave an overview of the available texts and distributed handouts. While he encouraged the use of new texts, he cautioned against indiscriminate use of the new texts without adequate review.

Sister Sakina Dewji of Toronto held a session on classroom management. She stressed the positive approach to prevention and intervention of undesirable behavior. She had a very entertaining presentation where she also redefined "give me five" as a call to summon all five senses of students in order to better engage them in the classroom.

Brother Shabbir Yusufali of Minneapolis gave a glimpse of available electronic resources on the Internet, from programs teaching Arabic, to those teaching Quranic recitation and Tajweed. He also made an impressive multimedia lesson presentation on the ahkam of the Pilgrimage of Hajj.

The method of efficiently organizing a library was presented by Sister Kaniz Sumar of Toronto. She presented elements necessary to set up a good library, including issues of physical set up, classification, operating procedures and rules and regulations. She is also working to identify software to automate library functions. Once tested, she plans to make the findings available to all those interested. Sister Sumar has been involved with the Jafferi Islamic Center Library in Toronto since its inception.

The keynote speaker on Saturday night, Dr. Muhsin Alidina of New York, made a brilliant presentation that was enlightening, witty, and at the same time challenged all to think afresh and consider a paradigm shift. After elaborating on various terminology and processes of curriculum versus syllabus development, he went on to tease the audience

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with his contention that we should be bold enough to look at some successful models of secular and other religious education and selectively adopt some of the relevant methodologies and tools in our Madaris. His talk was as enjoyable and educational as it was thought provoking.

The Council of European Jamaat's representative, Sister Marziya Panju, a teacher by profession in England, brought a fresh perspective on considering the learner in the process of curriculum development. Her perspective emphasized the latent desire in children to learn, stressing that teachers should educate with a view to kindle the fire of learning in our children rather than forcefully try to instill it. This process requires that we listen and hear the children more intently in order to understand their current position, thus enabling us to take them to where we want them to be emotionally and intellectually.

Sunday morning was spent in the workshop, where the participants spoke on the themes and sub-themes for Akhlaq and Tarikh frameworks that had been discussed the previous day. The workshops were moderated by Shaykh Hasnain Kassamali, Brother Hamid Mavani of Akron (Ohio), Dr. Muhsin Alidina and Dr. Bashir Dato. The afternoon saw the high spirited delegates embark on a sightseeing tour of the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The tour was arranged and sponsored entirely by the Minnesota Jamaat. It was a time for socializing and networking, a relaxed and fun afternoon.

The Sunday night program was open to the entire community and commenced with the recognition of Brother Hussein Walji, President of Minnesota Jamaat. Dr. Ansar Ahmed, a member of the Northwest and Hennepin County Board, presented Brother Hussein Walji with a Social Service Award from the Northwest and Hennepin counties, for his outstanding services to the community. This award had been officially presented to Brother Hussein Walji at the County Council Chambers two days earlier.

Brother Mujtaba Dato of Los Angeles, who had in the last two days very ably chaired the sessions, was as usual

eloquent as Master of Ceremonies. He drew the analogy of the Curriculum Development Process to that of a farmer replanting the same seeds seasonally, but using new methodologies of weather condition tracking and reporting, innovative planting tools and techniques, and generally modern information to reap improved and healthier crop and yield --- and so it is with our children. We want to sow the same seeds in them to grow into strong Shia Islamic identities, using an updated curriculum that will help them attain the characteristics enumerated in "The Target Profile of a Madrasah Graduate", which was previously defined and published by IEB-Nasimco. The community in Minnesota was then apprised of proceedings of the prior two days by Dr. Bashir Dato.

Brother Sadik Alloo of Los Angeles, the Retreat Coordinator, made the closing remarks where he thanked the Minnesota Jamaat, and the task force members, Shauzab Dinani, Mumtaz Ladak, Batul Najfi, Shabbir Karim, Sakina Dewji, Seyeda Dato and Nisar Sheraly. Dr. Takim's leadership and commitment was also applauded. And the support of the Nasimco Executive Committee was obvious with the presence of Brother Gulam Sajan (President), Brother Gulamabbas Khakoo (Vice President), and Brother Asghar Naqvi (Secretary) at the Retreat. The participants and all those who contributed their time and efforts made this Retreat a reality and a very successful one. Alloo also made the call to action and involvement by all the community members who have the ability and the desire to make a difference in the lives of our children.

The Retreat was a resounding success. All those who attended felt that they had contributed and put their signatures to the Curriculum Development Process. They learnt from the speakers and the various presentations. They networked, met old friends and made new friendships. The Minnesota community left a lasting impression of their professionalism and hospitality. All the objectives set at the outset for the Retreat were met with a sense of satisfaction and most participants wished that the Retreat could have been longer, a sign that they enjoyed themselves. Now we must all play our part.

View on a Mixed Seminar on Shafa'a

by a correspondent

In June, 1998 a seminar on Shafa'a was held at the Khoja community centre in Milton Keynes. The emphasis was solely on obtaining Islamic knowledge and pooling together of ideas and thoughts. I do not wish to dwell on the content of the seminar but on the format.

It was a mixed gathering. On one side of the hall sat the women and on the other the men - there was no partition. There were youth speakers both boys and girls from different communities speaking on the subject. It was a small gathering and informal but the atmosphere was different to any seminar I have ever been to in terms that it was very relaxed and one was never afraid to view one's opinion.

After Shafa'a, there was a discussion on ideas that could be implemented in order to improve the situation of not only Muslim youths but the whole community in general. It was the first time I saw so many youths from different communities sharing what they had in common.

I really enjoyed the seminar - it was of immense educational interest, it was current, there was respect and it was all within the regulations of Islam. To me, it was a step in the right direction. The location was good, the speakers were good, the contributors were good, the hospitality was good and so was the food!

I suppose this was an example where mixed gatherings actually worked. As I think of it now, it was like a talk show on television. We were seated on chairs and the chairman kept running around with a portable microphone in his hand so that we could give our opinions.

The opportunity to meet Muslims from other communities was also helpful and encouraging. It was a forum where we all shared something in common. What did however upset me at the end was when long speeches were made. The contents of the speeches could easily have been shortened. I hope that in future a forum where Muslim youths from different communities can meet is once again organized; this will bring scattered Muslims closer.



World Federation hosts 3rd Executive Council Meeting at Toronto

The Community of Toronto welcomed Councillors attending the Executive Council of the World Federation by responding in good numbers to attend the "World Federation evening" on Friday 19 June 1998 organised by the Secretariat of the World Federation.

Members of Toronto Jamaat saw an exhibition display on the various activities of the World Federation, appreciated the insight given on the activities and working of the World Federation and then heard the keynote address from the President of the World Federation Alhaj Mulla Asgharali M M Jaffer.

In his address, the President emphasised that the breadth of activities undertaken by the World Federation can only be undertaken by a young team at the Secretariat and not by one person. The virtue of leadership, he reposed, lies in building confidence and consensus within the team.

The next day, the host - Islamic Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat of Toronto made arrangements for the Councillors to visit 9000 Bathurst, an expansive 28 acre site where an impressive Al Sadiq Primary School is based. The Councillors were moved by the efforts put in by all concerned in making sure that the school instils Islamic etiquette in our children. The Councillors learned that establishing a school and then running it is a difficult task but it is not impossible when the Community as a whole is moved to appreciate the immense benefit that is accruing to children of the Community.

The Third Meeting of the Executive Council was held on Saturday 20 June, 1998 in the Jaffery Islamic Centre, Bayview where over 200 Councillors, Invitees and Observers attended. Among the attendees were Haji Gulamabbas Sajan - President of Nasimco, Haji Nazir Gulamhussein - President of Toronto Jamaat, Haji Mohamed Jaffer Hasham, Haji Aliraza Rajani, all from Canada. Haji Shakir Mukhi, President of New York Jamaat,

Haji Habib M Habib, all from the United States of America. Haji Aliraza Lakhani from Karachi represented the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamat of Karachi. Many Councillors representing member Jamats of Europe were also present. A special visitor to the meeting was the Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Mr Tony Valerie.

Attendees heard the welcome address from the President of Toronto Jamaat followed by the address from the President of Nasimco. The President of the World Federation then reviewed the immediate past quarter.

Reflecting on the international scene, he informed the attentive audience of the calamities that befell Shia Muslims in Pakistan, earthquake victims in Iran and Afghanistan and affliction within our Community due to cyclone in Western Gujarat. He said the World Federation raised its voice against injustices and provided assistance to victims of natural disasters wherever it could.

Massacres of Muslims in Pakistan has been of concern. He said that the World Federation Secretariat wrote to the Pakistan Embassy demanding that the Government of Pakistan take stern measures against the perpetrators and create conditions to remove sectarian killings.

He said that the World Federation provided financial relief to earthquake victims of Iran and Afghanistan and sent Indian Rupees 325,000 for immediate assistance for members of our Community afflicted by the cyclone in Jamnagar, Lalpur, Malia, Miana, Nawlakhi and Mandvi.

In Gujarat, after a 7 year lapse, he said that the World Federation revived the water programme whereby bore wells are dug in suitable places to benefit our and other communities. The President reported that the Water Purification Project in Alipur had been completed. This provides clean water to our Communities and as a result many diseases

previously transmitted from contaminated water will be eradicated.

Finally, the President made an appeal for Islamic Education Board programmes. He reminded the Council that 1997-2000 has been designated as a term for Islamic Education Board. Many projects including publications of books, distribution of books, providing education resources to Madressas, Schools and Universities are undertaken at considerable financial cost. This requires constant funding and he requested the Councillors to make an appeal in their own Community for financial contributions. It was stipulated that £90 per year or 25 pence a day from every individual of our Community would go a long way in ensuring that this work can continue unhindered.

The President of Nasimco, Haji Gulamabbas Sajan, led the delegation of NASIMCO Office Bearers at the Executive Council meeting.

Accounts

The Honorary Treasurer, Haji Ahmed Daya presented the accounts of the period 1 January 1998 to 30 April 1998. Queries were ably dealt with by him and to the satisfaction of the Councillors and Invitees present in the meeting.

Medical Advisory Board

The Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board, Dr Mohamed Taki Walji emphasised the value of screening for our Communities in North America, particularly for Thallasemia as cousin marriages are common throughout the Community. He informed the Council that in this term, the MAB will be expanding on services already being carried out, so as to benefit the Community even more.

Islamic Education Board

Haji Mustafa Jaffer of IEB informed the Council that IEB will soon embark upon a programme of short Islamic Course for pre-University students. Other activities in the term will include widening of IEB services on the Internet

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and making available Islamic audio cassettes in Bosnian languages for Bosnian tabligh.

Career Education Training Advisory Board

The Chairman of CETAB, Dr Ahmed Hassam impressed upon the Council that member Jamats and Organisations must promote higher education within the Community, particularly for girls. He assured the Council that career guidance will continue for students so that they can choose the right career.

He further emphasised that our aim must also be to improve the standard of education provided within our Community educational establishments in Toronto, London, Karachi and East Africa.

Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme

The Chairman of Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme, Haji Mohamed Visram elaborated on the need to expand the graduate education scheme which was recently launched. He informed the Council that his team is looking into improving the existing schools built by the World Federation and whether a fee paying school can be a viable proposition in parts of India.

External Liaison Desk

Brother Yasin Rahim of External Liaison Desk presented a paper on Interfaith - An action plan for implementation. The paper if acted upon can go some way towards creating a framework in which we as Muslim minority group in Europe, Canada and United States are able to interact with the wider society.

Karachi

The Council heard Haji Aliraza Lakhani elaborating upon the activities of Karachi Jamat. The Jamat, he said, was registered in 1892 and presently has an infrastructure to cater for the needs of its members in social welfare, health, education and shelter. More needs to be done to economically uplift many members of the Community in Karachi and one way to assist is for

Toronto's Shazia wins two DECA Medals

Shazia Damji of Toronto clinched two medals in the International Distributed Education Clubs of America (DECA) Competition held in April, 1998 in Denver, Colorado.

DECA is a Club for students interested in business studies. To promote students' interest in business studies and general career skills, DECA organises an annual International Competition in oral and written business skills.

Shazia was the Co-Chairman of the Richmond Hill High School DECA Chapter. To qualify for the Colorado event she obtained first place overall in her category in the Ontario Provincial competition beating several hundred other students and was also first in the regional written competition held prior to this.

businessmen of the Community to invest in Pakistan.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the host Jamat - Islamic Ithnaasheri Jamaat of Toronto.

The next meeting will be held in Peterborough, United Kingdom on 10 October 1998.

Publications

Four publications were distributed in Toronto. Copies were also posted to all Jamaats around the world. Further copies can be ordered from the World Federation Secretariat.

The list of books and cassettes available from IEB include:

Our Health in Our Hands - a collection of 9 Health Education Leaflets produced by MAB for our community

Are They Medically Compatible for Marriage? - Proceedings of a Seminar on community health awareness organised by Hyderi Health Sub-committee

Working together at the cost of a loaf of Bread - Report of the World Federation activities for the period October 1997 - May 1998.

With these achievements she qualified to join the Ontario delegation for the finals held in Denver, Colorado where several thousand students from five different countries and many different States within the US participated.

The competition was stiff and Shazia was placed in the 'top twenty' overall position in her category and also achieved a 'top ten' ranking for one of the oral competitions, both of which enabled her to qualify for the final round.

For these achievements she was awarded two medals, being among a few other Canadian students who also obtained medals.

Canada experiences difficult times

The Economy of Canada has again slackened and the Canadian Dollar has plunged to its all time low of below US\$0.64. Events in Asia and in Russia have contributed to this downward trend. Jobs are still scarce to find and business experiences tough competition making it hard to survive. Immigrants are advised to be cautious and not to plunge into business ventures before proper consultation, study and advice. There is steady flow of our brothers from Arab countries and East Africa and many have lost their capital in a hurry to buy or set up business. Even schooling and higher education require proper guidance to enable selection of the best institutes with due consideration of travel time. Our local Jamaat and Nasimco are open for advice.

Toronto's Ever Young Seniors....

Toronto's Jaffery Seniors Group, in summer, held one program every two weeks. They went out to places and even took a boat ride on the lake. There was also a trip to Niagara Falls to witness His Creation and experience spirituality. Community seniors enjoy such programmes thoroughly and it is thus planned to stretch these to the autumn season.



TURNING THE PROPHET'S WORDS INTO PROFITS

Islamic banking, with its strict codes, is growing fast. Last year, Citibank asked the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to approve an unusual type of trade-financing deal that charged no interest and was governed by Islamic principles. The New York Bank promptly gave its blessing. That it did was a testament to the growing role of Islamic banking in mainstream global finance. Indeed, in little more than two decades, Islamic banking has gone from nowhere to the big time, attracting major Western lenders, as well as some 200 players around the Muslim world.

Banks that follow sharia, or Islamic law, boasted assets totalling \$137 billion in 1996, a year in which they earned \$1.7 billion, says Samir Abed Shaikh, who is general secretary of the International Association of Islamic Banks in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Most of the leading Islamic banks are located in the Persian Gulf region, where Al Rajhi Banking & Investment Corp. in Saudi Arabia tops the list with assets totalling \$9 billion. The Islamic banking industry's assets have been growing at an annual clip of 15% for the past decade. "The progress has been fantastic," says Henry Azzam, chief economist of the National Commercial Bank of Saudi Arabia.

NO USURY. In addition to banning interest as a form of usury, Islamic banks follow a host of strict rules prohibiting them from earning money from activities that Muslims regard as unclean. The strict code hasn't stopped Western bankers from entering the fray. Citicorp, for example, set up Citi Islamic Investment Bank in Bahrain in 1996 after serving the market in other forms for 15 years. J.P. Morgan & Co., a long time adviser to some of the Gulf's Muslim rulers — as well as Deutsche Bank and the Netherlands' ABN AMRO Bank also have Islamic units.

Islamic banking took off during the mid-1970s when a surge in world oil prices poured billions of dollars into the coffers of the oil-producing Gulf states. Even before that, the independence that many Muslim countries gained in the 1960s reawakened an interest in Islamic heritage. Today, however, Islamic banking is tapping a new demographic reality. Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion. At the same time, more Muslims in Europe and the USA want financial services that reflect their religious beliefs. That's why some Islamic banks have set up shop not only in Europe but also in the USA. And with many Western-style lenders across Asia on the verge of collapse, some observers believe that Islamic banking may gain a foothold in the region, especially among the largely Muslim population in Indonesia. "These people want their own identity as Muslims, including financing," says Shaikh.

In recent years, Iran, Sudan, and Pakistan have banned traditional commercial banking and adopted Islamic banking models. Islamic countries' regulators also have moved to adopt common international standards for the industry, co-ordinated by a legal academy in Saudi Arabia.

Islamic banks are governed by reams of complex legal rulings that are known as *fatwas*, or interpretative applications of sayings from the Holy Qur'an. Each bank has its own Board of Muslim scholars to determine the suitability of banking services and investments. Islamic banks are limited by "sharia screens," which prohibit investment in such "sin" industries as gambling or weaponry. Everything else is governed by "sharia mirrors," or areas which are sanctioned by Islamic law, including education, food production, and bio-technology. So Islamic banks would be barred from speculating in pork bellies but not in cattle futures.

END RUNS. Bankers have devised

numerous ways to get around the Islamic ban on earnings from interest. For instance, importers and exporters of raw materials rely on a technique that is known as *murabaha*, such as the one that was approved by the New York Bank, to avoid the ban on interest. In this arrangement, a bank buys goods and sells them to a customer who then pays the bank at a future date and at a mark-up agreed upon by the bank and its customer. Another form of financing is known as *mudaraba*, under which investors might supply capital for a project while their bank provides the project with management. The bank and investors then share any profit or loss.

A consumer who wants to finance a new car under Islamic principles might lease it or agree to make a series of payments that total more than the sticker price. As with a loan, until the contract is fulfilled, the bank still owns the car. Just because the contract never refers to interest doesn't mean an Islamic bank can't make money.

Islamic Satellite launched

A Channel from the Satellite EUTELSAT II p3 has been launched, covering all the countries in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The Satellite Channel aims to spread the word of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) to the general public and to those who want to specialise in Islamic studies. The information and guidance about the teachings of Ahlul-Bayt (a.s.) and the real Islam are transmitted through various programmes aired through this satellite.

The International Colleges of Islamic Sciences, London will soon telecast educational programmes through this channel for those pursuing a degree. Transmission commenced on 26 May, 1998 for one hour daily from 0700 hrs. to 0800 hrs. (British Summer Time).



Wessex Jamaat hosts Husein Day

On Sunday, 10 May 1998, Wessex Jamaat, in collaboration with the World Federation, commemorated a multi faith Hussain Day at al-Mahdi. The occasion was attended by Church dignitaries, students from the Institute of Higher Learning in Chichester, local Members of Parliament, school teachers and many other leading citizens from Wessex. Jaffer Dharamsi was the Master of Ceremonies.

The programme commenced with the recitation from the Holy Qur'an and translation of the verses recited. The welcome address was given by Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, the Secretary General of the World Federation. He highlighted briefly the cause of Imam Hussain (a.s.) and the lessons to be learnt from the tragedy of Kerbala by each successive generation not only of the Muslim Ummah but also the entire mankind.

The next speaker was Dr. Abduljalil Sajid, JP, who is a leading member and scholar of the Sunni Community in the UK. He is the Imam of the Brighton Islamic Centre and was on the panel of the Runneymede Trust inquiry on Islamophobia. Imam Sajid is actively involved in the promotion of interfaith in Sussex.

Dr. Sajid spoke on the significance of Muharram and Martyrdom of Imam Hussein (a.s.) emphasising the fact that the event inspires mankind to confront and subjugate tyranny and oppression in every age. With Imam Hussain (a.s.) as a role model the Muslim Ummah, whenever faced with forces designed to destroy basic human values, would rise up to unfurl the banner of the freedom of human spirit.

Miss Arzina Merali, a school girl from Portsmouth, spoke on the Youths of Kerbala. She prefaced her speech with a brief exposition of the cause of Imam Hussain (a.s.). The holy Imam's sole purpose was to reform the *ummah* corrupted by the immorality flowing from the Ummayyade Court in Damascus and threatening to drown the human conscience. Imam Hussain's (a.s.) only weapons were *amr bil ma'ruf* and *nahya anil munkar*.

He had taken with him not an army of renowned soldiers but a few companions and a retinue of women and children. His youngest mujahid was a six-month-old baby who was to be slaughtered by an arrow from Yezid's archer.

The Reverend Michael Yorke, the Provost of the Portsmouth Cathedral and the Chairman of the Wessex interfaith group spoke on the Cost of Discipleship. He explained that he felt that it was an appropriate topic to discuss while commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s.) who had refused to lend legitimacy to a corrupt and dissolute ruler. The Provost also briefly outlined the basic theological differences between Islam and Christianity.

Mrs. Nowsheen Jaffer spoke movingly of the contribution of Bibi Zainab binti Ali. She described how her speech in the market place of Kufa had rekindled the Islamic conscience. She also described the role of Bibi Zainab in the court of Yezid and elucidated on how she exposed Yezid as a murderer and a greedy tyrant in front of his courtiers. Nowsheen then gave an account of how she had used the ruler's palace to begin *aza-e-Hussain*.

Mulla Asghar, President of the World Federation, spoke on the Message of Imam Hussain (a.s.). Responding to the Provost on the question of celebrating and commemorating martyrdom, Mulla quoted extensively from the New Testament according to St. John and illustrated how very poignant the account, according to the Christian belief, of Jesus' last hours on the earth was. When Mulla was reading from the New Testament, the audience, both Christian and Muslim were seen in tears. Mulla also praised the work of the Wessex Interfaith Group.

Mulla Bashir Rahim thanked the guests for attending the commemoration. He highlighted the various interfaith activities in the region and added that for these activities to be able to foster spirituality, it was essential to outlaw religious discrimination.

Summer...weddings...and barbeque at the Crescent Village

from Baqir Alloo, Toronto

The Summer Season in Toronto pulled many people outdoor and a number of activities, picnics, visits to the country and sports activities were arranged. Added to these were a number of weddings on each weekend. We are now poised to enter into autumn which brings the changing of colours of the leaves prior to them being shed. Autumn in Ontario presents magnificent scenery and the faithful remember His Glory and utter His Praise.

Meanwhile the Crescent Village held its annual barbeque program on August 22, 1998 which was attended by large number of residents and community leaders. The mayor of Richmond Hill, Bill Bell and Councillor, Vitto Spotafora attended the function and addressed the residents, congratulating them for their orderly and peaceful living. The children of the complex had a great time with a specially hired clown to entertain them while painting of their faces was done by volunteers. The surrounding of the playground was decorated with colourful posters and balloons. Freshly roasted barbeque, fresh salads and soft drinks were served.

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JIBA ONTARIO holds successful golf tournament

The fifth annual JIBA golf tournament was held on Sunday, July 26 this year at the Shawneke Golf Club. As usual, this proved to be the most popular golf tournament in the Toronto Ithna-Asheri community with a record turnout of 56 players. Also, as every year, there were players ranging from 12 year old Mustafa Kamani to some quite dexterous senior golfers. The weather was perfect and that contributed to the overall enjoyment of the day.

In what has become synonymous with the annual JIBA golf tourney, this year's event was sponsored by West Star Printing and Star-Web. JIBA appreciates the backing of this event by the Jaffer family and hope to count on their support in future years. Those 'cool' West star golf t-shirts which have become keep-sake for the past several years and the Titanium golf balls were very much appreciated by all!

There were all kinds of stories of "you should have seen this" and "the ball that got away" to seasoned players with double par on 5 par holes. And of course there were those whose balls were always attracted to the water (names withheld to protect the clumsy!!).

All in all, an excellent time was had by all. The JIBA committee was represented at the tournament by Vice Chair Hassan Jaffer - had to abandon the game after first 9 holes to attend to his "Caribana" responsibilities, Secretary Nazmul Damji who also presided over the award ceremonies at the dinner and Committee Member Shabbir Mohamed who managed to come away with one of the trophies.

At the scrumptious and generous dinner, Nazmul Damji thanked the sponsors - West Star Printing and Star-Web - and the organizers who primarily were Shafiq Ebrahim, who initiated the arrangements but could not participate since he was out of town along with veteran golf organizer, Hussein

Protests planned for film which portrays US Muslims as threat to Americans

Muslims living in the United States have expressed grave concern over the movie, *The Siege*, produced by Twentieth Century Fox, which portrays US Muslims as a threat to Americans.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) are scheduled to hold protest demonstrations at the Fox studios in Los Angeles and in New York and other US cities when the movie opens in theatres nationwide.

In the backdrop of the recent bombings of two US embassies in Africa and the subsequent American missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan, the council believes that the movie would incite hatred against the Muslims among the Americans who are already in a state of paranoia since the bombings.

The movie is scheduled for release on 6 November, 1998. The story involves a bombing campaign starting in Brooklyn and designed to provoke the President to declare martial law. At one point in the movie, the military rounds up Arab-Americans and Muslims of a certain age in Brooklyn and detains them, echoing the internment of Japanese-Americans during the World War II.

What sparked CAIR's concern, a spokesman for the council said, were complaints from Arab-Americans and Muslims who are upset by the current theatrical trailer for the film-especially a scene showing Muslims praying in a New York mosque juxtaposed with bombings and acts of violence.

"We fear the consequences of such negative images for the Arab-American and Muslim communities," said Hala Maksoud, President of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

The Council spokesman, Ibrahim Hooper said there could not be "a worse possible time for this movie, particularly with nerves raw all around the world... We don't think they realize the level of prejudice that exists."

Far from being anti-Muslim, says Fox, the film is designed to show how America can be quick to rush to judgment on other nationalities and religious sects. "The point of this movie is to take a hard look at this country, our country, its prejudices, its stereotyping and oppression," director Edward Zwick said.

"I didn't make the world, and the events of the last couple of weeks are as sad and frightening as they can be. But not talking about these things is the worst thing we can do -to deny the function of art to be provocative is just as oppressive and wrong," he said.

In earlier talks with Fox, the council listed 20 "gratuitously offensive" lines in the script, and eight points where characters are portrayed as "lecherous, threatening, misogynistic, fanatic, exotic, foreign infiltrators who lust after 'Baywatch' and 'American' liberties."

However in April this year, the producer of the movie, Lynda Obst told the council that some of the offending dialogue in the movie had been removed.

Chagani, who has introduced the game to so many in the community.

2 Azim Chagani - 2nd Low Gross
3 Shiraz Rustam - 3rd Low Gross

Fayaz Jaffer, a member of the sponsors family, was awarded a plaque in appreciation of their support and he gave away the trophies to the winners who were as follows:

CLOSEST TO THE PIN:

1 Shabbir Mohamed (Front Nine)
2 Gulamali Remtulla (Back Nine)

LONGEST DRIVE:

LOW GROSS SCORES:
1 Bob Mollu - Lowest

1 Bob Mollu - Front Nine
2 Imtiaz Kara - Back Nine



Muharram in Auckland, New Zealand

by Hasnain Walji

Auckland, New Zealand no longer seems so far away after Muharram 1419. A memorable Ashra was held in this serene part of the world. This was a truly cosmopolitan aza-e Husain, with lectures and elegies in Arabic, English Farsi, and Urdu. In the audience were mumineen from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, East Africa, Fiji and even a family of Chinese origin from Singapore. During the gatherings, the unity and brotherly spirit that prevailed in such a multicultural milieu was indeed exemplary.

The community of 350 people, organized under the banner of the Islamic Ahlul-Bait Foundation of New Zealand, vibrated with cries of *Ya Husain* in a rented commercial property. The participation of youths in recitation of Qur'an and speeches on Kerbala is a measure of the parents' foresight and commitment to build on Islamic teachings to the generations to come. Several parents even indicated their eagerness to have their sons trained as muballighs to serve the community.

The community is comprised of the highest percentage of professionals (mostly migrant engineers, doctors and other professionals from Iraq) in any Shia community I have visited. The resident Alim, Syed Majid from Iran is an *akhund* with a difference. He is a black belt in karate and the madressa, which has some 50 children, have karate and swimming lessons every weekend in addition to Qur'an, fiqh, tareekh and akhlaaq.

The origins of Shia settlement dates back to the early seventies when Br Iqbal Somani ended up in New Zealand after the expulsion of Asians from Uganda. Subsequently Br Muhammad Reza Rashid (originally from Kera) arrived from Calcutta, after a short period. Slowly, mumineen from Iran, Pakistan and India started arriving in small numbers. Another latent talent, Khalil Valji from Zanzibar, who had been in Auckland since the early seventies, was only 'discovered' in 1994, when the delegation from New Zealand

at the World Federation Conference was spotted by his relatives (Marhum Munawwar Valji and Nazir Valji) in England who gave them Khalil's contact.

For the past three years, there has been an exponential growth after professionals from Iraq began to seek settlement to escape the brutal regime in Iraq. More are expected to arrive in the near future. Today, they make up the largest Shia group in Auckland. Two of our brothers from Iraq, Aalaa Shakir and Emad al-Zubaidi, are actively involved in running weekend Arabic schools and are planning to embark on a fully fledged Islamic School in the area.

During my stay in Auckland, I met with an Iraqi surgeon, Dr Adnaan, who gave me an insight into what it was really like to have to practice plastic surgery during the war. His account was all the more fascinating because he is also an accomplished artist who has held several art exhibitions in Iraq as well as New Zealand. One of his many paintings, called 'The Migrant' epitomizes the struggle and pain of one who has been displaced and is eager to return to his homeland. Another enlightening meeting was with a lady architect from Iraq, who has been conducting research on Islamic Architecture and has written an interesting article on the evolution of the design of the minbar through different eras and cultures.

The residential property bought some four years ago to serve as Husainiyyah, is now far too small to accommodate the growing numbers and the community is actively looking for alternative accommodation. The project to build a new Husainiyyah from ground up has been shelved due to technical difficulties and the community has decided to buy a suitable property to cater for their needs.

With the downturn in South East Asian economies, New Zealand is bracing itself for a substantial impact. However, there are still business opportunities and limited openings for professionals in some fields.

FROM THE NAHJUL BALAGHA:

SAYING OF IMAM ALI (A.S.) ON SEEKING TEMPORAL PLEASURES AND SELF-IMPORTANCE

This wonderful sermon of Imam Ali (as) provides a fine guide to us on how to lead a fruitful life.

Somebody requested Imam Ali (a.s.) to advise him on how to lead a useful and sober life. Imam Ali (a.s.) thereupon advised him thus: "Do not be among those people who want to gain good returns without working hard, who have long hopes and keep on postponing repentance and penance, who talk like pious persons but run after vicious pleasures.

Do not be among those who are not satisfied if they get more in life and are not content if their lot in life's pleasures is less (they are never satisfied); who never thank Allah (s.w.t.) for what they get and keep on constantly demanding more of what is left with them; who advise others to such good deeds that they themselves refrain from; who appreciate good people but do not follow their ways of life; who hate bad and vicious people but follow their ways of life; who, on account of their excessive sins hate death but do not give up the sinful ways of life; who, if fallen ill, repent their ways of life and on regaining their health fearlessly readopt the same frivolous ways; who get despondent and lose all hopes, but on gaining health, become arrogant and careless; who, if faced with misfortunes, dangers or afflictions, turn to Allah (s.w.t.) and keep on beseeching Him for relief and when relieved or favoured with comfort and ease are deceived by the comfortable conditions they find themselves in and forget Allah (s.w.t.) and forsake prayers; whose minds are allured by day dreams and forlorn hopes and who abhor to face realities of life; who fear for others the enormous repercussions of vices

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(...from page 41)

and sins but for their own deeds expect very high rewards or very light disciplinary actions.

Riches make such people arrogant, rebellious and wicked, and poverty makes them despondent and lethargic. If they have to work, they work lazily and if they put up a demand they do it stubbornly.

Under the influence of inordinate cravings, they commit sins in quick succession and keep on postponing repentance. Calamities and adversities make them give up the distinguished characteristics of Muslims (patience, hope in future and work for improvement of circumstances). They advise people with narration's of events and facts but do not take any lesson from them. They are good at preachings but bad at practice, therefore they always talk of lofty deeds but their actions belie their words.

They are keen to acquire temporal pleasures but are careless and slow to achieve permanent (Divine) benefits. They think good for themselves the things which are actually injurious to them and regard harmful the things which really benefit them. They are afraid of death but waste their time and do not resort to good deeds before death overtakes them. The vices which they regard as enormous sins for others, they consider as minor shortcomings for themselves. Similarly, they attach great importance to their obedience to the orders of Allah (s.w.t.) and belittle similar actions in others. Therefore, they often criticize others and speak very highly of their own deeds. They are happy to spend their time in society of rich persons, wasting it in luxuries and vices but are averse to employing for useful purposes in company of the poor and pious people: They are quick and free to pass verdicts against others but they never pass a verdict against their own vicious deeds. They force others to obey them but they never obey Allah (s.w.t.). They collect their dues carefully but never pay the dues they owe. They are not afraid of Allah (s.w.t.) but fear powerful men"

Wild night as Iranians celebrate win over USA

Iran were eliminated from the World Cup in France after putting in a commendable display that put them on the verge of qualifying for the second round. However for many Iranians the highlight of the World Cup was the team's victory over the USA in the competition.

That night, the Iranians won twice. One, by displaying their good gesture with presentation of flowers to each of the players of the opposite team prior to kick-off and secondly by winning the match 2-1.

When Iran beat the United States, in Teheran it was a moment for celebrations. The police car with four officers, cheered and waved at the crowd. In a communal celebration that froze traffic and cut across lines of class and gender, Iranians poured into the streets the moment the game ended. Amid thousands of fans gathered in Vanak Square in central Teheran, a dozen men danced together, stringing the names of Iran's team into a rhyming chant.

Another man climbed up a lamp post as the crowd cheered and uniformed and plain clothes police officers and army troops looked on. "Good sight," one bewildered officer carrying a walkie-talkie said. Old men strolled the streets in night-shirts. Some women waved flags and pounded on cars, ordering drivers to honk their horns and cheer.

Young people whistled and whooped, honked and hollered to proclaim the victory over their political nemesis. Flags were waved, whistles blown, candies distributed, fireworks were lit.

The only chant that could be heard about the United States was "*Iran hoorah, Amrika sourakh*" - "Iran hurray, America a hole," referring to the American team's weak defence that led to Iran's 2-1 victory.

President Mohammed Khatami sent a message of congratulations to the Iranian team. Ayatollah Sayed Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, said "Be happy that you have made the Iranian nation happy."

The impromptu celebration was reminiscent of, though much smaller, than the street celebrations marking Iran's draw with Australia late last year, which qualified Iran for the World Cup finals for the first time in 20 years.

This time, Iranian authorities took precautions to prevent any celebrations from turning violent. Restaurants in Tehran were forced to close at nine on the night of the match. Sports centres were ordered to cancel plans to show the game on giant outdoor screens, and army troops and plain clothes policemen were stationed at roadblocks throughout the city.

Throughout the soccer-crazed country, Iranians were riveted to their television screens from kick off. To ensure that the coverage was Islamically correct, the broadcast began seven seconds late, so that Iranian viewers would not be subjected to the sight of fans in summer dress who might be drinking alcoholic beverages.

In the first half, after three American shots had hit the goal post, some fans invoked God's name. "God is definitely with us tonight, man," said one Bobak Pasha, a 30 year-old businessman, watching with his family.

When Hamid Reza Estili known as the James Bond of Iran scored the first goal, Iranians throughout Teheran were thunderstruck. "It is a beautiful goal! What a beautiful goal! said Hamid Salimi, a taxi driver watching the game in a poor neighborhood in southern Tehran. But in good-sport fashion, he added, "The Americans are doing their best."

In weeks prior to the match, as Iran girded itself for this match, Iran's leaders insisted that it was a game which had nothing to do with politics. The USA attitude to the game was similar but both teams had a lot at stake to win this game. Political analysts have envisaged that the game may now help create avenues of reconciliation of differences between the two countries.



DATELINE TORONTO

from Baqir Alloo in Toronto

THE AYYAME MOHARRAM Programs commenced on Tuesday April 28 in all Centres around Toronto. Bayview Centre became live with majalis recited by a well known zakir from Ahmadabad, Maulana Sayid Aftab Hyder of Ahmadabad. He dwelt mainly on the lives of our Ma'sumeen and Islamic history. Marsiya, nauha and matam were recited by the well known reciter, Syed Nadeem Sarwar of Karachi who put the audience in an aesthetic mood. Ladies majalis at Bayview Centre drew a large audience and was ably recited by Zakira Syeda Fatema Baquiri from Karachi. Prof. Abdulaziz Sachedina drew a good crowd at a Brampton hall specially hired by Toronto Jamaat to accommodate the usual large Moharram audience. Dr. Sachedina dwelt on lives of our Ma'sumeen and related them to the problem facing the youths in this part of the world. At the Selbi Centre, Brother Sadik Rahim of London-UK preached to a cosy audience on various subjects ranging from the tragedy of Kerbala, Islamic history and Akhlakiyat. Youths of Toronto flocked at the Thornhill Town Centre to hear Brother Fazle-Abbas Dato. His majalis were well received as they were rich in material and presentation. Brother Fazle Abbas was able to answer various questions in a rational and eloquent way. Majalis were also held at Al-Mehdi Centre and at the Islamic Museum where Maulana Sakhawat Hussein preached at different times and dwelt on fazail and history extensively quoting from the Qura'n. Majalis were also held at different centres catering for Urdu, Arabic, Persian and Pushto languages. Maulana Farmanhusein from India preached at a Massasauga hall. Maulana Shafik Huda preached at the Hamilton Imambara. Majalis were also held at various other centres in Canada and in some small towns, majalis were held at private residences. A solemn Ashura procession of about

JA'FARI ISLAMIC HOUSING CORPORATION held its Annual General Meeting on April 14, 1998 and re-elected Sajjad Ebrahim as President for another year. Other five members of the Board of Directors elected were Ghulamabbas Sajan, Kassim Moledina, Baqir Alloo, Dr. Hyder Fazal and Nazmul Damji. The meeting recognised the efficient way the 170 Unit housing complex is managed and passed a special vote of thanks to the President and Board Members.

NASIMCO TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE was held at the Jaffari Islamic Centre on April 11, 1998 and was attended by delegates from various North American Jamaats. Ghulamabbas Sajan was elected to head Nasimco as its President for the next three years. Other Office Bearers elected were Gulamabbas Khakoo of Los Angeles as Vice President, Asgharali Naqvi as Secretary General and Safdar Nasser as Treasurer. Other Members elected and nominated to serve in the Executive Committee are Javed Qureshi of Montreal, Shabbir Mawani of Ottawa, Khurram Razavi of Washington, Sadique Jaffer of New York, Aly Hemani, Razaali Kaba and Zinat Ladha (Lily) all of Toronto and Nishat Khalfan of New York.

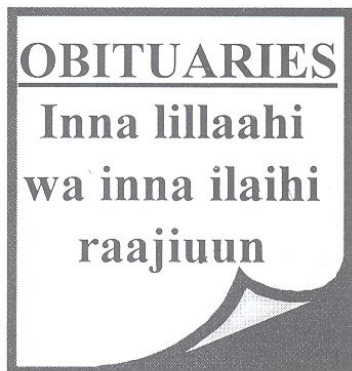
AL-SADIQ SCHOOL commemorated the martyrdom of Sayyaddu-Shohada by taking out a solemn procession outside the school. Dressed in black, the children chanted eulogies in English, Arabic and Urdu. It was an impressive rally which brought tears in the eyes of spectators.

SENIOR CITIZEN GROUP visited the Maple Syrup farms in late April and watched the process of collecting this beneficial sweet liquid which is admired throughout the world.

...AND ASHRA-E-ZAINABIYA: took off at Bayview with the preaching by Brother Hasnain Rajabali who flew from New York. Hasnain is a young gifted orator with an evangelical zeal and style. With his university education in the USA he meets the challenges that this part of the world poses and talks to the young and educated at their own level. Hasanain has become a much sought after preacher in North America drawing a relively large crowd of youths and adults. He keeps busy in his spare time from his business career to share his knowledge and experiences with others. During the Ayyame Moharram he preached at Vancouver and thereafter at Edmonton before coming to Toronto to deliver five lectures at the Bayview Centre. The other five days of the ten days period were devoted to Urdu majalis and Professor Javed Akber from India was at his best in explaining the Islamic system.

500 ladies and gents marched through Bayview Avenues from Thornhill Centre to the Bayview Mosque on Ashura day with alam and taziya. A Blood donation clinic was arranged on this tenth day of Moharram. A total of 124 people turned up to donate 92 units of blood which was enough for

368 patients. Donations of over \$120,000 was received by Toronto Jamaat to meet the \$90,000 estimated cost of the programmes. A huge quantity of non-perishable food was also noted to the Halal Food Bank of Toronto during these ayyam. In all, the sad occasion was marked in a memorable way.



Marhum

**Muhammadali Shariff
Jiwa -- Past Chairman
of the Africa Federation**

Marhum Muhammadali Shariff's sudden demise on 23 July 1998 in Moshi, Tanzania, at age 90, was a great blow to the Khoja community and he will be greatly missed by Moshiite and many Shia globally for he had dedicated his entire life for the betterment of our community.

The late Mohamedalibhai generally led an illustrious life which he devoted for the upliftment of humanity in general and the community in particular. He was born in Mombasa in 1909 and later settled in Moshi in 1931. He was educated at Alidina Visram High School and was among the first who matriculated. After joining his father's business, he became a reputable members of the Indian community in East Africa.

Marhum's public life and community services are commendable. From 1957 to 1958, the late Muhammadalibhai served as Mayor of Moshi town. In 1957 he received an MBE from the Queen for the services rendered to the British Empire when he was also invited to the Buckingham Palace in London. He also served as a Provincial Chairman of the East Africa Muslims Welfare Society during which he provided noteworthy services to the Muslims of the Northern Province of the then Tanganyika.

The Late Mohamedalibhai was an industrialist, educationalist and a social worker who gave his life for the community, particularly in Moshi. He was associated with numerous Boards and Associations either as a Chairman or a member including the Tanzania Sisal Growers Association, Indian Public School, Kibo Match

**Ayatullah Murtadha
Burujardi is shot dead**

On 21 April, 1998, 23 Dhulhijja 1418, Ayatullah Murtadha Burujardi was shot dead in Najaf. The 70 year old Ayatullah was returning home from evening prayers from the Shrine of Imam Ali (a.s.) with two persons accompanying him when an unknown killer shot him with a pistol and escaped. His two companions were seriously hurt.

Marhum was the Imamul Jama' of the Haram of Imam Ali AS. He was the teacher of 1000 students of theology in Najaf. He was the student of Marhum Ayatullah Sayyid Muhsin Hakim and Marhum Ayatullah Sayyid Abul Qasim Al Khui.

He had as usual lead the Fajr Prayers in the Haram and had delivered his morning address to the congregation. He was walking home when he was shot on the orders of Saddam. This was the third attempt on his life. The Government of Iran protested to the Government of Iraq on the assassination.

Mumineen are requested to pray for the Rooth of the Marhoom, for the safety of our Ulama, for the quick recovery of the wounded and the protection of the sanctity of the Holy Shrines.

Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Mawenzi School, Cotton Marketing Board, Kilimanjaro Coffee Board, East Africa Leather Association and the Red Cross Society.

Marhum was also the head of the East Africa National Investments Limited, a community company. Many other communal projects including the Haji Mohamed Jaffer Boarding House in Dar es Salaam and the beautifully designed Mosque of Moshi are testimony of his services to the community.

Marhum's wisdom led him to be appointed first as Vice Chairman and then the Chairman (following the death of Ebrahimbhai Sharif) of the Africa Federation during the 1962-65 term. Until his death he regularly attended meetings of the Africa Federation and provided valuable contributions. May Allah [swt] accept Marhums dedication for our community and give him a place amidst the 14 Masumins [a.s.].

**Grand Ayatullah
Shaykh al-Gharawi**

The murder of another eminent scholar and Shi'a leader less than two months after that of Ayatullah Shaykh Murtada al-Burujirdi has stunned Shi'a communities throughout the world. When any prominent Ayatullah dies it is of course an occasion for much sorrow because one can no longer have direct access to his vast learning and scholarship --- qualities so highly prized by Shi'a Muslims. It can be imagined therefore how great was the blow when it was announced that Ayatullah Mirza Ali al-Gharawi had been killed in Iraq on his return by road from Karbala to his home in the holy city of Najaf on 18 June, 1998. Both Ayatullahs were cut down in their prime. Both were completely apolitical - which adds to the utter meaninglessness of both crimes. There can be little doubt that the Iraqi Mukhabarat (Intelligence Services) were directly involved. The absence of any thorough police investigation, the undue haste in which both burials were carried out, the prohibition of any funeral procession to the cemetery of Wadi al-Salam and, in the case of al-Gharawi, the fact that his body was not even allowed to be taken to a mosque for the funeral prayer to be said over it, all substantiate this conclusion.

Ayatullah al-Gharawi was born as Mirza Ali Tabrizi in the town of Tabriz, Persia, in 1930. His father was a successful merchant well-known in trading circles both in Persian Azerbaijan and Russian Azerbaijan (now the Azerbaijan Republic). His mother was a Sayyida, a direct descendant of the Holy Prophet, and so Ali bore the customary title of Mirza. His father died when Ali was only two which meant that he now had to be looked after exclusively by his mother who, wanting her son to become eventually an 'alim (religious scholar), despatched him at the age of six to school in Tabriz to begin his elementary studies. Having completed these, and also a part of his intermediate education, the young Ali travelled to the holy

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OBITUARIES

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city of Qum to do his higher intermediate studies at a celebrated religious academy (Hawzah). He was only sixteen when he embarked upon Advanced Studies (al-Bahth al-Kharij). Among his teachers was Ayatullah Sayyid Husayn Borujerdi who was to become the main marja' of Shi'a Muslims throughout the world until his death in 1961.

After spending five years at Qum, Mirza Ali decided to travel once again, this time to Najaf in Iraq to complete his advanced education at the Hawzah there, the oldest and most prestigious university in Shia Islam. Here he was taught by the late Ayatullahs Shaykh Husayn al-Huh and Shaykh Mirza Muhammad Baqir al-Zanjani, as well as Ayatullah Sayyid Abu 'I-Qasim al-Khoei. It was probably Sayyid al-Khoei who, of all the Ulema, influenced and inspired him the most as to the direction his life should take. When he was only twenty-eight, the eminent Ayatullah Khoei prayed to God that Mirza Ali should one day become a distinguished marja'.

Al-Khoei's prayer was granted when Mirza Ali was in his early sixties. In 1993, following the demise of Ayatullah Abd al-Ala Sabzevari, he published his own juridical decisions, Risala 'Amaliyya, known as al-Fatawa al-Mustanbata, which was the first step for any prospective marja'. In the meantime, Mirza Ali became known as al-Gharawi (rather than al-Tabrizi), derived from al-Ghari, the ancient name of Najaf, as often happened with scholars who made Najaf their home and became part of the religious and cultural life of the city.

Al-Gharawi wrote a number of works on Fiqh (jurisprudence), most of which remain in manuscript form. In addition to the taqzrat already referred to, al-Tanqihfi Sharh al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa, of which twelve volumes have been published, he set out in great detail the arguments (or proofs)

on which he based the edicts of his Risala in a work which runs to at least eighty volumes, all of which are hand-written, named Tasnid al-Fatawa al-Mustanbata. On the death of Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Rohani in July last year, most of his followers changed over to Ayatullah al-Gharawi. At his death, al-Gharawi's followers were to be found in Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, other Gulf States, Turkey and the Lebanon.

Since his late twenties, already recognised as a mujtahid, al-Gharawi began to teach al-Bahth al-Kharij in the Hawza while at the same time attending the lectures of his teachers. He remained a teacher right up to his death. His lectures attracted students particularly because of the clarity in which they were delivered, free of unnecessary complications or muddled up arguments. For several years he was also one of the Imams of the congregational prayers at al-Rawda al-Haydariyya which contains the tomb of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib, the First Imam.

Every Thursday it was al-Gharawi's custom to make the fifty-mile journey north to the holy city of Karbala to pray in the Rawdha and visit the tomb of Imam Husayn (a.s.), the grandson of the Holy Prophet.

That Thursday in mid-June - towards the end of Muharram - was, tragically, to be al-Gharawi's last visit. At night, returning home to Najaf by car, he was shot dead in a hail of machine-gun fire along with his son-in-law, the driver and a friend.

Two assassinations within less than two months inevitably lead to concern for the safety of the Ulema who remain in Najaf. In this respect, there must be singled out Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Seestani who is the marja' currently with the greatest following among Shi'a Muslims worldwide; Ayatullah Sayyid Sa'id al-Hakim, who is a marja' and grandson of the late renowned Grand Ayatullah Muhsin al-Hakim; and Shaykh Muhammad Ishaq al-Fayyad, a Pakistani who has lived for the past fifty years in Najaf and is expected by many to seek recognition soon as a marja'.

Marhum Akberali Haji Peermohamed

The Supreme Council noted with regret the death of Akberbhai Haji Peermohamed which occurred on the 6th of July, 1998 in Mombasa at the age of 74. Marhum Akberali, originally from Zanzibar and settled in Mombasa, was a very active and dedicated member of the Community.

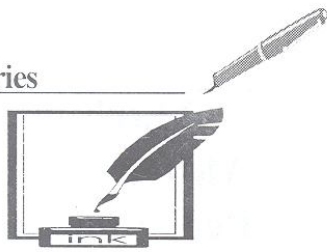
Haji Akberbhai has a glittering record of services to Mombasa Jamat from the late 1950s and had continued to serve in various capacities the Mombasa Jamat and nearly all its subsidiary organisations.

Haji Akberbhai was a self made man, who took keen interest and had deep sympathy for our community. He was an ardent councillor of the Africa Federation who regularly attended Supreme Council meetings.

He was the Chairman of the Bustani Jamaat at the time of the unification of the two Jamaats in 1966. He was also a Vice-Chairman of the unified Jamaat and subsequently became the Chairman in 1983.

Marhum was a very active member of the Ithnasheri Young Men's Union and Faize Hussein in the past. Marhum once also served in the Matrimonial Committee and undertook many other positions in different capacities. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Managing Committee and MRC.

Besides his services to the Community at Committee levels and as Chairman, he loved poetry especially Persian, and also regularly recited Duas, Marshias, and Majlises. May Allah (s.w.t) grant him Magferat and rest his soul in the proximity of Chaharda Masumins (a.s). Amen. Marhum leaves behind a son, two daughters, and four grandchildren.



Death Jottings

inna lillaahi wa inna
ilaihi raajiuun

The following deaths have been reported since the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* which carried death announcements up to 29 January, 1998.

Marhum Munsir Anverali Jafferli Dhanji, London, on 23 August 1998, 30 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Aziz Anverali Rajabali Dato, Nairobi, on 22 August 1998, 29 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Abbas Mohamed Raza S Bhimji, London, on 21 August 1998, 28 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhuma Shamira Askari Taki, London.

Marhum Asgher Yusuf Kara (Atta), Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania, on 18 August 1998, 25 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhuma Gulshanbai Dalal, London, on 13 August 1998, 20 Rabiul Akhar 1419.

Marhuma Noorbano Rehmatullah, Karachi, on 29 July 1998, 5 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Nisar Musa Dhala Baaloo, London (England), on 28 July 1998, 4 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Akber Jaffer Hirji, Birmingham (England), on 18 July 1998, 23 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Habib Hussein Sherrif Dewji, Daressalaam, on 17 July 1998, 22 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhuma Zainab-bai Sultanali Yusufali, Dubai, on 13 July 1998, 18 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Husein Bandali Kanji, Mombasa, on 12 July 1998, 17 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Mohammedhussein Ahmed Peera Hirji, Daressalaam, on 8 July 1998, 13 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Akberali Haji Peer Mohamed, Mombasa, Tuesday 7

July 1998, 12 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Mohammedhassan Mohammedali Rhehtulla (Babu Raama), Mumbai, on 27 June 1998, 2 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Pyarali Abdulrasul Bhaloo, Malindi, on 26 June 1998, 1 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Sajjad Mohamed Jaffer Rajabali Alidina, London (England), on 24 June 1998, 29 Safar 1419.

Marhum MohamedAli Abdulrasool Remtulla Kassam of Daressalaam, on 23 June 1998, 28 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Rehmatbai Gulamali Pirbhai Visram of Mombasa, on 22 June 1998, 27 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Zainabbai Habib Amersi Alibhai, Milton Keynes(England), on 16 June 1998, 21 Safar 1419.

Marhum Husein Hassanali Rhehtulla, London, on 14 June 1998, 19 Safar 1419.

Abdulsattar Giga, Dar es Salaam, on 13 June 1998, 18 Safar 1419.

Marhum Bashir Kassamali Habib Chatoo, Daressalaam, on 12 June 1998, 17 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Shirinbai Allarakhia Kermalli Alibhai, Edmonton, Canada, on 8 June 1998, 13 Safar 1419.

Marhum Murtaza Banatwala, Muscat, Oman, on 3 June 1998, 8 Safar 1419.

Marhum Kassamali Noormohamed Soonasra of South London on 2 June 1998, 7 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Sugrabai Pyarali Asaria, London on 1 June 1998, 6 Safar 1419.

Marhum Fateh Ali Jessa, Dar-es-Salaam, on 27 May 1998, 1 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Shirinbai Musa Jaffer Alloo, Mundra, Kutch on 27 May 1998, 1 Safar 1419.

Marhum Gulamabbas Kanji (Mulla Bulbul), Mombasa on 23 May 1998, 26 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Sharif Seper, Zenica (Bosnia) on 20 May 1998, 23 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Abdulla Mohamed Visram, London, on 16 May 1998, 19 Muharram 1419.

Marhuma Sultanabai Mohamedali Dawood Haji Nasser, Karachi on 16 May 1998, 19 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Mohamed Kamalia, London, on 24 April 1998, 26 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Anver Pyarali Mohamedali Merali, Essex, on 23 April 1998, 25 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Marzia, wife of Dr. Sultanali (of Zanzibar) Agha Seyyid Hassan Najafi Al-Marashi, Marina, North California, on 13 April 1998, 15 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Mohammed Hussain Hassanali Juma (Sheni Mayay), Dar-es-Salaam, on 9 April 1998, 11 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Mohamedraza A. Manek, Toronto, on 8 April 1998, 10 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Fatmabai Tahera Mussa, Montreal, on 4 April 1998, 6 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Khairunnisa Akbar Jamal, London, on 4 April 1998, 6 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Shirinbai Mewawala, Mumbai on 03 April 1998, 5 Zilhajj 1418

Marhum Nausheer Gulamali Dato, Mombasa, on 2 April 1998, 4 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Sugrabai Mohammedali Taki Bandali Kanji, Mombasa on 28 March 1998, 29 Zilkaad 1418.

Marhum Kassamali Dhalla Jaffer, Daressalaam, on 24 March 1998, 25 Zilkad 1418.

Marhuma Aminabai Gulamabbas Moorji, Tanga, on 17 March 1998, 18 Zilkad 1418.

Marhum Firoz Mohamedali Nayani Dharsee, Tanga, on 17 March 1998, 18 Zilkad 1418.

Marhuma Aminabai Amirali Abdalla Fazal, Bukoba on 14 March 1998, 16 Zilkaad 1418

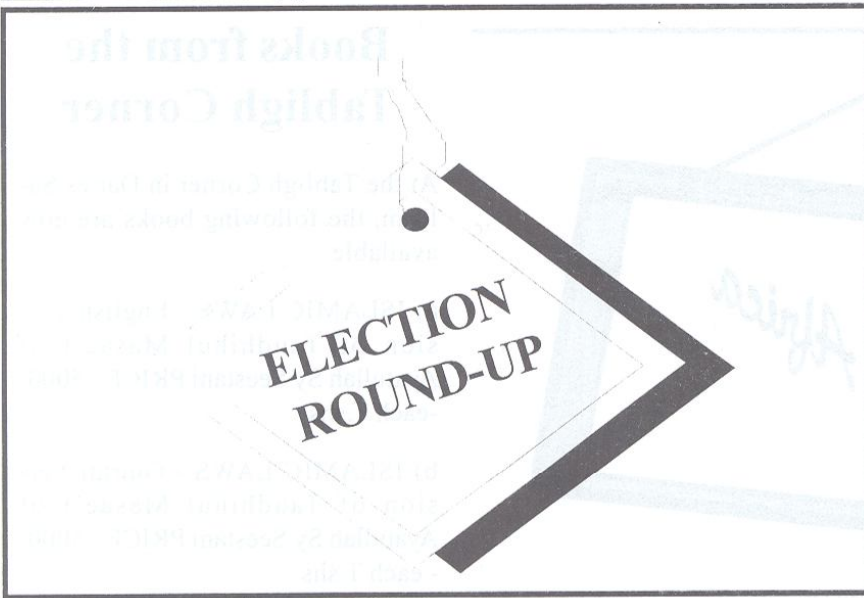
Marhum Munawer Mohamed Husein Valji, Essex, on 10 March 1998, 11 Zilkad 1418.

Marhum Sherali Yusuf Alloo, Mwanza, on 7th March 1998; (8 Zilkaad 1418 A.H.).

Marhuma Sayyida Salim Akhtar, Lahore on 3 March 1998, 5 Zilkaad 1418

Marhum Azad Mohammedhussein M.D. Kermalli, London, on 25th February 1998; (27 Shawwal 1418 A.H.).

Marhum Yousuf Ali Nanjiani, Karachi, on 25th February 1998; (27 Shawwal 1418 A.H.).



Kitchener, Ontario

The Islamic Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaat of Kitchener, Waterloo held its Annual General Meeting on March 8, 98. The following members were elected into office:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Sultan Hudda - | President |
| Bashir Sachoo - | Secretary |
| Ali Abbas Tharia - | Treasurer |
| Sarfraz Jamal - | Committee member |
| Enayat Ladha - | Committee Member |

IHS, Canada

At the biennial election of the Islamic Humanitarian Services, the following were elected to head the organization for the term 1998-2000:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Shafiq Hudda | Religious Director |
| Moiz Karimjee | Administrator |
| Hussein Remtulla | Finance Officer |

Morogoro, Tanzania

At an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting held on 6 June, 1998 the Managing Committee was dissolved following the resignation of four members. A new ad-hoc committee with the following members was then formed:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Riyaz Kanji - | Chairman |
| Akber Ismail - | Secretary |
| Mohamedraza Ahmed - | Treasurer |
| Abdulrazak Kermali - | Member |
| Aliabbas Fazal - | Member |
| Aliraza Rashid- | Member |

Trustees:

- Riyaz Kanji
 Mohamedraza Ahmed
 Gulamali Rashid.

TANGA

At the special General Meeting held on Saturday 5 April, 1998, the following members were elected into the Managing Committee of Tanga Jamaat:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Mahmood Y.J. Dhirani | Chairman |
| Mohamed R.M. Walli | Vice Chairman |
| Anver A. Fazal | Hon. Secretary |
| Mohsin G. Meghji | Hon. Jnt Secretary |
| Mohamed A. Manekia | Hon. Treasurer |
| Murtaza A. Bhaloo | Hon. Jnt Treasurer |
| Hasnain A. Hassanali | Member |
| Shabbir M. Sachoo | Member |

ORGANIZATION OF NORTH AMERICAN SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES (NASIMCO)

At the NASIMCO Conference held in Toronto, Canada on April 11, 1998, the following were elected/nominated for the years 1998/2001:

- | |
|--|
| President |
| Ghulam Abbas Sajan , Toronto |
| Vice-President |
| Gulam Abbas Khaku , Los Angeles |
| Secretary-General |
| S. M. Asghar Naqvi, Toronto |
| Treasurer |
| Safar Nasser, Toronto |
| Councillors |
| Ali Hemani, Toronto, Sadiq Jaffer, New York, Razaali Kaba, Toronto, Sr. Nishat Khalfan, New York, Sr. Zeenat (Lily) Ladha, Toronto, Shabbir Mawani, Ottawa, Javaid Qureshi, Montreal, Khurram Rizvi, Washington D.C. |

The offices are located at 9000 Bathurst Street, as a courtesy from Toronto Jamaat.

MAURITIUS

A new Management Committee has been elected in Mauritius. The committee comprises of the following members:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Haydarally Pirbhai | President |
| Assenjee E. Moosajee | Vice President |
| Dr. Amirali Asser | Secretary |
| Mohamed Iqbal | Assistant Secretary |
| Kassamally Esmael | Treasurer |
| Inayatoli H. Pirbhai | Asst. Treasurer |
| Mohsinali H. Pirbhai | Member |
| Noormohamed K. Esmael | Member |

BIRMINGHAM

The newly elected Executive Committee of the KSI Muslim Community of Birmingham for the years 1998/99 follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mohamed Bharwani | President |
| Mohamed Fazal | Vice President |
| Hassan Naqvi | Hon. Secretary |
| Gulamabbas Kassam | Asst. Secretary |
| M. A. Bhimani | Hon. Treasurer |
| Azad Jivraj | Asst. Treasurer |

Committee members: Azad Jivraj (Mukhi), Nazir Rumani, S. Ibrahim, Pyarali Khimji, Raza Abedi and H. Kanani.

ZANZIBAR KSI KUWWATUL ISLAM JAMAT

On 15 April, 1998 (18 Zulhijj 1418), the following office bearers were elected into the Management Committee of the KSI Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat of Zanzibar for a period of two years:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| MohamedRaza H. Dharamsi - | President |
| Amin Sivji Haji - | Secretary General |
| Haji Husein Dato - | Treasurer |
| Hasnen Mohamed Husein Dharmasi - | Mukki |
| Abdul H. Panju - | Kamrio |



Dar Jamaat procures strategic Ex-Korean Complex in Dar es Salaam

The Dar es Salaam Jamaat has procured the ex-Korean Complex lying adjacent to the community's boarding house and Al-Muntazir School. The new complex comprises of 3 built up blocks.

One block consists of an elegant 3 storeyed building which includes a theatre and two reasonably sized halls. This building has about 22 rooms with two washrooms on each floor. The second block contains two 4-bedroom flats while the third block has 17, 2-bedroom flats and two halls. In addition to this there is also a badminton court and a large adjacent garden behind the first Block. There is also a tarmaced driveway to facilitate easy car movement.

This new procurement of the Jamaat has a tremendous potential for future development primarily because of its location to the Jamaat's other structures. Taking into consideration the fact that education is of utmost importance for our youths along with the fact that sporting and recreation facilities for our members have to be enhanced, the Jamaat has a master development plan in the pipeline, the details of which will soon be made public.

In his keynote address at the last Supreme Council Conference in Dar es Salaam, the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani congratulated Dar es Salaam Jamaat for purchasing the plot and asked the Jamaat to ensure that the new property is effectively developed for the benefit of community members.

New committee members of Arusha Jamaat



Seated from left to right: Raza Suleman (Hon. Secretary), Habib M. Yusufali (President) and Tahsil M. Sherif (Vice President).

Standing from left to right: Shabbir M. Surati (Hon. Treasurer), Rizwan Peera, Hassan Fazal and Sadiq Chagani (committee members).

Books from the Tabligh Corner

At the Tabligh Corner in Dar es Salaam, the following books are now available:

a) ISLAMIC LAWS - English Version of Taudhihul Masae'l of Ayatullah Sy Seestani PRICE : 5000/- each T.shs

b) ISLAMIC LAWS - Gujrati Version of Taudhihul Masae'l of Ayatullah Sy Seestani PRICE : 5000/- each T.shs

c) MARRIAGE - A step towards fulfilment in Life - A World Federation Production PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

d) POEMS FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN - A World Federation Production PRICE : 900/- each T.shs

e) FIQH & FUQAHA - An introduction to Fiqh. Containing 44 life sketches of the great past Masters - World Federation Production PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

f) PEARLS OF WISDOM - A string of incidents in the history of Islam - World Fede PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

g) THE PRINCIPLE OF EDUCATION - UP BRINGING - Production of Zahra Academy PRICE : 2000/- each T.shs

h) CURRENT LEGAL ISSUES - English version of al-Mustahdhat Minal Masae'l ash-Sharia - According to eddicts of Ayatullah as-Sayyid Ali Al-Husayni As - Seestani - Production of Imam Ali Foundation - Uk PRICE : 2000/- each T.shs

i) A RESTATEMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS - By Sayyid Ali Asghar Razvy - The production of World Federation - UK PRICE : 8000/-each T.shs

A fair selection of other books are also available here and the Tabligh Section plans to update new releases through its Webpage <http://tabligh.raha.com>, where details of all books available can be perused.

Africa Federation denounces Dar and Nairobi bomb blasts

The Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community in Africa and worldwide was greatly shocked and distressed by the two terrorist bomb blasts that rocked the US Embassy premises in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam almost simultaneously on Friday 7 August, 1998. Islam, being a peaceful religion, condemns such acts of terrorism involving the wanton destruction, injury and loss of life and property.

It was gratifying to note that members of the community displayed their sense of grief and anger at the calamity by cancelling all festivity programmes. Moreover it was a fine gesture by community members and organisations in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi to donate blood and medicines to hospitals to alleviate the plight of those who were suffering.

The Africa Federation has expressed its unreserved condemnation of the senseless acts of destruction of innocent lives and property. At the same time, the Federation has offered a helping hand to victims with a request to all members to be conscious of the extent of human suffering caused as a result of this tragic calamity. It has also requested community members in Tanzania and Kenya not to hesitate to come forward to render a helping hand to fellow human beings who have been

affected by the blasts.

A young member of our Community in Dar es Salaam was injured in the blast. His injury was however not serious and he is recovering satisfactorily.

The Federation has expressed its deep sympathy to all those who have been affected in one way or another, especially to the bereaved families who have lost their loved ones. The Federation has also written letters of sympathy to the Governments of Tanzania and Kenya as well as to the USA Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi.

May Allah (s.w.t) in His mercy grant them patience and courage to sustain the loss and may He in His mercy safeguard and protect the nations of Tanzania and Kenya.

The Nairobi Jamaat held prayers for the victims at the Jaffery Islamic Centre in Lavington on 10 August, 1998 following which a group went out to distribute medicines, food, mattresses and blankets at the Kenyatta National Hospital.

On the previous day about twenty youths of the community distributed similar items at the hospital and 50 pints of blood were also pledged as and when required --the blood banks at the hospital were found to be full.



At Kenyatta Hospital.....handing over supplies to the Duty Officer for victims of the bomb blast. This was done under the convenership of Zulfikar Khimji, Past President of Nairobi Jamaat.

Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania appoints new Office bearers

The following have been appointed to run the Bilal Muslim Mission in Dar es Salaam for the 1998-2001 term:

Chief Missionary

Allamah Seyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

Chairman

Pyarali M. Shivji

Hon. Secretary

Inayat H. Alidina

Hon. Treasurer

Ayaz R. Teja

Committee Members

Fidahuseein Hameer

Mushtaq Fazal

Jaffer R. Jaffer

Iqbal Somji

Murtaza R. Jivraj

Mohamedtaki Rajwani

Husein Dattoo

Mubarak Ladha

Mohamed Pirbhay - Vice Chairman of Africa Federation - ex officio.

The Postal address of the BMM is P.O. Box 20033, Tel: 120111, 112419/20, Dar es Salaam. The telephone contact of the Chairman, Alhaj Pyarali Shivji is 1144113.

Federation Samachar announces new team

The following have been appointed to the Editorial Board of the *Federation Samachar* for a three year period from 1998-2001:

Editor

Munir Daya

Advertising

Amir Lakha

Distribution (Dar es Salaam)

Fazleabbas Dhirani

Distribution (International)

Mrs. Fatim Haji

Miss Fatima Patel

Photographs

Murtaza Jivraj

Internet Edition designer

Fatema Alloo



**MUHARRAM
1419 A.H. ---- A
report from the
Bilal Secretariat
in Mombasa**

The Annual programme of Majalis in Kiswahili were held from April 26th to May 5th 1998 at the Bilal Hall from 8:00 p.m. The programmes commenced with recitation of verses from the holy Qur'an and Utenzi (marthiya in Kiswahili). The majalis were recited by the following respected scholars:-

Majlis 1-2: Shariff Ahmad Badawy
Majlis 3 -5: Ustadh Muhammad A. Dumila

Majlis 6-10: Sheikh Abdulmajid Nasoro from Dar-es-salaam.

The attendance was very encouraging despite the heavy rains, with numbers reaching up to 130 people, including ladies. The majority of the audience were non-Shia brethren. A group of 14 students from Al Mahad Al Islami (college sponsored by Islamic Foundation) were also in regular attendance.

On the last two nights during recitation of Maqal by Sheikh Abdulmajid Nasoro the audience were moved to tears. Some commented that they were not aware of such tortures done by Yazid forces who even recited salawat in tashahud whilst offering prayers. All the majalis have been recorded on videos which are in circulation. These videos are expected to have a greater effect on the public who were unable to attend the majalis.

RURAL CENTRES: A similar programme of majalis were held from April 27th - May 7th 1998 in rural areas. The majalis were recited by the Masjid Imams or Madrasah teachers at the centres. Students recited Utenzi and Matam in Kiswahili. On the day of Ashura, a procession was organised in five centres. Niyaz was served in eleven centres.

**Taki Kanji is
second for the
second time**

In April, 1998 the Tanzania Golf Union Northern Province Golf Championship was held at the Moshi Club golf course being sponsored by KLM.

Taki Kanji of Moshi emerged runners up in the 36 hole stroke play event. Taki Kanji was also runner up in the golf tournament in the last Supreme Council games held in Dar es Salaam.

Taki Kanji plays with a handicap of 14 at the Moshi Club. The Arusha KSI Jamaat Chairman, Habib Yusufali also participated in the Moshi event.

**Message of
Kerbala spreads to
Zambia and South
Africa**

For the first time ever, majlises of Sayyeda Shuhada Hazrat Imam Husein (a.s.) were held in Johannesburg during Muharram 1419 A.H.

Khoja brothers rented a hall where the majlises were recited. The Supreme Council at the request of Manzoor Kanani of Nairobi and Yunus Merali of Johannesburg organised for Sheikh Durul Hassan to travel to Johannesburg. This enabled our Shia brothers and sisters and their families to benefit from this azadari for the first time.

Arrangements were also made for Muharram Azadari in Lusaka, Zambia where Sayyid Shaukat Hussein Rizvi recited majlises.

**Educational Insurance
schemes offered**

Educational costs are going up by leaps and bounds. To help families educate their children up to University level, the Supreme Council, since the previous term, has entered into an agreement with Messrs. Meghraj Insurance Company Limited of UK which can assist to alleviate this burden. Various insurance schemes are available to suit individual needs.

**AF Internet team
appointed**

The following have been appointed to run the Internet Web Site of the Africa Federation for a three year period from 1998-2001:

Web Manager
Munir Daya

Web Designer
Fatema Alloo

News input
Mrs. Fatim Haji
Miss Fatima Patel

The Internet site will soon be given final touches in order to make all areas under construction accessible. Surfers can get to the site on <http://www.africafederation.org>

**Morogoro's Dar Ul
Muslimeen Orphanage
vies to suport destitutes**

The Dar Ul Muslimeen Orphanage and Rehabilitation Centre was officially registered in October, 1995 after it began its philanthropic work in June, 1995 by adopting 8 needy orphans of African origin.

All the orphaned children are provided with basic necessities such as food, medicines, clothing and schooling while a reliable and trustworthy woman looks after their daily requirements. The total cost to maintain a child is T.Shs. 15,000/- per month which includes school fees.

The Dar Ul Muslimeen currently rents a residence at Shs. 10,000/- per month but plans to take over the building which is currently being offered for Shs. 2.5 million. The Organisation's co-ordinator, Akber Ismail says that buying the property would be an asset for the Organisation because this would enable them to build a proper home for more children along with providing facilities for the needy.

The Organisation welcomes one and all to visit their Centre. Their contact details are:

Dar Ul Muslimeen
Orphanage and Rehabilitation Centre
P.O. Box 1909, Telephone: 3151
Morogoro, Tanzania.



Lindi Jamaat's Education programme-- an inspiration to other small Jamaats

The major causes of migration of our community members from remote regions of Tanzania have been lack of medical and educational facilities. Migration has caused inconvenience and extra costs for many families. The affected places are Bukoba, Mwanza, Morogoro, Zanzibar, Kigoma, Mtwara, Lindi and Songea.

The Supreme Council, with due consideration of the plight of our members residing in remote regions, issued a circular some two years ago encouraging affected Jamaats to initiate Day Care Centres. The Council then envisaged that the establishment of such Centres would be a move in the right direction.

In March, 1997 Lindi Jamaat under the committed leadership of Murabbi Gulambhai Manji along with full support of young members in the Jamaat renovated one old room adjacent to the Mosque open compound and commenced a Day Care Centre with nine children. The room has a small open courtyard for the children to play and the reasonable entrance and monthly fees has been willingly paid by parents.

Within one year the Centre has twice as many students with children of other communities also being sent here. The school generates enough finance to meet its recurrent expenses. Regional authorities have been impressed by the initiation of this educational facility by our community and officials regularly visit the Centre.

Kampala Jamat offers Flat for students

The Kampala Jamat has allocated a two-bedroom flat in the Jamat's building to accommodate female students pursuing higher education. The Jamat had made a commitment to this effect during the 1997 Supreme Council Meeting held there.

Following the Resolution passed during the last Africa Federation Conference in April, 1998, top priorities for scholarships are now given to applicants wishing to pursue higher education in local colleges or universities. At present five students with scholarships have been accepted by the Makerere University.

Great results from Mombasa Jaffery Academy

The Mombasa Jaffery Academy's O & A level London G.C.E. results are everything to write about. The school's first batch of A' level students sat for

The number of members in Lindi Jamaat is gradually increasing and the Jamaat is also considering to launch a primary school which will be needed in the year 2001 to accommodate the present growing number of students in the Day Care Centre.

The young and old parents are relieved with the Day Care Centre and keen to have the primary school project implemented soon. This would ensure that their young ones would obtain fine religious and secular education at least up to the seventh grade.

The move by Lindi Jamaat is commendable and the Jamaat should surely be an inspiration to other smaller Jamaats to take heed.

SETWEL Board appointments made

The following appointments of the Setwel Board, for a three year term to 2001, have been made:

Roshan A. Fazal – Dar-es-Salaam – Chairman
 Ramzanali M. Nanji – Nairobi – Vice Chairman
 Mehboob F. Fazal – Dar-es-Salaam – Hon Secretary
 Zakir A. Pirbhai – Arusha – Member
 Fidahusseini Ebrahim – Mombasa – Member
 Murtaza G. Habib – Hon Asst Treasurer – Ex-officio – Member

their exams in June 1998 and best results were attained by:-

Fatemah A. Rhemtulla A,A,B,B
 Huseinali Z. Habib A,A,B

Education Board gets new Chairman

A new Chairman, Asgher Manji has been appointed to lead the Education Board of the Africa Federation for the term 1998-2001. The full team is made up of the following members:

Asgher Habib K. Manji Chairman
 Raza Chandoo Vice Chairman
 Mohammed F. Sumar Hon. Secretary
 Murtaza Bashirali Nasser Member
 Mazaher Jaffer Dhirani Member
 Sister Latifa M. Hassam Member
 Sister Zinat Shiraz A. Fazal Member
 Sister Hamida Asgher Manji Member
 Murtaza G. Habib Ex-Officio

CHB announces new team

The new Central Health Board (CHB) team of the Africa Federation has been appointed for the current term that will run from 1998 - 2001. The team is made up of the following members:

Aunali K. Khalfan Chairman
 Inayat Alidina Hon Secretary
 Dr. Mahmood Hameer Special Project Development
 Fazleabbas Dhirani Special Project Development
 Jamil Merali Medical Advisor/Ladies Liaison Officer
 Dr. Dilawer Padhani Medical Advisor/Health Education
 Mohamed Mulla Physical Fitness Activities cum Conventions
 Shakil Dharamsi Health Screening/Blood Grouping
 Hassan Raza Medical Library/Health Screening
 Razahusseini Manji Medical Bulletin/Publications
 Mohamed Pirbhai ex-officio (Vice Chairman of AF)

The Postal address of the Board is P.O. Box 6710, Dar-es-Salaam. The telephone contacts of the Chairman, Aunali Khalfan are: Tel: (O) 255-51 117004 Mobile: 255-812 782 519 Fax: 255-51 112726/7.

Tahera Sunderji A,A,B
 Gulamraza A. Dattoo A, A,D

The highlight of the O'levels were Ali M. Nasser and Zahid M. Jagani. Both excelled with Eight A's.



DAR hosts 20th Africa Federation Triennial Conference

The 20th Triennial Conference of the Africa Federation was held at the Dar-es-Salaam Imambara from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th April, 1998 (the Session actually extended to about 3.00 a.m. on Monday 13th April, 1998). The Session was a success with deliberations covering a wide range of communal issues including the discussion of various proposed resolutions. Most of the sessions were conducted with packed attendances.

The visitors from outside Tanzania who attended included: Chairman of Conseil Regional Des Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaats de L'Ocean Indien at Antananarivo, Moajiz Khamis, Stanmore Jamaat Chairman, Dr. Amir Lakha, Aden Jamaat Chairman, Ramzan Jaffer, Kenya National Assembly Member, Hon. Sajjad Rashid of Mombasa, Ahmed Daya and Kassim Manji, UK, Fidahussein Gulamhussein, Toronto, Riyazhussein Gulamhussein of Maputo, Mohamedraza Hassan Dharamsi, Zanzibar, Azad Dhalla and Gulamhussein S. Ahmed of Saudi Arabia and Ansar Hemraj of Dubai. Other guests included Professor Kamoopuri and Anver Rajpar, Chairman of Zainabia Trust who currently resides in Dar-es-Salaam.

The Session commenced with recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an by Aliasgher Kermalli which was translated into English by Sameer Bharmal. This was followed by Dua-e-Wahdat which was led by Mehboob Somji, the Tabligh Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamat. The Chairman of the Organising Committee, Aunali Khalfan then officially welcomed all to the Conference and after introducing his team members who were ready to assist at all times, he read out various messages gracing the Conference which were received from overseas.

The Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamat, Asgher Bharwani then delivered his welcome address assuring one and all that volunteers were available for assistance to handle individual requirements. In his address he accentuated on

the important role of the Africa Federation of keeping Africa Jamats together and to solve common problems and achieve common objectives.

CITATIONS: After the welcome address, Citations were read out by the Vice Chairman of the Supreme Council, Mohamed Pirbhai to Ramzanhussein Mulla Nanji and to the Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Habib Jafferli Mulji.

The citation to Ramzanali M. Nanji was for the Husseini Medal conferred to him for the philanthropic services rendered by him to individual members, Jamaats and the Africa Federation. Ramzanbhai is currently the Chairman of Nairobi Jaffery Academy and is also the Vice Chairman of the Setwel Board along with being a Trustee of the Africa Federation. The Husseini Medal was presented to him by the Chairman of Aden Jamaat, Ramzan Jaffer. The full text of this citation is outlined on page 58 of this issue.

A dilatory Citation was then read out to the Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Habib Mulji for the Haideri Medal awarded to him in 1995 at the end of his 12 years at the helm during which he served six years as the Vice Chairman and six years as the Chairman. The Current Chairman Mohamed Dhirani explained to the congregation that the Citation was not ready at the time the medal was awarded because of his sudden appointment. Copy of the Citation was presented to Habibbhai by the Chairman of Stanmore Jamaat, Dr. Amir Lakha. The full text of this citation is outlined on page 58 of this issue.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH:

After the presentations, the Africa Federation Chairman Mohamed Dhirani then delivered his key-note address in Gujarati. After welcoming all guests and thanking the host Jamaat, which he said has traditionally been hosting the Conference every three years, he revisited the deaths of prominent

community personalities who passed away last year following which he began his key-note address.

JAMAAT'S PROJECTS: The Chairman expressed satisfaction that some important projects were completed during the last year. He said that in Nakuru, the Imambara, Mosque and residential flats were officially completed. He said the residential flats are expected to raise revenue by way of rental income thereby helping to finance the Nakuru Jamaat's costs. He then referred to the new Jaffery Islamic Centre in Nairobi which was officially opened on 8 March, 1998. He said this Complex, lying adjacent to the plush Nairobi Jaffery Sports Club, is a proud achievement for Nairobi Jamaat and includes a Mosque, Haydari Madrassah, the Nairobi Jaffery Academy and an Imambara for ladies and gents. He said plans are also underway for the construction of a Musafarkhana, Girls College and Students' Quarters. In Tulear, Madagascar he said that a Musafarkhana and Madrassah were completed while in Majunga, a widow's home was completed. Outlining the projects, that are in the pipeline for completion, Mohamedbhai said that these include a Madrasah and Widows home in Mwanza, an Imambada, Madrasah, Musafarkhana and Alim's flat in the main port city of Tamatavovo, Madagascar and a Dispensary and renovation to the Imambada in Majunga, Madagascar. He said that in Reunion, plans to build a *Bait ul Salaat* are ready for implementation but the Jamaat there was awaiting approval from the City's Planning Commission.

ECONOMIC SITUATION: The Chairman then spoke on the difficult economic times facing the Community and stressed on the need for members to avoid lavishness. He said that the difficult times had a direct bearing on income from khums and donations to the Supreme Council which have dropped, thereby restraining the general performance of the Council by way of

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providing business loans and other welfare and housing assistance.

He said that the Supreme Council has one building in Dar-es-Salaam and three buildings in Mombasa which fetch rental revenues to the tune of \$ 70,000 per year. He said this income would be supplemented with additional income due from a building in Kampala which was recently reclaimed by the Supreme Council. The Kampala Ebrahimibhai Memorial Building is expected to fetch an income of \$ 70,000 per year after its current face-lift while in Mombasa at the Unity House building, he said an extra floor would be added when the present tenants vacate the flats which would then be rented out to bring in an additional \$ 60,000 to \$ 70,000 per annum. He said these additional finances plus the income from the Foundation Fund are expected to ease the financial constraints of the Africa Federation in the years to come. Until then, he said the Federation would have to exercise restraint in its expenses.

EDUCATION: On education, the Chairman expressed satisfaction that the Community now generally understands the importance and need of higher education for our children. He said a number of students were provided funds for further education through pledges availed in 1995 which were for a three-year period expiring this year. He said that beginning from next year fresh loans would have to be secured and to this effect he said that the time is now ripe for Jamaats to also share the cost of education for their students.

He said involving Jamaats in financing part of the educational costs would be a pragmatic way of ensuring that educational loans are repaid because individual Jamaats can be more aggressive on its own members and their families when it comes to obtaining repayments. He furthermore said that one possible way of obtaining revenue to finance further education is for Jamaats, which have schools, to increase school fees by a certain percentage and to allocate this percentage towards a fund for higher education.

He decried the attitude of many educa-

tional loan beneficiaries who are not repaying the money advanced to them. He said last year only \$30,000 was collected from five students while seventeen did not pay their dues. He said lack of repayments was depriving other potential beneficiaries from taking advantage of similar loans.

HIGHER EDUCATION - OVERSEAS: On overseas education, Mohamedbhai said that higher education costs are prohibitive in Europe and America. He said that for many courses similar professional training is now available in East Africa and India. He said students should be encouraged to study in Africa and to this effect he said the Supreme Council would give priority to students seeking educational training here.

He praised the outgoing Education Board Chairman, Hussein Rashid and his team for the excellent work done during their term. He said the Education Board has established good contacts with various colleges and universities and raised awareness of the importance of education to our community thereby facilitating community youths to take advantage of the facilities available by the Federation and individual Jamaats.

HIGHER EDUCATION – EXPANSION OF OUR SCHOOLS TO COLLEGES: On schools, he said the Community now has four schools in East Africa rendering education upto Form six level plus four schools in Madagascar while a number of other Jamaats have primary schools or are planning to establish new schools. He said that in Dar-es-Salaam, where the Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary accommodates 2200 students, the demand for student places is high and he praised the decision by the Jamaat to procure the 3-storey high Korean Complex Centre at a cost of U.S.\$ 1.6m which would help extend the Al-Muntazir School, which lies adjacent to it.

He also said that time is now ripe for the Community to think of universities and colleges. He said in Nairobi the building of a Girls College is seriously being looked into with a provision to provide accountancy, secretarial and management studies among other

courses. In Dar-es-Salaam, he suggested commencement of a girl's college in the new Complex. He also emphasised on the need for the Community to produce its own teachers so that our youths are not unduly exposed to other teachers who lack religious or good educational backgrounds. He suggested that establishments be incorporated in Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi that provide teacher training degree/diploma courses.

The Chairman also suggested that with the Community having so many schools in Africa, a time has come whereby the schools need to get together and discuss their problems and progress. He suggested that a Central Board of Schools be set up which could then get the schools to co-ordinate.

Mohamedbhai then referred to the regions in Tanzania which do not have good facilities for education. He said in such regions, families have had to wind up their business and move to Dar-es-Salaam in order to secure better education for their children. He suggested that to enable upcountry Community businessmen to continue with their business operations undeterred, the Dar-es-Salaam Boarding House be revived into its old purpose – that of providing boarding facilities to upcountry students.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN MADRESSAS: The Chairman commended the madrasahs in the Community for doing a good job by providing our children with religious education. He said that women have also been actively involved in madrasahs and suggested that a super or adult education class be introduced for adults and youths wishing to learn religious education. He also stressed on the importance of Gujarati which, he said, should be taught in madrasahs so that our youths are able to read and write the language.

NEEDS FOR MOLVIS: On molvis, he said the Community lacks its own molvis and regretted that "Mehrab" and "mimbar" were still largely dependent on foreign molvis whose deliverances are not always to the required quality as a result of which youths are losing interest and staying away from majlis.

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(.....from page 53)

He offered the Community's youths who have studied up to Form 4 or Form 6, a free scholarship to Qum to study religious education for a 4-5 years course in any recognised Hawza. He said priority for educational loans would be given to students seeking to pursue further careers in Islamic education in any recognised university.

SPORTS FESTIVAL: The Chairman then revisited the Sports Festival held in Dar-es-Salaam and said the next Festival will inshallah be held in the year 2001 because for the next two years Christmas will coincide with the holy month of Ramadhan. He said the offer by Dubai Jamaat to host the next Festival is being seriously considered.

SECRETARIAT: The Chairman then talked about the increasing responsibilities of the Africa Federation, with some Community members now residing in new towns and countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia. He said to effectively perform duties and to handle the scope of work involved, the Chairman needs to have assistants and advisors to help and guide him.

VOTE OF THANKS: The Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to all Council officials and other individuals for their whole-hearted assistance, co-operation and devotion which contributed so much to make his term of office a great success. He also expressed his deep appreciation for the dedication and selfless services rendered by all in their respective fields of tabligh, health, education and welfare and prayed to Allah (s.w.t.) to reward them handsomely in this and the next world.

The list, he said, was long. However, he stated that his office-bearers, trustees, Secretariat staff and Jamaat's Presidents deserved special mention.

He also thanked the Jamaats which he visited for their support, hospitality, encouragement and respect given to him during his visits.

OTHER SPEECHES: After the Chairman's address, the Chairman of the Conseil Regional Des K.S.I. Jamates de L'Ocean Indien, Moajiz



All smiles by the Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani as he and the host Jamaat Chairman, Asgher Bharwani are welcomed to initiate proceedings by the Chairman of the Organising Committee, Aunali Khalfan.

Khamis, Stanmore Jamaat President, Dr. Amir Lakha, Aden Jamaat Chairman, Ramzan Jaffer and Gulamhussein S. Ahmed from Saudi Arabia addressed the gathering outlining the situation at their end.

NEW OFFICE BEARERS: The following morning after the confirmation of the minutes of the 19th Constitutional Conference held in Dar-es-Salaam, the following office bearers were elected.

- Chairman: Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
- Vice Chairman: Mohamed H. Pirbhai
- Hon Treasurer: Ahmed H. Alloo
- Trustees: Gulamabbas M. Janmohamed (Dar-es-Salaam)
- Habib P. Virani (Dar-es-Salaam)
- Ramzanali M. Nanji (Nairobi)
- Yusuf G. Dato (Mombasa)
- Dr. Asgher G. Moledina (Kampala)
- Ebrahim Kassam (Kampala)

The following appointments were made by the Chairman by virtue of the power granted to him under Article 16(a) and (b) of the Constitution.

- Hon Secretary: Asgherali J. Dhanji
- Hon Asst Secretary: Mazaher J. Dhirani
- Hon Asst Treasurer: Murtaza G. Habib

The Chairman under the power granted to him vide Article 27 (c) and as announced in the Conference co-opted the following:

- Mohamed A. Hassam
- Mohamed Y. Somji
- Naushad H. Dhanji

CENTRAL HEALTH BOARD: The Chairman of Central Health Board, Aunali Khalfan briefed the Conference on the statistics of various diseases

notably Heart, Cancer and AIDS which are now on the increase in the Community. He praised the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) of UK and the Imaan Foundation of Mumbai for their excellent co-operation and support.

Central Health Board had also invited Dr. Anil Mehta, Dr. S. Bhattaacharya, World-renowned Heart Surgeon, and Dr. K. Kothari an Eye Specialist all from India who gave very good presentations on Heart Bypass and Eye Operations.

SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR: Among the candidates from Nairobi, Mombasa, Arusha and Dar-es-Salaam, Noor-el-Ain Shariff of Dar-es-Salaam was declared the winner. He received his trophy from the Chairman of Regional Conseil de Madagascar, Moajiz Khamis. Despite his physical disability, Ain is the top-most table tennis player in the country.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

The following Resolutions were adopted by the Conference

1. Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina: Not to grant Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina any forum for propagation of his thoughts, ideas or philosophy under any Jamaat in Africa. The debate on this Resolution lasted nearly six hours when finally the Chairman declared voting by secret ballots whereby 110 councillors and delegates voted. The results reads 33 No's (NAYS), 73 Yes (AYES), 3 Abstentions, 1 Spoilt vote.

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The Resolution which was amended as proposed by Mombasa Jamaat and approved by Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat is as follows:

"This Conference notes with concern aspects of writings by Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina in "Islamic Messianism" and in "Encyclopedia of Bio-ethics" which run contrary to the accepted Shia Ithna-Asheri beliefs."

"In order not to give credence to those aspects of writings which run contrary to our beliefs and be recognised as "accepted shia beliefs", emanating from an author recognised by the Shia Community, this Conference places on record its condemnation of all such writings that run contrary to Shia Ithna-Asheri beliefs. As a mark of our protest against such writings and in taking a moral/religious stand on principle affecting our faith and in order to ensure that our progeny is not unduly misled as a result of such writings, this Conference hereby collectively resolves to call upon the Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats in Africa not to grant Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina any forum for propagation or dissemination of his thoughts, ideas or philosophy until such time as he rescinds and abrogates in writing his objectionable written views which are not according to the tenets of the Shia Ithna-Asheri faith".

2. Trustees: The following Resolution proposed by the Secretariat to amend the Constitution was adopted at the Conference.

Article 35(a) of the Constitution of the Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa was replaced with the new article with the same number and was unanimously approved in the Triennial Conference.

TRUSTEES: (Effective date of the amendment 11th April, 1998)

"The properties and other assets of the Federation shall be vested in eight trustees of whom the Chairman and the Honorary treasurer shall be ex-officio Trustees. The other six trustees shall be elected at each Ordinary Conference, of whom two each shall be from Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, all six to be

citizens of any member country of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa and/or bonafide resident for five years or more in that Country and/or to have immovable property. The Supreme Council shall cause a Deed of Trust to be prepared in accordance with the Law. The Trustees shall abide by the provisions of such deed and the law".

The old article 35(a) which has been replaced read as follows:

TRUSTEES: (Replaced and absolute from 11th April, 1998)

"The properties and other assets of the Federation shall be vested in six trustees of whom the Chairman and the Honorary treasurer shall be ex-officio Trustees. The other four trustees shall be elected at each Ordinary Conference, of whom two shall be from Tanzania and the other two from Kenya, all four being citizens of any member country of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of the respective countries. The Supreme Council shall cause a Deed of Trust to be prepared in accordance with the Law. The Trustees shall abide by the provisions of such deed and the law".

3. Tangayika Education Council: The Conference unanimously approved that all assets, liabilities, commitments and other affairs of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council – which is being wound up would be taken over and managed by the Africa Federation.

The resolution read: "In terms of Article 34 of the Constitution, at the request of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council, all assets, liabilities, commitments and other affairs of the said Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council, which is being wound up, be taken over in trust and managed by the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa on the terms and conditions to be agreed upon, and in accordance with the same aims and objects and for the same categories of beneficiaries as was provided for in the Constitution of the said Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council.

The handing and taking over will be finalised when Tanganyika Education

Council will complete the handing over notes, documents, files and most importantly the accounts."

4. Education Loans: Among other conditions, approved by the Conference, henceforth the local Jamaats under the establishment of Central school boards which the applicant's originates shall in principle raise 50% of the amount of Education Loan approved by Education Board.

The resolution read: "The Supreme Council shall grant Higher Education Loans upon the following principles and conditions:

1. All eligible candidates, male or females, shall be entitled to an education loan upon the terms and conditions set by the Education Board

2. The local Jamaat from which the applicant originates shall in principle raise 50% of the amount of Education loan approved by the Education Board

3. Notwithstanding clause 2 above, the Education Board will, with advise of the local Jamaat, consider all exceptional cases.

4. The Education Board with the local Jamaats shall set up modalities and arrangements for the financial sustainability of the Education Board Loan Scheme.

5. The Education Board will in addition to its current application procedures, develop suitable procedures for:-

a. Ensuring implementation of this resolution

b. Modalities of repayments

c. Guardianship of female students

d. Actions to be taken against defaulters of agreed repayments and rejection of applications by their siblings.

e. Prioritisation of educational institutions and advisory services to the applicants, and their member Jamaats.

f. Any other matter considered necessary to give full effect to this resolution and mandate of the Education Board.

5. AIDS: It was resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah for any member of a Jamaat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus.

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The resolution read: "Resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah of any member of Jamaat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus. Each Jamaat shall establish, the necessary modalities, with the advice of Central Health Board, on blood testing, pre and post testing counseling of the parties, confidentiality of information and other necessary support services. Consent for the Nikah shall be sought after all such independent information as is necessary has been obtained from parties to give informed consent to the proposed marriage."

The modalities of this Resolution are being worked by the Central Health Board and inshallah before the engagement and nikah season starts in Rabi-ul-Awwal these will be ready for implementation by the Jamaats.

6. Restructure of Africa Federation:

It was resolved that office bearers will appoint a committee to look into the current structure of Supreme Council and to make recommendations, within an agreed time frame for necessary structural reorganisation.

The Resolution, submitted by Mombasa Jamaat, was unanimously adopted. It read:-

"In order to fulfil the aspirations of the Community and face up the challenges ahead as we approach the next millennium, it is only appropriate that the Supreme Council undergoes a major structural change and at the same time, strategies are laid out that would bequeath to the new generation of leadership that will emerge after the expiry of the current three term, with an organization that is vibrant and with appropriate relevant outlook and approach.

To this end, this Conference resolves to direct the office-bearers to appoint a Commission to look into the ideals and aspiration of the Community and the current structure of the Supreme Council and to make recommendations, within an agreed time frame, for necessary structural re-organization.

Members of the Commission may be drawn from among experienced social

workers, professionals, educationists, economics /industrialists with corporate experience and individuals with appropriate religious background.

Recommendations of the proposed Commission be tabled before the next Council Meeting in 1999, and if need be, a special conference convened at the same time to consider any constitutional changes required as a result."

Nairobi Jamaat through its Councillor Alhaj Murtaza Jaffer stated that at the time of doing the restructure of the Africa Federation, it was also necessary to look into the restructure of individual Jamaats. This was agreed upon and the following Resolution was accordingly approved.

"The Federation on its own is not a separate entity. The collection of member Jamaats joining together make up the Federation. In reviewing the restructuring of the Federation, the role, function, and structure of Jamaat organizations also need to be looked into, which should assist in the restructuring of the Federation in the interest of the Constituent Jamaats."

"It was also resolved that the restructure will be done by the Mombasa Jamaat which will appoint a special committee for this purpose." (*more details on page 62*).

7. Reconciliation with the World Federation: "Considering the need for reconciliation between the Africa Federation and the World Federation and recognizing the fact that the existing solu-

tion is injurious to the interest of the Community, this Conference resolves to rescind item No. 13 of the Agenda and urges the Africa Federation to amicably resolve any difference of opinion or dispute it might have with the World Federation in a much more magnanimous manner and in the long term interest and unity of the Community.

After this resolution was introduced the Chairman stated that in terms of Clause 36d of the Constitution this resolution was Ultra Vires. The Conference on the proposal of Mombasa Jamaat gave the Chairman full power to deal with this issue in the interest of Africa Federation.

Much time was spent on the above resolutions, particularly on the one pertaining to Abdulaziz Sachedina. Thereafter presentations were made by the Chairmen of the various Boards under the Supreme Council, the reports of which were then deliberated upon.

VOTE OF THANKS: Masum Meghji, a delegate of Mombasa Jamaat, thanked all councillors, delegates, invitees, various Chairmen of Jamaats, Boards, all visitors and also offered special thanks to the organising committee Chairman, Aunali Khalfan and his team, volunteers and scouts for their excellent service during the Conference. With this note, he moved to offer the hosting of the next Supreme Council meeting earmarked for April, 1999 in Mombasa.

The Conference ended at around 3.00 a.m. on 13th April, 1998.



The Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani and the Chairman of the Central Health Board (CHB), Aunali Khalfan with visiting doctors from India who addressed the congregation on important health issues.

For dedicated service...Citations in Gujarati

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

૧૨ ઓક્ટોબર, ૧૯૮૮
૧૦ એપ્રિલ, ૧૯૯૮

અલબચ્ચ રમઝાન મહમદુસેન મુલ્લા નાનલ,
નૈરોબી.

ધાર્મિક લાગણી અને સામાજિક સેવાની દાજ્ જે કુટુંબમા થાલી આવે છે એ કુટુંબના નબીસ લાઈ રમઝાન મહમદુસેન મુલ્લા નાનલની આપર ગુમ-નામ સેવાઓની ક્ષત્રપે આ માનપત્ત રજૂ કરતા મને આનંદ થાય છે.

સમરત પૂર્વ આફ્રિકામા નૈરોબી શહેર સબક્રસ, વેપાર, તબીબી સારવાર તેમજ દેશાવર આવવા બનાનું એક મથક છે. એવા અતી અપી શહેરમા પોતાના કમકાજમા બહુજ ગુથવાયલા ઢોવા છતા ક્ષેત્રપક ક્ષેત્રી ભિત્તરને વેપાર-સબંધી, તબીબી સારવાર માટે અથવા કા-કાયાસ્તની સફર માટે જતી વેલાએ એકએક ક્ષેત્ર સબાય કે મહત્તની જરત બપાય તો લાઈ રમઝાન નાનલનું નામ મોખરે આવે છે. બીલકુલ ઢસતા મોઢે સેવા આપવી એ લાઈ રમઝાનની ખાસિયત છે.

ધાર્મિક ક્ષેત્રે ભિલાલ મુસલીમ મીશનની પ્રગતીમા તેમજ મુદ્રેસતુલ રસુલુલ- અકરમમા તેમનો અને તેમના કુટુંબીજનોનો ફાલો નોધપાવ છે. ઢલમાઓના રવાગત અને મહેમાન-નાવાઝમા પક તેઓ આગળપડતા છે

નૈરોબીમા કાયાશાબાની જર બજાતા છ મહીનામા તે શાબા તૈયાર કરી દેવામા લાઈ રમઝાનની કોશિશો અને સબાય ખાસ નોધપાવ છે. ખૂલુસથી એક ક્ષર્યને ગતી આપતા બીજ ભિત્તરે પક મુલ્લા દોલથી સાથ આપે છે. એનો આ ઢજો દાખલો છે.

સોમાલીઆના બેજરત પ્રકરમા તેમજ તે પછી સોમાલીઆથી આવેલ લાઈઓના પુનર-વસવાટ માટે તથા સેટવેલ બોડના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખ તરીકે લાઈ રમઝાનની સેવાઓ નોધપાવ છે. લાઈ રમઝાન હેરેશનના ઢરટી તરીકે પક સેવા આપતા આવ્યા છે. રમઝાનલાઈની વધોની સેવાઓની કટર કરતા તેમના ઢકમા દુઆ છે કે અલલાકપાક ચક્રરદા માઅસુમીન અ. ના વસીલાથી તેમને નેક તવફીક્રત, સેહત, આફીયતની સાથે લાંબુ આયુષ્ય અતા કરે અને એમની દીની અને ક્ષેત્રી સેવાલાવનામા વધારે કરે આમીન.

આ લાલી લાગણીઓ અને નેક દુઆઓ સાથે લાઈ રમઝાનને "પુસૈની" ચંકક ઇનાયત કરતા મને બેહત ખુશી ઢપજે છે. વરસલામ,

લી: દુઆગીર સેવક,
મહમદ ગુલામહુસયન ધીસરી.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

૧૨ ઓક્ટોબર, ૧૯૮૮
૧૦ એપ્રિલ, ૧૯૯૮

મુસ્લમી અલબચ્ચ ઢબીબલાઈ બકર મુલલ,
દારેસલામ.

સેવાલાવી માનવીઓની કટર કરવી એ પક એક ઇનસાની ફરજ છે. આ તકે અલબચ્ચ ઢબીબલાઈ બકર મુલલની સેવાઓની ક્ષત્રની તપે આ માનપત્ત પેશ કરતા મને ખુશી ઢપજે છે.

મુસ્લમી અલબચ્ચ ઢબીબલાઈ સાથે ક્ષેમને લગતી સેવાના ક્ષેત્રમા ઢબી મહીને કામ કરવાનો જે મને મીક્ષે મવેલ તેને લક્ષમા લેતા તેમની સેવાલાવની લાગણી, મિખાલસતા, ધીરજ, લગાતાર તનતોડ મહેનત અને અંગત કુરબાની ક્ષત્રને લાયક છે.

૧૯૭૨મા ઢબીબલાઈએ દારેસલામ જમાતના માનદ મંચી તરીકેની જ્વાબદારી સ્વીકારતા ક્ષેત્રી સેવાના ક્ષેત્રમા પ્રથમવાર પ્રવેશ કરેલ. ત્યાર બાદ ૧૯૮૩ સુધી દારેસલામ જમાતની ક્ષર્યવાહી સમીતીના સભ્ય તરીકે અને મહેસા તથા તઠલીગ હિશાગમા નોધપાવ કામગીરી બનવી.

૧૯૮૩ થી ૧૯૯૮ સુધી હેરેશનના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખનું સ્થાન સંભાળ્યું અને ત્યાર બાદ છ વર્ષ સુધી આ સેવાઓની પરંપરા ચાલુ રખતા ૧૯૯૮ થી ૧૯૯૫ સુધી હેરેશનના પ્રમૂખ રહીને ક્ષેમને ઢમદા માર્ગદર્શન આપ્યું.

હેરેશનના તેમના પ્રમૂખપદ દરમ્યાન ૧૯૯૨મા સોમાલીઆના એ દુખદ પ્રકર સમયે ક્ષેમના ઇતિહાસમા સોનેરી અક્ષરે લખાયેલ "સી-ઓન ઇવિકયુએશન" ની સુંદર કામગીરી અને ક્ષેત્રી ભિત્તરેની લાઈયાસ અને સેવાલાવી લાગણીઓના ઢજ ઉદાસરસે ઢમેશા યાદગાર રહેશે. ત્યાર બાદ સોમાલીઆથી બેજરત કરી આવેલ ભિત્તરેની પુનર-વસાહત માટે ઢજનીઆ તેમજ અ-વ રથબોએ વસવાટ માટે ક્ષેમે જે નોધપાવ સાથ આપેલ તે કાચ્છીનો ઢલેખ ઢબીબલાઈના નામ સાથે સંકબાયેલો રહેશે.

ભિલાલમુસલીમ મીશનના એક ઢર્મના સભ્ય તરીકે, ગોલન ક્રેસંક ઝુપના એક ઢર્મના ગવરનર તરીકે, તેમજ દારેસલામ જમાતની છ વર્ષની કામગીરી દરમ્યાન તથા હેરેશનના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખ તરીકે ઢબીબલાઈએ જે સાથ અને સહકાર આપી ક્ષેત્રી સેવામા મને મદદરપ બનેલ તેની કટર કરતા મને ખુશી ઢપજે છે.

અલલા સબહનહુ વ તઆલાની બાર્તામા દુઆ છે કે ચક્રરદા માઅસુમીન અ. ના વસીલાથી ઢબીબલાઈને તંદુરસ્તી લખું લાંબુ આયુષ્ય બક્ષે અને એમની ક્ષેત્રી સેવાઓનો લાલ ક્ષેમને સહાયે મબતો રહે. આ દુઆઓની મકબૂલીવતની આશા સાથે ઢબીબલાઈને હેરેશન તરફથી "હયદરી" ચંકક અર્પક કરતા મને અનંદ ખુશી ઢપજે છે.

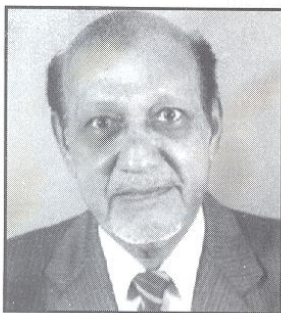
વરસલામ,
લી: દુઆગીર સેવક,
મહમદ ગુલામહુસયન ધીસરી.

For dedicated service.....

.....a *Husseini Medal* and a *dilatory Citation* are presented

At the 20th Triennial Conference, the following Citations were read out by the Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Pirbhai. Pertinent details can be read in the Conference report carried on page 52.

**Murrabi Alhaj Habib Jafferali
Mulji of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**



"To recognise and appreciate dedicated social workers is a moral obligation. In this spirit I have pleasure in presenting this citation and Haideri Medal to Alhaj Habib Jafferali Mulji.

I have had the privilege of working with Alhaj Habib Jafferali Mulji in Community service and from what I have known of him, I have been highly impressed with his sincerity, dedication, patience, sense of personal sacrifice and relentless dedication to the task at hand.

Alhaj Habib made his entry into Community affairs as an active social worker in 1960. He was elected Honorary Secretary of Dar es Salaam Jamaat in 1978. He served as a Committee member of Dar es Salaam Jamaat until 1983 and played an active part in Madressa and Tabligh related activities.

Alhaj Habib also served as a Committee member of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania for seven years and as a Governor of the Golden Crescent Group for one term.

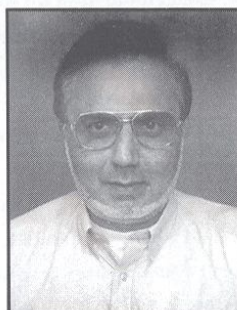
From 1983 to 1989 he served as Vice Chairman of the Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa and from 1989 to 1995 he rendered noteworthy services as Chairman of the Africa Federation.

During his term in office as Chairman of the Federation, the Community underwent the agony of the Somali crisis and witnessed the historic "sea-borne evacuation" from Somalia in 1992. This historic event in which the Community members performed noteworthy feats, will ever remain enshrined in our history. The greatest endeavours made by the dedicated members of the Community in organising the "sea borne evacuation" of over a thousand souls from Mogadishu and the support received from the cross-section of the Community members in these endeavours and in the subsequent rehabilitation and resettlement of the evacuees in Tanzania and elsewhere are a matter of great pride and satisfaction. The name of Alhaj Habib Mulji will always remain linked with those historic developments.

In recognition of his selfless services and with prayers for his longevity, good health and success in all walks of life I have pleasure in awarding the "Hyderi Medal" to Alhaj Habib Jafferali Mulji.

**Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
Chairman
Africa Federation**

**Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein
Mulla Nanji of Nairobi, Kenya.**



"Love of religion and service to the Community has for decades been the tradition of the Mulla Nanji Family. Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein Nanji has lived up to those precepts and in recognition of his numerous silent services, I have pleasure in presenting this citation and Husseini Medal.

In Eastern Africa, the city of Nairobi

has acquired a unique status for political, economic and medical referral activities. As a resident of this hectic city, despite his considerable preoccupations, Alhaj Ramzan is known to be ever receptive to all Community members who seek him out for advice and assistance in matters related to trade or medical treatment. Travellers stopping over in Nairobi enroute to and from Hajj and Ziyarat can also rely upon Alhaj Ramzan to come to their assistance.

In the field of religious activities, active contributions by him and members of his family in the management of the Bilal Muslim Mission, Nairobi and the Madressa Rasul ul Akram are noteworthy. For Ulema and Zakereen passing through Nairobi, Alhaj Ramzan and his family have been ever willing hosts.

When the Nairobi Jamaat felt the need for setting up a Girls Secondary School, Alhaj Ramzan played a leading role with noteworthy contributions from himself and his family and with the active involvement and contribution from other Community members also, the school project was accomplished within a record period of only six months.

During the Somalia crisis and the evacuation of the Community members from Mogadishu, Alhaj Ramzan played an active part. In the subsequent rehabilitation and resettlement of the evacuees, Alhaj Ramzan has also been at the forefront as an active Vice Chairman of the Resettlement Board. Alhaj Ramzan is also a Trustee of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa.

In recognition of his numerous silent services in the cause of Religion and the Community and with prayers for his longevity, good health and prosperity, I have pleasure in awarding the "Husseini Medal" to Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein Mulla Nanji.

**Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
Chairman
Africa Federation**



CHB outlines its objectives for the new term

The Central Health Board (CHB) of the Supreme Council has outlined its objectives and targets for the period from 1998-2001.

The targets take into consideration the fact that over the years there have been numerous improvements in health awareness in our community with members becoming increasingly conscious of the needs for healthcare in their day to day lives. However new challenges are emerging which require our commitment and action, for example the increasing number of HIV/AIDS cases, Heart diseases etc. in our community world-wide.

The Central Health Board has certain obligations towards the community's well being and therefore has deemed it necessary to have a clear direction and objectives for implementation during the term of office. The targets outlined are as follows:-

1. Improvements and expansion to existing facilities provided by the CHB to the patients in India for treatment in terms of accommodation facilities, general welfare, medical and financial assistance when deemed necessary. Embark on feasibility study immediately.
2. More frequent, regular and closer follow up of health screening sessions. To re-introduce the health screening Projects for Jamats who require our assistance i.e. Tanga, Morogoro, Dodoma, Zanzibar and others. Find ways to improve communication and participation by the CHB Zonal Representatives in the constituent Jamats and vice versa.
3. Better propagation of health education in areas live HIV & AIDS. Heart diseases, Thalassaemia, etc. Prepare a 3 year programme for the youths, ladies and gents population of our community.
4. Assist Jamats that require

guidance and support to set up Dispensaries and Clinics in their respective towns/cities.

5. Appoint expert individual and group counselling in health and Sex Education for all age levels and groups of youths and school children of both sexes.
6. Encourage the constituent Jamats that do not have sports and recreation amenities to provide Sports and Recreation facilities for of all age levels for ladies and gents members of the community.
7. Accelerate, enhance and promote further closer working relationships with MAB of the World Federation and the Imaan Foundation in India for the mutual benefit of our organisations and community members.
8. Establish Medical Library for the medical professionals and students. First consignment of journals, literature etc. supplied by MAB should be put into use immediately.
9. Encourage and assist medical professionals and students for field trips, training attachments, placements etc. by liaising closely with organisations like jamats, MAB, WHO, NGO's etc.
10. Continue to publish the quarterly CHB Medical Bulletin for our community members.
11. Establish database of the health status of our community typical cause of deaths, common diseases established through health screening programmes etc. and advise corrective and remedial action.
12. Organise Medical Convention involving health care professionals, heads of our community, social workers etc. once every two years to discuss pertinent health matters and agree on action programmes and their implementation.

News in brief ...

Education Board...

The Education Board has moved to Dar es Salaam under new Chairman, Asgher Habib K. Manji who takes over from Husein Rashid who did a commendable job during the 1995-98 term when they awarded 21 educational loans to the tune of US \$ 300,020 on yearly basis until the students complete their education.

It is however sad to note that US \$ 448,768 remain outstanding by students who are now well settled but yet are hesitant to settle their dues. The delay in effecting repayments has limited the capability of the Council to provide fresh loans.

Bilal Muslim Mission.....

The Supreme Council has appointed a new 'blood' team of 12 members to head the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

With the courtesy of overseas organisations, two experienced teachers have been recruited for the Hawza at Temeke. A dispensary and Primary School are also being run by the Mission at the same Centre.

Nakuru Jamaat

Construction of the new Mosque and Imambara has been completed. To complete the final phase of flats and two floors, a sum of US \$ 25,000 is required. The Supreme Council initially paid \$ 23,000 for land and has loaned K.Shs. 1 million for the work to continue. Community members are called upon to assist towards this project with a worthy cause.

Mwanza Jamaat

In Mwanza, work has commenced for the construction of two floors for a Madressa and widows home. The Jamaat faces a constraint of funds and donors are invited to assist.

Nairobi Jaffery Academy

The Nairobi Jaffery Academy operates a girls school at the Lavington Complex. The Academy is facing acute transportation problems for students and to alleviate their plight, a mo'amin from Dar es salaam has donated to the partial cost of the purchase of two buses which will also be used to ferry Jamaat members from the Old Park Road Centre to the new Complex.



Africa Federation opts for compulsory HIV/AIDS testing prior to registration of engagements and recitation of *Nikah*

It was resolved in the last Tri-ennial Conference of the Africa Federation that all male and female community members wishing to have their engagements registered or requiring their nikahs to be performed by the Jamaats will require to have blood tests to verify that they are not carriers of HIV/AIDS.

The detailed procedure (*Modus Operandi*) has been forwarded to all Jamaats which have been called upon to implement this system henceforth.

PREAMBLE

There is a general consensus and confidence that socially and religiously no party would be irresponsible enough to get married if one of them is or becomes aware that he or she carries the HIV virus because this would leave the spouse and subsequently even the children vulnerable to the devastating and fatal disease of AIDS.

The responsible trend would be for the parties to undergo the test on their own will before committing to matrimony even if there was no such requirement as is provided in the new resolution adopted by the Conference in Dar es Salaam.

However it is no secret that barely anyone opted to undergo the AIDS test prior to marriage while a few cases have also emerged where known carriers have wilfully decided to get married to innocent spouses who after marriage are highly vulnerable.

The new resolution aims to catalyse the trend whereby parties are compelled to undergo a test privately, the results of which would tell if one is socially and medically eligible for marriage. If yes, they can then proceed to comply with the requirements of the new Resolution.

This Resolution was primarily adopted to encourage members to follow an Islamic way of life that guides one's sex life by strict moral guidelines. Ultimately the aim is to protect each and

every daughter and son in the community against the virus.

The number of reported AIDS cases in our community from throughout the world has now reached the three figure mark. In East Africa, a number of cases have been reported some of which have however been diagnosed only after marriage when the spouse and sometimes even the children have also been infected.

The aim of the new resolution is to ensure that non infected people of our community are not unnecessarily infected. A private test done by both prospective partners in a marriage can prevent at least some cases of AIDS. At the same time however there is a need to prevent exposing affected individuals who instead of being ridiculed require counselling and guidance.

THE NEW RESOLUTION

At the 20th Triennial Conference of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamats of Africa held in Dar es Salaam in April, 1998 the following resolution was adopted.

“Resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah of any member of Jamat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus. Each Jamat shall establish, the necessary modalities, with the advice of Central Health Board, on blood testing, pre and post testing counseling of the parties, confidentiality of information and other necessary support services. Consent for the Nikah shall be sought after all such independent information as is necessary has been obtained from parties to give informed consent to the proposed marriage.”

Following the adoption of this resolution, it therefore becomes incumbent upon both parties to do the test and obtain the certificates of proof of negative status at the time the Jamat intends to

endorse the engagement (*nondh*). This is to also prevent the stigma of broken engagements, should the test be found to be positive later on. It is required that the test be repeated at the time of marriage if the period between *nondh* and marriage is over four weeks.

Additionally, where facilities exist, parties have been advised to also undergo a Thalassaemia test too when having an HIV test. This would reduce the prevalence of the inherited dangerous disease of Thalassaemia Major.

During the early days of this Resolution should any Jamat come across any special circumstances which require guidance or assistance, they should revert to the Secretariat/Central Health Board without any hesitation. The objective is to streamline procedures for convenience.

The proposed *Modus Operandi* for the tests prior to registration of engagement and the performance of *Nikah* is:

1. *All prospective bride and groom (candidates) will have to undergo HIV/AIDS test to prove their negative status with respect to HIV within four weeks prior to the registration of engagement and again, within four weeks prior to the performance of Nikah.*
2. *Each Constituent Jamat in Africa should appoint reliable and responsible doctors belonging to our community or otherwise, (preferably not more than three doctors) who can be relied upon to give correct interpretation of a test at the same time retaining the secrecy of the affected individuals. Prior to conducting a test, prospective candidates should be required to produce evidence of identity e.g. I.D. Card, Passport, or Driving Licence.*
3. *The prospective candidates*

(continued on page 61)



Its of no use to close the gate after the horses have fled!

(....from page 60)

and their families should be fully briefed about the legal and medical implications. The medical sub-committee and the Jamat should work closely but it is the families who should initiate the step. The appointed doctors should also provide pre and post test counselling to those who undertake the test.

4. *Prospective candidates should approach one of the appointed doctors directly/privately for the HIV/AIDS test. The original test certificate will be handed over to the individual personally to maintain confidentiality. A confidential record should be maintained by the appointed doctors. Relevant charges for blood testing should be settled directly by the individual.*

5. *HIV/AIDS test certificate should be handed over by prospective candidates to the Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Jamat who may if he so wishes check with the doctor who issued the report. Upon satisfaction, the Secretary would endorse the relevant certificate and give clearance to the Secretariat for registration of the engagement and for the performance of Nikah, as applicable.*

6. *Candidates who reside outside Africa and wish to perform their Nikah in one of the constituent Jamats in Africa should follow the above procedure and obtain the certificate of the HIV blood test from one of the doctors appointed by the Jamaat in the country where the registration of Nikah will take place.*

Constituent Jamats have been requested to get actively involved to ensure the entire process is made smooth and efficient in order to encourage candidates to willingly abide by the above procedures.

After the resolution was adopted, the *Samachar* sought the opinion of some community members. Many of those who we talked to were of the opinion that the new resolution is fine but some, particularly youths felt it was an infringement by the Federation into their

personal lives.

Some wondered if compulsory testing was legally allowed while others felt that one test rather than two should be called for. Others felt that it was not pragmatic to demand that overseas members be tested by local doctors and felt that there should be liberty as to who undertake the tests.

A few opined that compulsory testing would discourage overseas members from marrying girls in Africa while some felt that every person has a right to privacy and that revealing one's positive status to the maulana is unethical. They claimed that only a doctor has a right to his patient's disease-related secrets and no one else.

Some analysts claim that Pre-marital HIV tests contradicts the Tanzania Law of Marriage Act, 1971 which provides that each person has a right to marry and start a family. This Act has no exceptions to cover HIV testing and it is argued that unless the Act is replaced, any impediment to marriages, be they for a good or bad cause, is illegal by law.

However pre-marital testing has been imposed on couples intending to get married in some parts of Tanzania but there have not been any objections by the Government to this effect.

According to a recent statement issued by the United Nations Programme giving priority backing action against AIDS (UNAIDS), of the 30 million people with HIV infection in the world, at least one-third are young people aged 10-24. The report indicates that every day, 7000 young people around the world become infected which translates into around 2.6 million new infections a year.

The intention and purpose of the new resolution by the Africa Federation is to avoid the wilful or careless spread of this virus in our community. The reported cases of community members who have contracted the virus is alarming and radical measures were called for. With our youths, particularly females, being so vulnerable it surely would be of no use to close the gate after the horses have fled!

NEWS TITBITS

Durban, South Africa

In Durban, South Africa the first new Shia Centre has been acquired for US\$ 20,000. The Centre, after renovations will serve our community and promote religious activities.

Harare, Zimbabwe

In Harare, Zimbabwe three young doctors from Dar es Salaam, Dr. Rizwan Hameer, Dr. Kazim Dhalla and Dr. Safdar Shivji Haji who are pursuing post-graduate degrees have simultaneously undertaken the responsibility of propagating of the Ahlul Bait (a.s.) school of thought there.

They have invited a Sheikh from the Sheikh Abdillah Academy in Mombasa to run a crash course for local Muslims.

Thank you Bwana Dhalla....

The Africa Federation has expressed its sincere thanks to Gulamabbas Dhalla of Los Angeles who sent in a CD ROM for Gujarati.

With the help of this CD the Council can now issue circulars in Gujarati for the benefit of members who cannot understand English.

Madagascar and Re-Union

After successfully conducting a Madressa Crash Course in Majunga in July and August, 1997, the Regional Consiel de Madagascar again arranged for a similar Course at Tulear from 25 July to 24 August, 1998 for young boys and girls.

To make this possible the Supreme Council sent Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, Sister Masuma Habib of Nairobi and Sister Masuma Somji of Mombasa who undertook the sessions well.

The Re-Union Jamat has also mounted a Madressa Crash Course programme for its students. Meanwhile a contingent of twenty members from this Jamat visited Majunga for the opening ceremony of the Jamaat's dispensary. During their visit they also played the hosts in a friendly football game.



Dar's Tabligh Section receives new books from overseas

The Tabligh Section of Dar es Salaam Jamaat has received religious books from Pakistan and the UK. The books are available from the Tabligh Corner in Dar es Salaam while those outside Tanzania can order them through e-mail tabligh@raha.com. The books include:

- A Restatement of history of Islam - T.shs 8000/- each
- Current Legal Issues - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 2000/- each
- Islamic Laws (Gujrati) - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 5000/- each
- Islamic Laws (English) - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 5000/- each
- Islamic Wills - T.shs 3600/- each
- Unto Thee I grant - T.shs 1500/- each
- Marriage - T.shs 1500/- each
- Islamic Beliefs and Practice I - T.shs 6000/- each
- Islamic Beliefs and Practice II - T.shs 8000/- each
- Poems for Muslim Children - T.shs 1000/- each
- The Shiites under attack - T.shs 3000/- each
- The faith of Shiite Islam - T.shs 2500/- each
- A Shiite Anthology - T.shs 2500/- each
- Peshawar Nights - T.shs 8000/- each
- An Introduction to Quran - T.shs 3000/- each
- Story of Ka'aba - T.shs - 5000/- each
- Occultation of the 12th Imam a.s. - T.shs 3000/- each
- Imam Ali a.s. - T.shs 3000/- each
- Rising of al-Husayn - T.shs 3000/- each
- Martyrs of Mankind - T.shs 3000/- each
- Islamuna - T.shs 3000/- each
- Tohfatul Awam - T.shs 2000/- each
- The Major Sins - T.shs 1000/- each
- Journey to the unseen world - T.shs 1200/- each
- Ideal Women - T.shs - 2500/- each
- Nahjul Balagha (Gujrati) - 1500/- each
- CD's of Matam of Nadeem 97 & 98 - T.shs 6000/- each
- Teach Yourself Qur'an - T.shs 2500/- each
- Selected Ayats - T.shs 3000/- each
- Dua vol one - T.shs 2500/- each
- Dua vol two - T.shs 3000/- each
- Ta'aqibat - T.shs 2000/- each
- Almanac - T.shs 15000/- each
- Dua vol 3 - Part One - T.shs 3000/- each
- Dua vol 3 - part Two - T.shs 3500/- each
- Dua vol 2 - T.shs - 3000/- each

Noor is Sportsman of the Year



Noorelain Shariff has been adjudged as the Sportsman of the Year for 1997. An adhoc committee nominated by the Chairman during the April, 1998 Triennial Conference held in Dar-es-Salaam awarded Br. Noor-El-Ain Shariff of Dar-es-Salaam the award out of four recommendations received from various Jamaats. He was handed over the Abul Fazal Cup floated by the Late Alhaj Kassamali Nazarali Alibhai Panju.

The adhoc committee comprised of:

1. Shiraz Pyarali Walji - Kampala
2. Hussein Peera - Dar-es-Salaam

3. Muslim Remtulla - Arusha
4. Mohamed Nathoo - Sports Council

Noorelain Shariff, despite his physical disability, is the top most table tennis player in the Country. He was the first Tanzanian to represent the country in the 1992 Para Olympics for the Disabled held in Barcelona, Spain and also travelled to Chiba, Japan in 1991 to participate in the 41st World Cup Table Tennis Championship. In 1995, he travelled to Tianjin, China for the 43rd Table Tennis Championship for disabled persons.

In addition to table-tennis, Noorelain Shariff also participates in volleyball, swimming, football and gymnastics. He is also actively involved in the gymnasium of the Union Sports Club in Dar es Salaam. He was bestowed the 'Best Volleyball' player title in 1982 in Tanga and was adjudged the best swimmer in 1991 during a 10km. swim in Dar es salaam. He has also been the coach for the Tanzania national team since 1990.

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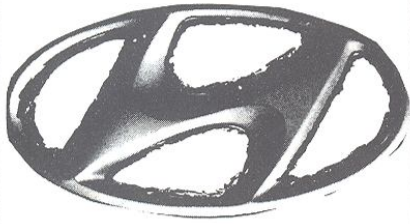
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In Acclamation of the Africa Federation.....

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 યે દીની ઇત્તેફાકકક હય સમર ગયર ફાની
 યે ફેડરેશને શીઆકી બૂલંદ જબ ખુદાને શાનકી
 બલાએ દુરકી ઓર મુશ્કીલાત ભી આસાન કી
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 વો વરફ કીસ તરહ બયાં અલ્લાહકે એહસાં કી
 ખુદાને અપને કરમસે યે દીન હમે દીખલાયા હય
 યે ઉન મુખલીસો કે હી ઈખલાસકા ઝરરીન સાયા હય
 યે હરતીયાં હય, અહુલહુસાયને નુરમહમદ, વ ઈબ્રાહીમ શરીફ ઓર મહમદે શરીફ
 હો ખીદમત કયસે બયાં, મહમદે મેઘલ, અસ્ગરે મુલ્લા, ધીરાની વ હબીબ
 ઈહતીદામે અહુદેનાસર*, બાદમે પીસરે ** લાખાને કદર શનાસ જગા સંભાલી હય
 ફીરભી ઈબ્રાહીમ શરીફકી ઈખલાસો ઉલ્લૂત કી વોહ જગા સબસે નીરાલી હય.
 યે સારે સદર-નશીનોકી બડી શાનો શૌકત હય,
 કે હસકી કુરબાનીઓસે કૌમો-મીલ્લત નાઝં હય.
 યેહી તો બાત હય "અકબર" ફૂઝેમે સમંદર સમાનેકી
 બહરે વૂસુકસે કી ખીદમતે, બેવા-યતીમો-મૂહાજર-મરીઝેકી
 મરહબા અય દાફતરસલામ, મખાસા, નઈરોબી વ અશ્શા
 પેશકી સબહી મેમ્બર-જમાતોને વોહ ખીદમાત હય ઝીશાં
 અય કોમીઓ, ઈત્તેફાકસે તુમ એક બને ઓર નેક ભી
 યેહી તો જઝબએ ઈમાં હય, મરજએ તકલીદમે રહે એક ભી
 બેશક માનાકે પંજ-સાલકી યે ફેડરેશન સબમે પૂરાની હય
 લયકીન, રગોમે ઉસકી આજભી તવાની, બેશો-જવાની હય
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AFED Restructuring Committee issues preliminary findings

.....invites suggestions and ideas

The Restructuring Committee has issued a preliminary statement cum appeal to community members drawing attention to data, meeting, facts and figures pertaining to the Africa Federation. The data has been obtained with the intention of initiating changes in the mode of operations of the Africa Federation so as to enable it to operate and serve members more effectively.

The AFED Restructuring Committee operates with a slogan, "**Survival is not compulsory. Change is, if we are to survive in a competitive world.**" The Committee consists of the following members:

- Alhaj Hassan Jaffer (CONVENOR)
- Alhaj Akberali Karim
- Alhaj Asaf M. Gulamhussein
- Alhaj Masumali Meghji
- Alhaj Murtaza Jaffer

The initial statement from the Restructuring Committee says: ".....

Mombasa Jamaat was entrusted with the responsibility of forming a Committee to initiate the restructuring exercise

In response to our query about the current structure of the Federation and the decision making process, Council Secretariat has responded with the following comments:-

1. Current Structural Organization is as follows:

a. The Conference is the supreme and final authority and shall have power by

resolution passed by a majority of at least 60% of delegates present at the Conference.

b. The Supreme Council (SC) - the Federation affairs are managed by the SC and comprises of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Hon Asst. Secretary, Hon Asst. Treasurer and six Trustees, Chairman of the constituent Jamaats as ex-officio Councillors, elected Councillors and Councillors nominated by the Chairman.

c. Office Bearers (OBs) comprises Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon Asst. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Asst. Treasurer and three advisors appointed by the Chairman to assist the office bearers.

2. Decision Making:- This is done on day-to-day basis by all OBs in a consensus manner. However, the chairman can exercise his powers as a final authority. Once a week, a meeting is held at the Secretariat for routine works and other decisions relating to the running of the SC.

The Chairman also invites the trustees from time to time whenever the discussion warrants their presence.

Furthermore, the Chairman also invites various learned personalities, ex Chairmen and OBs of SC, professionals, businessman and elders to a specially convened meeting when important subject matter requires the presence of such dignitaries.

3. Committee:- Regular and specialized works require the formation of various committees. SC facilitates such routine and specialized work to particular Committees who carry out the work under the framework laid down in the

constitution and under the guidance of the Supreme Council. If need arises, the committees refer the subject matter to OBs of SC for verification/ratification if they feel it is out of their bounds and requires higher authority to deal with.

The various committees are:-

- * Central Health Board.
- * Censta
- * Education Board.
- * Sports Council
- * Setwel Board (Settlement & Rehabilitation Board).
- * Editorial Board - Federation Samachar.
- * Tabligh Committee - Gents and Ladies.
- * Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania and Kenya.

What is the breakdown of the community population in Africa today? Fifty years ago when the Federation of K.S.I.J. of Africa was formed, the total community population in Africa was estimated at around 20,000. Today, fifty year later, despite a natural growth of 100% the community population in Africa hovers around the magical figure of 20,000 as the following countrywide estimates illustrate.

(continued on page 66)

COUNTRY	ESTIMATED TTL POPULATION	NO. OF JAMAATS		REMARKS
		ACTIVE	DORMANT	
Kenya	3,080	3	1	MSA 1900, NBI 1100, NKU 80, Lamu NIL
Tanzania (Mainland)	11,000	12	5	
Tanzania ZNZ/Pemba	250	2	1	
Uganda	300	1	?	
Somalia	-	-	2	
Ethiopia	-	-	-	
Rwanda	10	1	-	
Burundi	300	1	-	
Mozambique	300	1	1	
Malawi	20	-	-	
Zambia	20	-	-	
Zimbabwe	10	-	-	
South Africa	20	-	-	
Comores	30	1	-	
Madagascar	5,000	15	-	
Mauritius	300	1	-	
Re-Union	1,500	1	-	
Congo	500	2	-	



(.....from page 65)

To analyse the state of the community today and identify trends, issues and priorities, we need to ask a few questions?

1. Define the vision for the type of community we aspire to evolve for our progeny.
2. Why, where and when did we come into existence as a community known as the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community
3. Fifty years hence can we survive as a Community as we know of today?
4. Why do we have to survive as such as a Community? What if we do not? What are the current trends?
5. Fifty years ago we formed the Federation of the K.S.I. Jamaats, initially, of East Africa, later to be renamed, for Africa.

Today, fifty years later, as we look ahead, we need to ask:

- * How relevant and effective is the organization today?
- * What shortcomings or inadequacies can we identify?
- * What do we expect from the Federation and the Supreme Council?
- * What role can we define for the constituent Jamaats or the individual members of the Jamaats?

...from the Restructuring Committee

- * What are the financial resources and the funding sources of the Federation.
- * Does the constitution of the Federation require any review? Suggest avenues.
- * Evaluate the tri-annual Conference and the annual Supreme Council meetings.
- * Evaluate the role and effectiveness of the Councillors.
- * Evaluate the function of the Office Bearers and the Secretariat.
- * Evaluate the role and effectiveness of the various standing Committees.
- * Evaluate the role of the constituent Jamaats/visavis the Federation/SC.
- * Identify issues confronting the Community in Africa today and set them out in the order of priorities.
- * Can we visualise establishment of an NGO.

To evaluate these and related issues and come up with suggestions, we would urge all Jamaats to form a small sub-committee to seek out views and opinion of members and revert with their input and proposals which should be forwarded to the above Committee by 15th September, 1998.

The scope and extent of review is wide open. Questions posed above are only indicative avenues worth looking into.

Members of the Committee appointed by Mombasa Jamaat to initiate the exercise on behalf of the Federation are:-

	Fax	Tel (off)	(Res)
Akberali Karim	314856	312960	224579
Hassan Jaffer	311404	492087	316617
Asaf G'mhusein	221036/7	220563	312816
Masumali Meghji	316681	473001	315184

Kindly advice names and contact address of local liaison person appointed by your Jamaat for this purpose for needful co-ordination.

Individual Community members are also at liberty to contact us directly with any ideas or suggestions.

**H.A.M. Jaffer,
Convenor,
AFED RESTRUCTURING
COMMITTEE.**

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No, I am not under duress with the hijab

by Sultana Yusufali, 17, a Toronto high school student.

I probably do not fit into the preconceived notion of a "rebel". I have no visible tattoos and minimal piercing. I do not possess a leather jacket. In fact, when most people look at me, their first thought usually is something along the lines of "oppressed female."

The brave individuals who have mustered the courage to ask me about the way I dress usually have questions like: "Do your parents make you wear that?" or "Don't you find that really unfair?"

A while back, a couple of girls in Montreal were kicked out of school for dressing like I do. It seems strange that a little piece of cloth would make for such controversy. Perhaps the fear is that I am harbouring an Uzi underneath it. You never can tell with those Muslim fundamentalists.

Of course, the issue at hand is more than a mere piece of cloth. I am a Muslim woman who, like millions of other Muslim women across the globe, chooses to wear the hijab. There are many different ways to wear it, but in essence, what we do is cover our entire bodies except for our hands and faces.

If you're the kind of person who has watched a lot of popular movies, you'd probably think of harem girls and belly-dancers, women who are kept in seclusion except for the private pleasure of their male masters. In the true Islamic faith, nothing could be further from the truth. And the concept of the hijab, contrary to popular opinion, is actually one of the most fundamental aspects of female empowerment.

When I cover myself, I make it virtually impossible for people to judge me according to the way I look. I cannot be categorised because of my attractiveness or lack thereof. Compare this to life in today's society: We are constantly sizing one another up on the basis of our clothing, jewellery, hair and

makeup. What kind of depth can there be in a world like this?

Yes, I have a body, a physical manifestation upon this Earth. But it is the vessel of an intelligent mind and a strong spirit. It is not for the beholder to leer at or to use in advertisements to sell everything from beer to cars. Because of the superficiality of the world in which we live, external appearances are so stressed that the value of the individual counts for almost nothing.

It is a myth that women in today's society are liberated. What kind of freedom can there be when a woman cannot walk down the street without every aspect of her physical self being "checked out"?

When I wear the hijab I feel safe from all of this. I can rest assured that no one is looking at me and making assumptions about my character from the length of my skirt. There is a barrier between me and those who would exploit me. I am first and foremost a human being, equal to any man, and not vulnerable because of my sexuality.

One of the saddest truths of our time is the question of the beauty myth and female self-image. Reading popular teenage magazines, you can instantly find out what kind of body image is "in" or "out." And if you have the "wrong" body type, well, then, you're just going to have to change it, aren't you? After all, there is no way that you can be overweight and still be beautiful.

Look at any advertisement. Is a woman being used to sell the product? How old is she? How attractive is she? What is she wearing? More often than not, that woman will be no older than her early 20s, taller, slimmer and more attractive than average, dressed in skimpy clothing.

Why do we allow ourselves to be manipulated like this? Whether the '90s

woman wishes to believe it or not, she is being forced into a mould. She is being coerced into selling herself, into compromising herself. This is why we have 13-year-old girls sticking their fingers down their throats and overweight adolescents hanging themselves.

When people ask me if I feel oppressed, I can honestly say no. I made this decision out of my own free will. I like the fact that I am taking control of the way other people perceive me. I enjoy the fact that I don't give anyone anything to look at and that I have released myself from the bondage of the swinging pendulum of the fashion industry and other institutions that exploit females.

My body is my own business. Nobody can tell me how I should look or whether or not I am beautiful. I know that there is more to me than that. I am also able to say no comfortably when people ask me if I feel as though my sexuality is being repressed. I have taken control of my sexuality.

I am thankful I will never have to suffer the fate of trying to lose/gain weight or trying to find the exact lipstick shade that will go with my skin colour. I have made choices about what my priorities are and these are not among them.

So next time you see me, don't look at me sympathetically. I am not under duress or a male-worshipping female captive from those barbarous Arabic deserts. I've been liberated.

Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (saw)

Charity

A man giving in alms one piece of silver in his lifetime is better for him than giving one hundred when about to die.

Pride

No one who keeps his mind focussed entirely upon himself, can grow large, strong and beautiful in character.



Ruling on wealth after divorce

Murrabi Alhaj Ahmedbhai Issa Hasham of Dar es Salaam recently sent this question pertaining to divorce to our Marja, Ayatullah Al-Ozema Alhaj Agha Seyyid Ali Husseini Seestani. The reply is appended hereunder.

"Ayatillah Al-Uzma Al-Haj Agha Seyyid Ali Husseini Sistani

Assalamu Alykum Warah Matullahi Wabarakah

I hope that you are well and may you always be under the protection of the Almighty. Ameen.

Please let us have your ruling on the following question:

In European countries and in America, the laws of the country stipulate that when a husband divorces his wife, he has to pay 50% of his wealth to her; and if the husband refuses to pay, the wife can obtain her rights through court. Is this action in conformity to shariat? What about the wealth obtained in this way, is it halal?"

Answer

"At the time of nikah for example, if a husband had given an undertaking that in case of divorce he will pay 50% of his wealth to his wife, he must act according to his undertaking. In this case the obtained property would be halal for the wife. But if the wife did not have any condition with her husband then she cannot compel her husband to pay 50% of his property to her. Such wealth would be haraam for her."

Seyyid Ali Hassan Shestani
29th Safar 1419

WOMEN OF THE WEST Vs WOMEN OF ISLAM

"Do the women of the West have more rights than the women of Islam? Who has always had rights? Who believes in "Equality" and who believes in "Uniformity"?"

First of all we need to establish when the issues of human rights were raised in Western society. Britain which is considered to be the oldest democratic country, only recognised equal rights for men and women at the beginning of this century (20th). The West see these rights as a novelty in their lives. However, the equality of rights between men and women have been anticipated 14 centuries ago in Islam.

Is there a difference? Yes! Islam says a woman and a man are not identical in many respects, and the world is not exactly alike for both of them, and their natures and dispersions are not intended to be the same. This requires that in many duties, rights and punishments they should not have an identical placing.

Unfortunately, this is not the case in the Western culture that surrounds us. The Western world is trying to create uniformity and identicalness in Laws, regulations, rights functions between men and women. As they do this they are ignoring the innate and natural differences.

Islam strongly approves and encourages equality, but does not agree with identical, uniform and exact similarity. The sadness in all this is that the many rights that have been given to women by Islam have in practise been ignored and should be restored. Some Muslim women blindly follow and imitate the ways of the West. Famous movie stars, singers and MPs etc are seen as role models encouraging dress style and life style.

The biggest misfortune for a Muslim woman or for any woman attempting to acquire identical rights as that of a man, in my opinion, lose the right of being who she is - "A Woman" - yet not reaching an equal of a man. She should have faith in the rights suitable for herself and not be encouraged by the West to exceed them.

This way her status may be considered equal or higher than that of a man. She should take as her models Bibi Khadija a.s.(the Prophet's wife), Bibi Fatemah a.s. (daughter of the Prophet and brave life companion of Imam Ali a.s.) and Bibi Zainab a.s.(the woman who contrived the Kerbala battle to the end, and proved that the blood of the martyrs were not shed in vain).

Resources used to write this article: Mahjubah vol. 2 - no. 7 Imam vol. 1 - no.12.

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“.....okay sisters, you may now take off your scarves”

...a wrong hijab provides the type of protection provided in rain by an umbrella with holes in it.

All outward actions which Islam requires must be done correctly and with the correct intention, ie not for fashion or to fit into a certain group. That is, it must all be solely for the sake of Allah (swt).

It has been my personal observation that some Muslim girls and women do not realize the significance of hijab. Hijab is arabic for protection and cover. Some people put a lot effort into their hijab, yet it serves no purpose. I am referring to the pointless hijab that some girls wear.

The first pointless hijab is referred to as the headband hijab. It is a band of fabric approximately 4 inches wide. It covers the back of the head and allows all the hair to be exposed. It doesn't serve much in terms of modesty, but at least it comes in handy in case of an unexpected tennis match.

The second pointless hijab is the dupetta, also known as the *Saran* wrap hijab. It covers all the hair, but it is totally transparent. Again it doesn't serve much in terms of modesty, but it keeps the hair nice and fresh.

The third type of hijab is known as the Mickey Mouse Hijab. It is when a girl wears a black scarf and tucks it behind her ear, so that her ears stick out.

We can then move to move to the yo-yo hijabs. The first yo-yo hijab, also known as the Benazir

Bhutto hijab, is the scarf that keeps falling down and needs to be constantly pulled back up....up, down, up, down, just like a yo-yo. The second yo-yo hijab is also referred to as the convertible hijab. This type of hijab is predominant at any type of social event, i.e. an Aqeeqah, Bismillah party, Ameen party, wedding, etc. This is when an Imam or Qari comes up to the microphone and starts to recite Qur'an. At this point, all the convertible hijabs come up...until he says "Sadaqallahul atheem".

I'm not sure, but apparently in some cultures that translates to "okay sisters, you may now take off your scarves". I'm sure this may seem odd, but what's even funnier is when people do not anticipate the recitation of Qur'an at a social event, and are forced to be creative by using accessories such as a purse to cover one's hair. I was surprised to see a woman hold her purse over her head as "hijab"...as if the multitudes of men surrounding her are not a good enough reason to wear hijab, but some person reciting du'a compels her to hold a purse over her head.

Her friends were more creative...one friend used her dinner napkin. I also laughed when I saw two or more girls draped under one dinner napkin during the recitation of the holy Qur'an. Her other friend was still more creative. She used her coffee saucer on the back of her head. I wasn't sure if it was a hijab or a

Yamaka. I didn't know if she was a Muslim or a Jew and I felt like going up to her and saying "Shalom alaikum, sister".

We should remember that hijab is not just a protection from guys, but from a girl's nafs (ego) as well. It should prevent girls from having to spend hours in front of the mirror doing her hair. But, unfortunately, you see girls in front of the mirror for hours doing their hijab as they would do their hair, with all sorts of elaborate braids and the like. I wanted to go up to a sister and say "Is your hijab naturally curly?". I also felt compelled to go up to another girl and say "pardon me, but is your hijab naturally that color, or did you dye it?".

Well, the point to remember is that some people make an effort to wear hijab, but it is futile, because it is not fulfilling its purpose. It's like using an umbrella with holes in it. Hijab is used for protection from men as well as from the girl herself, and should not be used as an accessory or for beautifying oneself.

Anyway, that's it. If anyone disagrees with me or is offended, then I believe you are disagreeing with the teachings of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala.

Please let us do without the many hijabs which do not prescribe to religious teachings and let us not remove our hijab when we are required to don them. After all it is for our own protection.

WIFE ABUSE IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

by a North American correspondent

Wife abuse has hurt many Muslim women, destroyed many Muslim families, and weakened the entire Muslim community. How much longer can Muslims afford to look the other way?

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts)..." Qu'ran 30:21.

"I recommend that you treat women with goodness. The best of you are those who treat their wives the best." Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him).

While Muslims loudly protested on the widely-documented Serbian abuse of Muslim women in Bosnia, the abuse of many Muslim women at the hands of their own husbands is hidden and ignored by the community.

In America, domestic violence is the single major cause of injury to women. "Nearly one quarter of women in the United States - more than 12 million - will be abused by a current or former partner some time during their lives," according to the American Medical Association; and, despite Islamic teachings of justice and compassion, many Muslim women in the United States and Canada are no exception.

Based on information from Muslim leaders, social workers, and activists in North America, the North American Council for Muslim Women says that approximately 10 percent of Muslim women are abused emotionally, physically, and sexually by their Muslim husbands. (There are no hard numbers, because community leaders haven't taken the well-known problem seriously enough to research.)

Wife-abuse, which stretches across all ethnic, racial, educational, and socioeconomic lines in the Muslim community, results in severe emotional and physical pain for many Muslim women, a stacking up of sins for many Muslim

men, and many weak, unhappy Muslim families that fail to contribute adequately to the development of the Muslim community and the rest of North American society.

Despite the severity of the problem, the Muslim community has largely closed its eyes and devoted very few resources to helping the victims and stopping the abusers.

This is doubly unfortunate because family violence is one of America's most critical health problems (according to the American Medical Association and the U.S. Surgeon General), and Islamic leadership is needed to deal with this crisis; but Muslims are clearly in no moral position to lead society because they tolerate abuse within their own community.

Forms of abuse of Muslim Women

"Domestic violence is an ongoing, debilitating experience of physical, psychological, and/or sexual abuse in the home," says the American Medical Association.

Although Islam promises women protection from such problems, the reality in many Muslim homes is different. The most common form of abuse is emotional and mental abuse. In Muslim homes, this includes verbal threats to divorce the wife, to remarry, or to take the kids away if she does not do exactly as she is told; intimidation and threats of harm; degradation, humiliation, insults, ridicule, name-calling, and criticism; false accusations and blaming her for everything; ignoring, dismissing, or ridiculing her needs; neglect and the silent treatment; spying on her; telling her she is a failure and will go to hell; twisting Islamic teachings to make her feel worthless because she is a woman; restricting her access to transportation, health care, food, clothing, money, friends, or social services; physical and social isolation; extreme jealousy and possessiveness; lying, breaking promises,

destroying trust; etc. Emotional abuse can take place in public or at home.

Although it's completely contrary to the example of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, the Muslim community nonetheless tends to dismiss the seriousness of mental abuse, rationalizing it as a petty argument between husband and wife, and saying it's not serious unless he hits her. In reality, mental abuse does severe psychological harm to many Muslim women. It destroys their self-esteem and makes them question their self-worth; some have mental breakdowns and go insane.

Furthermore, psychological abuse can lead to physical abuse. Physical abuse includes pushing, shoving, choking, slapping, punching, kicking, and beating; assault with a weapon; tying up; refusing to help her when she is sick or injured; physically throwing her out of the house; etc. Physical abuse escalates in frequency and severity.

The third form of abuse is sexual abuse, involving forced, violent sex. For example, a wife may not want to have sex for health reasons, but the husband may force her anyway.

These three forms of abuse are usually related and occur over a long period of time. Muslim men, just like non-Muslims, often start with mental abuse and work their way up. Muslim women need to recognize the signs of escalating abuse.

Why Do Some Muslim Men Abuse Their Wives?

There are a number of factors that make many Muslim men abusive. Abusers are often part of a cycle, picking up the habit after watching their own fathers abuse their mothers in North America or in Muslim countries. And their own children learn this abusive behavior and abuse their wives. (This is an important point because the longer the Muslim community tolerates abuse, the

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longer it will be passed on from father to son, from generation to generation.)

For cultural reasons, some Muslim men accept the idea that it's normal for a man to hit his wife and that she is no more than a piece of his property. Others abuse their wives as a result of frustration resulting from economic hardship, political oppression, problems with the children, or an inferiority complex. Some abuse their wives because they want them to be more "modern" and less Islamic by removing their hijab (Islamic dress), while others are abusive because they want the opposite.

Some Muslims with superficial ties to Islam don't know that abuse is unacceptable due to their weak faith, poor Islamic knowledge, and lack of interaction with the Muslim community.

Tragically, some Muslim men actually use Islam to "justify" their abusive behavior. Focusing on rituals, considering themselves to be Islamically knowledgeable, and disregarding the spirit of Islam, they wrongly use the Qur'anic verse that says men are the protectors and maintainers of women to go on to demand total obedience and to order their wives around. They also disregard the Islamic requirement for the head of the household to consult with other members of the family when making decisions.

Then, if their wives dare to speak up or question their orders, these men misinterpret a Qur'anic verse that talks about how to treat a disobedient wife and use it as a license for abuse.

In reality, the Qur'an and Sunnah provide clear instructions on what procedures a husband must use in conflict situations where the husband is innocent and the wife is rebellious and at fault. The first step is a peaceful discussion between the two about their problem and likely solutions. This is intended to soften hearts and eliminate misunderstandings.

If this doesn't work, the next step is for the husband to tell his wife his expectations in a firm, decisive manner.

If the rebelliousness and disobedience continues, the husband is supposed to leave the bed, which is really a punish-

ment for both of them for not being able to resolve their differences. If that fails to solve the problem, representatives of both sides should meet to try and arbitrate. As a last resort, if he thinks it will prevent divorce by letting the wife know how serious he is, the husband can use a light slap on the hand or shoulder but not on any other part of the body, and it shouldn't leave a mark or scar. Anything beyond this is Islamically prohibited.

This procedure is to be followed only when the wife is the cause of a serious problem and the husband is innocent, compassionate, and well-behaved. If the husband is the cause of the problem, he has no right to do any of this.

Unfortunately, Muslim wives often accept un-Islamic treatment from their husbands because they don't know their Islamic rights, and they don't realize their husbands are crossing the Islamic line.

Abusive men completely disregard the Islamic teachings of kindness, mercy, gentleness, and forgiveness, just as they disregard the example of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, who never hit a woman and was extremely gentle and compassionate with his family.

Why is help so scarce?

One problem is that many Muslims don't want to get involved in the "private" family affairs of other Muslims. Rather than enjoining good and forbidding evil, rather than trying to stop abuse in a friend's or neighbor's family by offering to mediate between the husband and wife or by encouraging them to speak to Muslim counsellors, many Muslims close their eyes and pretend they don't know there's a problem. So the abuse goes on.

Another reason why abuse isn't stopped is that many abused Muslim women simply don't seek out help. They're afraid that if their situation becomes public they will lose their privacy because of gossip and they fear the abusers will become more hostile when the negative publicity gets back to them. Furthermore, many abused Muslim women remain silent because they lack confidence in themselves and believe that they somehow deserve the abuse. Abused Muslim women also keep quiet

out of a feeling of hopelessness and a belief that no one will help them, out of financial dependence on their husbands, out of a desire to keep homes together for the children's sake, or out of love for the abusive husbands. Other Muslim women accept the abuse as a fact of life and learn to live with it.

Of those who reach a breaking point and seek help, many Muslim women turn to *maulanas* but often find them unhelpful. The *maulanas* often tell these women to be patient and pray for the abuse to end. Some make the abused Muslim women feel guilty, telling them they have brought the abuse upon themselves and instructing them to go home and please their husbands. Other imams, who are sincerely but mistakenly misinterpreting Islam by putting the importance of family privacy above any harm that might come to the individual woman, tell the women it is wrong for them to discuss their problems with anyone other than their husbands.

Relatively few *maulanas* have had the wisdom and courage to tackle the problem head-on. As a result of this, many abused women don't bother turning to them for help.

Looking for other sources of help, many abused Muslim women have turned to relatives only to be told to accept the abuse because making a big deal out of it could hurt the relatives' family honor and reputation.

Abused Muslim women then often turn to Muslim female activists and Muslim women's organizations for help. While these activists are often untrained in crisis intervention, some of them get the abused women out of their houses and hide them until Muslim men can be sent to try to reason with their husbands. They often collect money from other women to give to the abused women until it's safe for them to go back home. When continued attempts to salvage the marriages prove futile, these activists counsel the abused women on how to get out of their marriages.

As for national Islamic organizations, most have largely ignored the issue of wife abuse, neglecting to highlight the

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problem and solutions during national conferences or to devote resources to helping abused Muslim women.

Left to suffer, many abused Muslim women turn to shelters run by non-Muslims for help. Going to a non-Muslim shelter can result in social workers taking children away from troubled Muslim homes if they think it is better for them to be in a more stable environment, which often ends up being a non-Muslim home.

Many women go even further, leaving Islam altogether because the Muslim community fails to live up to the Islamic promise of protection, brotherhood, and sisterhood.

The Community's Role

The Muslim community has failed in its obligations to effectively protect many Muslim women and to bring many cruel Muslim men to justice. The community needs to deal much more effectively with wife abuse in order to stop the immediate suffering of people in abusive situations and to help build healthy Muslim families.

First, the community must accept the fact that there is a problem and to analyse ways on how to deal with it. Then a core group of trusted, active Muslim men and women who are committed to ending wife abuse in the Muslim community and to strengthening Muslim families, must become knowledgeable about Islamic guidelines on the family and be trained in crisis intervention and counseling. (Unfortunately, some community leaders will be too ignorant or arrogant to seek such training; but they must not be allowed to get in the way.)

In North America, since there aren't yet many Muslims qualified to teach crisis intervention and counseling, several Muslim women have started learning these techniques from non-Muslim social service agencies (listed in the phone book under wife abuse, domestic violence, or crisis intervention). Other Muslim women and men need to follow suit. Whatever they learn from these agencies should be cast in the light of their Islamic knowledge of properly functioning Muslim families.

Once they know what they're doing, members of core groups across the continent should recruit and train others in their communities in crisis intervention and the Islamic perspective on the family. In this way a network of counselors can be established in major cities.

A list of trained Muslims and their phone numbers (or one Muslim hotline number) should be circulated throughout the community in each city so that abused women know whom they can turn to for meaningful help. (Most of the women likely to approach the network will initially be physically abused Muslims. Victims of mental abuse are less likely to reach out at first because many have become accustomed to the abuse and accept it as a way of life. But educational programs at community gatherings — explaining what Islamic family life should be like and explaining that there is help available for abused women — will let emotionally abused Muslim women know they have a way to stop the pain.)

These trained Muslims should give abused women shelter (at people's homes or at community facilities, such as a rented apartment) for periods ranging from several days to several months depending on the extent of the abuse, while counseling them. At all times a high level of confidentiality should prevail as the last thing an aggrieved woman would want is publicity of her plight.

Taking into account the fact that many Muslim women turn to non-Muslim shelters because they don't want to deal with the Muslim community or because the community program is not big enough to help them, the Muslim community should sensitize people running non-Muslim shelters to the particular needs of Muslim women; and trained Muslims should visit the shelters regularly and constantly remind shelter operators that they are available to help whenever a Muslim woman comes in.

While caring for abused women, trained Muslims should counsel abusers separately, making them aware of the reasons they abuse, of the fact that their actions harm their wives, that such behavior is completely un-Islamic, and that God will hold them accountable.

After separate counselling, the next step would be joint counselling for the couple or the entire family. The objective should be to heal the family, but divorce may be necessary.

Another option, that some Muslims in New York have tried, is to punish Muslim men for their abusive actions. A "security force" warns, and then beats up, if necessary, Muslim men who continue beating their wives. Usually the abusers get the message; this is the only language many of them understand. Some men have to be beaten before they wake up and are ready to listen to rational, Islamic arguments.

Police and psychiatrists may have to be involved in severe cases of chronic abuse. Community education on happy family life is an indispensable aspect of Islam and community leaders and other concerned Muslims have a responsibility to educate people — about the problem and about efforts to help victims and prevent future abuse — through Friday khutbahs (sermons), educational seminars and workshops. These educational programs can themselves reduce abuse by letting people know the community isn't going to tolerate wife abuse anymore.

Furthermore, the community needs to establish classes to teach Muslims, young and old, how to be proper husbands and fathers and to teach Muslim women, young and old, how to be proper wives and mothers.

Many Muslims don't know their rights and obligations in these roles. In addition, in order to prevent future family problems, parents and community leaders must teach children and young adults to be compassionate, to value the family, and to resolve problems in an Islamic, non-violent manner. It's also important for Muslims to study fields like psychiatry, women's issues law, social work and counselling.

The Muslim community has tolerated abuse for a long time. How much longer will Muslim families be weakened by abuse? How much longer will abusers be allowed to run free and unpunished in the community? How much more abuse will Muslim women have to endure? Certainly enough is enough!

HIV and AIDS make their presence felt in the community

As far back as early 1990, the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) of the World Federation had brought up the subject of HIV & AIDS in our community for discussion in one of the Executive Council meetings held in Peterborough. It drew peoples' attention to the fact that if no urgent action is taken, this deadly infection will affect our whole community. The audience were shocked to hear this and some found it difficult to believe that such a disease can penetrate our community. Some even accused the MAB of spreading panic in our community.

Alas, HIV & AIDS has penetrated our community. So far the MAB has received 110 cases (see table below) of whom most have died. This however is a tiny fraction of what the real figures are. MAB estimates that over a thousand people in our Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community world-wide are affected by HIV & AIDS at the moment. This is a conservative figure. Other doctors working closely with our community put prevalence to 3%.

Now, marriages are ending up in divorce and engagements are being broken because one of the partners is HIV positive.

Now in our communities:-

-AIDS is being passed on to children from their mother.

- Aids is being passed on to the offspring.

- Marriages are ending in divorce and engagements are being broken because one of the partner is HIV Positive.

Some of the facts about HIV & AIDS:

1. The first fact about AIDS is that AIDS is now a fact of life. Too many people still think of it as a disease which "other" people contract.

2. Society's reaction to AIDS have varied from shock and fear to complacency. As we are a close knit community, HIV and AIDS is a particularly important issue. No doubt, strict adherence to Islamic teachings will save us from this dangerous disease.

3. As yet there is no cure for HIV (which leads to AIDS) so there is only one way to combat the disease. That is to prevent it from spreading. AIDS kills. Once infected, always infected.

4. AIDS is a world-wide problem amongst people of all ages. Early cases were found in drug abusers, blood transfusion patients and people who practised high risk sexual activities such as homosexuals and prostitutes. But now HIV is being spread through conventional sex - between men and women.

5.HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the name of a virus that can damage the body's immune system. The immune system fights off illness, and if the body's defences are severely weakened this can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). AIDS is the name for a collection of different diseases which can cause serious illness or death in both adults and children.

6. In adults, a test for HIV antibodies will not produce a positive result until at least 3 months after infection and this is called the "window" period. It is important to remember that even though a test result may be 'negative' during the "window" period, a person can be infectious at this stage, if they have HIV. People who develop AIDS become ill from a variety of problems which they cannot fight off and from which they eventually die. Two illnesses which commonly affect AIDS patients are a type of pneumonia called *Pneumocystis Carinii*, and a form of cancer which attacks the skin called *Kaposi's Sarcoma*. DEATH OCCURS WITHIN 3 YEARS OF GETTING AIDS.

How is HIV Transmitted

+ through unprotected vaginal or anal intercourse with an infected man or woman;

+ by infected blood entering the blood stream through sharing injection needles, transfusion of infected blood or blood products, intravenous drug users (those who take injections regularly for pleasure), needle injuries, etc. Check if blood or blood products are screened in your country.

+ from a woman with HIV to her baby either during pregnancy, or during delivery.

WHO IS AT RISK?

People who:-

- a) Have sexual intercourse with an infected man or woman.
- b) Use intravenous drugs.
- c) Share injection needles.

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YEAR NUMBER OF PATIENTS PER YEAR CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED

Year	Number of Patients per Year	Cumulative Total of Number of Patients Treated
1991	2	2
1992	6	8
1993	8	16
1994	13	29
1995	17	46
1996	19	65
1997	21	86
1998	24 (UP TO APRIL, 1998)	110

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- d) Have a transfusion with infected blood or blood products.
- e) Have frequent sexual intercourse with many partners.
- f) Have sexual intercourse with prostitutes.
- g) Indulge in prohibited sexual behaviour e.g. homosexual intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, etc.
- h) Are born to infected mothers.

PREVENTION

1. The Islamic life style - chastity before and fidelity within a marriage - is a safeguard against acquiring this disease. Live within the bounds of The Islamic Shariah and adhere to the injunctions prohibiting homosexuality and extramarital sexual relations. Despite the alarming aspects of this illness it is reassuring to know that we have the ability to choose to avoid AIDS and the answer lies in 'living within the precincts of the moral code' as prescribed by Islam and upholding the values of chastity and morality. Being faithful to ones wife or husband is the best way of prevention.

2. If your use a condom use it correctly. Use water based lubricant gel with the condom. Oil based gel can weaken the rubber.

3. Remember - many signs and symptoms of AIDS coincide with wide variety of illness and therefore early medical help should be sought where suspicion arises.

4. Have screened blood transfusion. Except in life threatening conditions, a blood transfusion for any purpose should be refused unless it has been guaranteed to have been screened for HIV. Where in doubt, it is always advisable to arrange donors within family or community whose health status is known.

5. Don't use intravenous drugs. Do not share your needles, syringes, mixing bowls etc., if you happen to use intravenous drugs.

6. Do not share razors, toothbrushes and towels.

7. Do not share Zanjeers or go too close to the user.

Federation Samachar

How to quit smoking

THE following are the different ways smokers have actually used in restraining themselves to live without cigarettes. Any one or several of these methods in combination might be helpful to you.

1. Before you quit smoking, try wrapping your cigarettes with a sheet of paper. Every time you want a cigarette, unwrap the pack and write down what you are doing, how you feel and how important this cigarette is to you. Do this for a couple of weeks and you'll have cut down as well as developed new insights into your smoking.
2. If cigarettes give you an energy boost, try gum, modest exercise, a brisk walk or a new hobby. Avoid eating new foods that are high in calories.
3. If cigarettes help you relax, try eating, drinking new beverages, or social activities within reasonable bounds.
4. When you crave cigarettes, you must quit suddenly. Try choosing an opportune time to quit, such as when you are ill with a cold or influenza, and have lost your taste for cigarettes.
5. Never smoke after you crave for a cigarette until three minutes have passed since you got the urge. During that three minutes change your thinking or activity.
6. Plan a memorable date for stopping. You might choose your vacation, New Year's Day, your birthday, a holiday, the birthday of your child, your anniversary. But don't make the date so distant that you lose momentum.
7. If you smoke under stress at work, pick a date for stopping when you will be away from your work.
8. Don't store up cigarettes. Never buy by the carton. Wait until one pack is finished before you buy another.
9. Never carry cigarettes about with you at home or work. Keep your cigarettes as far from you as possible.
10. Never carry matches or a lighter with you.
11. Change your brand of cigarettes weekly so you are always smoking a brand of lower tar and nicotine content than the week before.
12. Never say, 'I quit smoking' because your resolution is broken if you have a cigarette. Better to say, 'I don't want to smoke now'. This way you maintain your resolution even if you 'accidentally' have a cigarette.
13. Each day try to put off lighting your first cigarette.
14. Only smoke half a cigarette — throw the other half away.
15. After you have quit, never face the confusion of 'craving a cigarette' alone. Find someone you can call or visit at this critical time.

Telephone, a source of infection

Making a call from a public booth of a hospital ward can prove to be dangerous as the mouthpiece of a telephone is a potential vector for transmission of diseases, a study warns. "Telephone infection" is rampant in hospital wards, states the study published in a Journal of Association of Physicians of India (JAPI) by a team of doctors led by Dr. V. Singh and Dr. S.P. Garg at the Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital, Jaipur.

According to the study, the telephone can be a source of respiratory infections like bronchitis or pneumonia, oral cavity infections and dental problems. A bacterial culture from the telephone mouthpiece installed in the wards of the SMS Hospital has shown that 20 out of 43 telephone equipment carried pathogenic bacteria.

Although most bacteria are killed within hours due to drying, bacteria like *staphylococci* were found to be resistant to heat and remained viable for weeks. Saliva sprayed into the mouthpiece by betel chewing patients is the most likely source of infection. The researchers said that saliva mixed with dust and betelnut pieces provide an ideal medium for the bacteria to grow and multiply. Earlier, studies by the researchers had shown bacterial contamination on hospital instruments like stethoscope and ultra-sonography devices but this is the first time that telephones are being suspected for the same. To prevent "Telephone Infection" they suggest that a thin polythene plastic cover may be fixed over the mouthpiece and cleaned with disinfectant swabs after each use.

Felled by an *Istakhaaro!*

by Ali Yusufali, Dubai

We sit at the dinner table, my brother, sister, her family and Mummy. It is an occasion that almost always brings up the subject of my martial status. I try and maintain a passive face on these occasions, indifferent, as the moment usually passes after a while and talk turns to other (mundane) topics. Mummy is emotional, like she always is when it is discussed. At forty-one and divorced for five years, she and the rest of my immediate family are very eager, nay, desperate to have me remarried. I wonder what drives their relentless urging for me to take a wife; my advancing age, my sharpening eccentricity, the increasingly scantiness of my scalp, maybe all of the above? And so invariably, the subject crops up and predictably Mummy ends the discussion with the words, "You await my death before you will marry again, I know it, you want me to be out of the picture before you bring a *bahu* home!" Sniffle.

I sigh, but make a mental note of doing something about the situation. I really must marry again, this *mutah* business is getting to be pretty expensive anyway. Even the heavens say so. I was at Mahshad visiting the Imam (as) recently and an *aalim* nearly scared me out of my skin when he abruptly proclaimed I would never be happy or contented at heart until I tie the knot again. The scary part was that he did not know me or that I was single! How did he know? Maybe saw it in my eyes? I have a much greater respect of these *ulemas* now, and try to cast my eyes down when I (occasionally) converse with them. What if they come up with more hidden secrets that even I do not know? Scary!

I am really not against the institution of marriage, really. I mean it would be great to have someone to share your life with, the joys and sorrows, you know what I mean, yes? And cheaper too, compared to *mutah*, I mean. Some men would argue the point... Anyway, I would be married today if I found the right person, and yes, I am choosy. I have the right to be. I have been bitten hard and I will be thrice shy. Of the

women I have met since my divorce, none have really clicked; not a *momeena* anyway.

So on a business trip recently, I make it a point to look up an old contact in Bombay. This lady had invited me to meet her divorced daughter when I was last in India a year ago, but she had called me on my last day there, and I had promised to look her up on my next trip. Well, I call her and yes of course she remembers me, she is so, so happy to hear from me, yes her daughter is still unmarried and yes she will definitely meet me. Well and good, we make it a point to meet the next day. Incidentally, the company I am involved in on a business proposal employs this person I am to meet. Is this a coincidence or is it a coincidence?

Well, the three of us meet and guess what? As it happens once in maybe a million tries, it is a perfect match! She is pretty, (masha'Allah), intelligent and educated, (masha'Allah) and most important off all, a true *momeena*, (masha'Allah). I like her instantly and guess what again? The feeling is mutual, the girl actually likes me. I am on top of the world, I am ecstatic, and I am overwhelmed, I move around Bombay with a silly grin on my face and a spring on my feet. The rickshaw drivers, taxi drivers and other Bombaites write me off as another nut among the many they encounter daily. Suddenly, the heat and humidity is not so bad, the streets are not so filthy, the smells not as bad as I had first imagined... I am really happy after a long, long time.

As her father and brothers are in the Middle East and their approval is mandatory for the union to happen, the mother says we cannot meet until then but conversation on the telephone is permitted. So we talk on the phone for hours, bonding and building a relationship. We plan a future together and she demands a dowry of a trip to *Hajj* and *Ziyarat*, reinforcing my belief about her *imaan*. We exchange gifts and I receive a large bouquet of red roses, hmmm.

The future seems set until a certain Mr. *Istakhaaro* makes an unexpected appearance...

I return to Dubai happy and contented, sure that my life will finally settle to a more predictable pattern. Mummy, *Bhayya* and the maid give me odd looks at my apparent transformation. I am taking a nap after a fine lunch next day when the maid, announcing a telephone call from a neighboring country, wakes me up. I instinctively know who it is; Mr. Brother wanting to come and check me out. I clear my throat and say "salaam alaikum" in my best possible voice. The tone of reply is not at par and I immediately realize something is very wrong. He is truly apologetic and remorseful. He has discussed my marriage proposal with an *aalim* and the verdict of an ensuing *istakhaaro* is bad. Real bad. So sorry, he says, so very, very sorry!

I am drenched in sweat and my heart is thumping as I replace the receiver. I am sure a slap on my face would not have been more hurtful. My obvious fist reaction is of anger and hurt at the rejection. Then I cool down a bit and think about the situation. There has to be a way out, I tell myself, there must. I have waited long and hard for this person, I can't give up without a fight.

That same day, after *magribain* prayers, I seek out an *aalim* (with eyes downcast, of course) and request an *istakhaaro* for *nikah*. There is a moment of silence. Maybe he is not convinced I am still of marriageable age? *Tsk*, he clicks his tongue. It is better not to do *istakhaaro* in case of *nikah*, do *tawakal'Allah*, says he. There is amusement in his voice, but I am still reluctant to look into his eyes. No, I insist, please do an *istakhaaro*. Very well, says he, make a *niyat*. I make one and wait, heart in my mouth. Seconds later, he gives the verdict, it's great, very good, go ahead, *mubaarak*. I break into a grin and want to give him a bear hug (eyes downcast, for sure) but race home instead to call Bombay to give the lady

(continued on page 77)

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the good news.

Not so fast buster, says she, why did Allah (swa) say no to me and yes to you? He loves me more, I attempt at humor? She is not amused. No, no, says she, there is divine message here, a warning maybe? Yes, I agree there is a message all right, and He says yes, go ahead, no warnings. *Aacha*, we will talk to Mr. Brother again, she says. Okay, I agree, and I will write an email to him too. Yes, yes please, do that, and Yusuf, please, please impress him and pray for us and give *sadeqa* and keep *haajaat* and pray extra *namaaz*... I quickly agree to all her demands.

And so I write an impassioned plea to Mr. Brother, requesting him to ignore his *istakhaaro* result and accept mine instead. He writes back. Sorry, can't do that but give me a week to think over the issue and I'll get back to you. I accept reluctantly, as if I have a choice. I do not have to wait long. Mr. Brother asks Mr. *Istakhaaro* once again the following day and their interpretation of his ruling still refuses me a bride, my mother a *bahu* and my siblings a *bhabhi*. So what shall we do now, I ask my lady. What can I do, she weeps in anguish, I can't displease Allah (swa). But He gave a resounding yes to me, I wail in pain and despair. Well, He said no to me and I can't go against my family wishes...our hearts weep.

I think I will stick to *mutah*, it's virtually painless at the heart although it does hurt the pocketbook now and then. But then there are no known remedies for broken hearts, are they? Oh yes, and keep my eyes downcast in the company of those who know.

Note: Although this article is written at an attempt at humor, the underlying message cannot be ignored. There are so little known facts about Istakhaaro and the apparent misuse of it continues unabated. I personally tried to do some research on it after the above incident but surprisingly, there is very scant, if any written works in English on the subject. What are its origin, when to use it, do we have to follow the verdict, is it recommended, did the Imams (as) prescribe it...?

Once in a blue moon....

Do you ever take a busman's holiday or strike while the iron is hot? Here's a few sampling of such common phrases and the intriguing, uncommon stories behind them.

SAVED BY THE BELL: It means to be spared from a difficult situation at the last possible moment. In England, in the late 17th century, a sentry at Windsor castle was accused of being asleep on duty. His defence at the court-martial was that since he had heard the clock of St.Paul's in London, 20 miles away, strike 13 at midnight, he could not have been asleep.

The court ridiculed the idea that the bells of St.Paul's could carry between London and Windsor, and sentenced him to death. It was later verified, however, that the clock of St.Paul's did strike 13 instead of 12 times on that particular night. Saved by the bell, the sentry was released and lived to the ripe old age of 102.

GET UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF BED: This figure of speech refers to anyone who is moody or bad-tempered for the day. It is based on the old superstition that it is unlucky to get out of bed from the left side - left-hand side was associated with the west, where the sun sets, symbolizing death.

KICK THE BUCKET: The bucket in this phrase does not refer to the vessel used for carrying water, but to the bucket beam or wood frame on which pigs were hung after slaughter. Anyone who has 'kicked the bucket' has therefore died.

GONE TO POT: This refers to anything beyond repair or anyone incollapse. The phrase comes from practice of throwing leftover food into a pot for stew or hash.

ONCE IN A BLUE MOON: During the volcanic eruption on the Indonesian island of Krakatoa in 1883, the dust thrown into the atmosphere caused the moon to appear blue for some time. Natural disasters of such magnitude are rare, so the expression means something that seldom happens.



Smile Corner

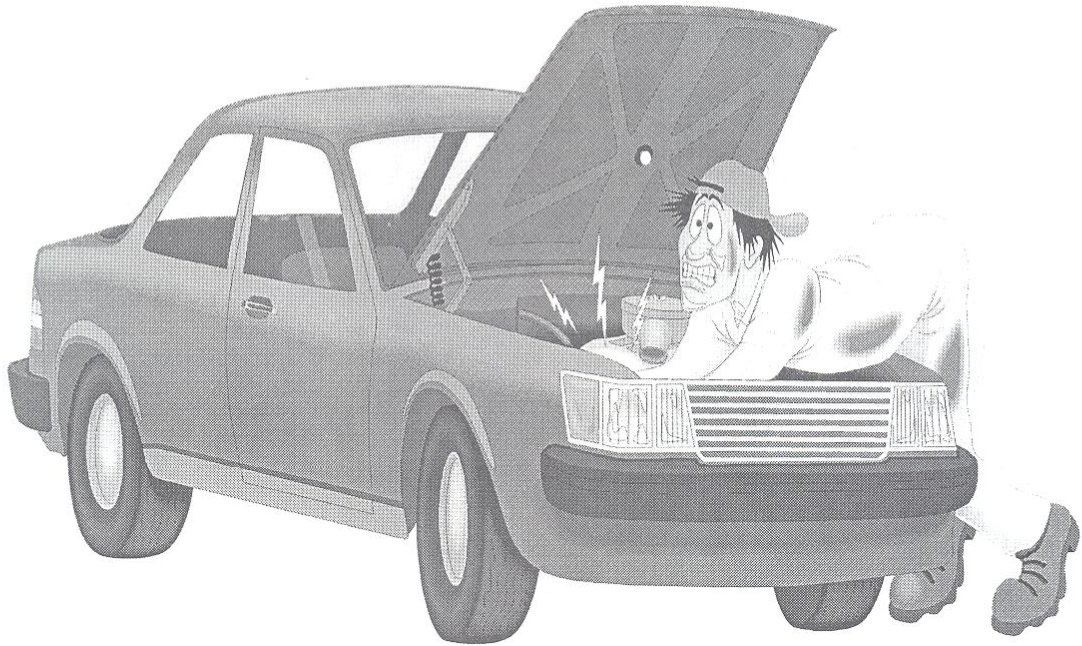
There were two young brothers, 8 and 10 years old, exceedingly mischievous. Whatever went wrong in the neighborhood, it turned out they had a hand in it. Their parents were at their wits end trying to control them. Hearing about a religious teacher nearby who worked with delinquent boys, the mother suggested to her husband that she would ask the teacher to talk with the boys and he agreed. The mother went to the teacher and made her request. He agreed, but said he wanted to see the younger boy first and alone. So the mother sent the younger boy to the teacher.

The teacher sat the boy down across his HUGE, impressive desk. For about five minutes they just sat and stared at each other. Finally, the teacher pointed his forefinger at the boy and asked, "Young man, where is God?"

The boy looked under the desk, in the corners of the room, all around, then said nothing. Again, louder, the teacher pointed at the boy and asked, "Where is God?" Again, the boy looked all around but said nothing.

A third time, in a louder, firmer voice, the teacher leaned far across the desk and put his forefinger almost to the boy's nose, and asked, "Young man, I ask you, where is God?" The boy panicked and ran all the way home. Finding his older brother, he dragged him upstairs to their room and into the closet, where they usually plotted their mischief. He finally said, "We're in Bi-i-i-i-g trouble." The older boy asked, "What do you mean, 'BIG trouble?'" His brother replied, "I'm tellin' ya, we're in BIG trouble. God is missin' and they think we did it!!"

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In the year 2500.....

by S. Naqi, Karachi

I woke up to the sound of my new alarm clock and heard it say, "Wake up! time for school!" I got out of bed, the date flashed on the electronic calendar which hung on the wall: 2nd January, 2500. I quickly got into my metallic uniform, wore my auto-breaking sneakers and headed for the breakfast machine. I gobbled down some vitamin pills and got into my aircraft. The aircraft were intricately designed and a computer had been fitted in it which controlled all its movement so that there was no need of manual handling. The newly constructed air cushions around motor vehicles prevented collisions and accidents and so students were also allowed to drive on the highways.

I finally reached the school parking lot after covering the distance of 20 miles in a three-minute continuous journey. The parking lot greatly resembled the aerodomes of the twentieth century. After parking the aircraft, I reach the classroom on electronic roller skates. The bell, which sounded more like the police siren of the past, rang as I entered the classroom. The electronic doors of the classroom shut automatically at the sound of the bell. No one now could enter or leave the room. I sat down at my desk and switched on the computer. It gave all the data of what we had to study that day. There were no human teachers but the computers were present for student's guidance. The room was filled with numerous computers and the walls were totally covered with electronic charts showing the functions of the machines.

The computer began chapter 65 of History. We soon learnt how people in the past used to travel in boxes called cars and used simple machines called fax machine, air-conditioners and telephones. The computer gave me some questions to solve, which I answered. When I gave a wrong reply, a dreadful noise emerged from it while the questions continued if the reply was correct.

The day went by slowly with our noses buried in physicos and chemology (previously known as physics and chemistry respectively). We also studied about the nuclear plant which is under construction at Venus.

As the final bell announced the end of the school, I returned home, fresh as ever. I programmed the cook robot to prepare strawberry meringue pie, chow chow mein juice, some protein lemon salad and a generous helping of nompin-nom while I returned to my room. I later came downstairs on the chair lift and had the refreshments at the dining table. I then went out to play.

There was a soccer match going on between some robots and some of my friends in a huge soccer field, so I joined the game. The genius and automatic minds of robots were almost impossible to dodge, but it was fun playing with them. After that I and my friends had a little chat about the activists of 'Niscoff' (neighboring planet) who commits suicide for the sake of rewards and honour they are supposed to get in their second life after death in heaven.

I returned home. There was no homework so I started reading the novel 'The Eternal Galaxy.' A brilliant news was waiting for me at the diner table. My father had bought me a ticket to Saturn, where my cousin lived, for the next day. The next week was a holiday. I reached the rocket spot next day with my parents, exchanged good-byes and mounted the rocket. In no time we were flying through space. Finally I landed on Saturn. I got down and found my stimulated cousin waiting eagerly beside her shiny black aircraft she had bought a day before. Talking and laughing we went home. Lunch was ready so I quickly freshened up and sat down at the table. My aunt had prepared tasty vitamin pills of many colours and shapes. I drank delicious home-made H₂O, thinking enviously of the old days

when this precious drink was everywhere in abundance. We then watched a documentary about the village life in the depths of the Pacific. Farmers growing aquatic vegetables, living in their rusty metallic houses, trying to produce the best food we needed.

Later my cousin took me to a fun fair. We enjoyed different hilarious tricks and delightful games. The best thing was the clone machines which could make duplicates of you that were able to survive for 20-25 minutes and they ended up in smoke. We enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. At last we bought a bunch of uranium balloons and some chlorinated protein floss and headed for home. By then I realized that I had spent one diamond that day (I better learn to cut down a little on expenses). My eyes were heavy with sleep so I turned to my sleeping tube, switched on the dream memorizer and drifted into a pleasant slumber thinking what the forth coming days will have in store for me on Saturn.

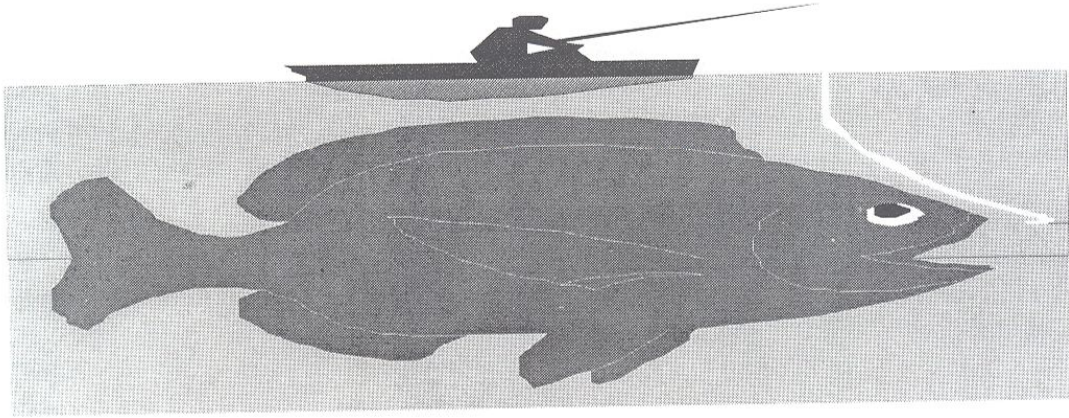
Knowledge and Ignorance *Sayings of Imam Ali a.s.*

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

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

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

*You don't need to
fish around....*



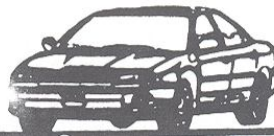
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Halal Slaughter is humane

Halal slaughter is a humane method of providing hygienic meat to a consumer. To this effect the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) has been quoted : "God calls for mercy in everything, so be merciful when you kill and when you slaughter, sharpen your blade to relieve it's pain."

Many allegations have been made that Islamic slaughter is not humane to animals. However, Professor Schultz and his colleague Dr. Hazim of the Hanover University, Germany, have proved through an experiment, using an Electro Encephalograph (EEG) and Electro Cardiogram (ECG) that Islamic slaughter is THE humane method of slaughter while captive bolt stunning, practiced by the western method, causes severe pain to an animal. The results surprised many.

Experimental Details:

1. Several electrodes were surgically implanted at various points of the skull of all animals, touching the surface of the brain.
2. The animals were allowed to recover for several weeks.
3. Some animals were slaughtered by making a swift, deep incision with a sharp knife on the neck cutting the jugular veins and carotid arteries of both sides along with the trachea and oesophagus -- this was the halal method.
4. Some animals were stunned using a captive bolt pistol - this slaughtering by the western method.
5. During the experiment, EEG and ECG were recorded on all animals to record the condition of the brain and heart during the course of slaughter and stunning.

Results and Discussion:

Halal Method

1. The first three seconds from the time of Islamic slaughter as recorded on the EEG did not show any change from the graph before slaughter, thus indicating that the animal did not feel any pain during or immediately after the incision.

2. For the following 3 seconds, the EEG recorded a condition of deep sleep - unconsciousness. This is due to a large quantity of blood gushing out from the body.

3. After the above mentioned 6 seconds, the EEG recorded zero level, showing no feeling of pain at all.

4. As the brain message (EEG) dropped to zero level, the heart was still pounding and the body convulsed vigorously (a reflex action of the spinal cord) driving out maximum blood from the body: thereby resulting in hygienic

meat for the consumer.

Western method by C.B.P. Stunning

1. The animals were apparently unconscious soon after stunning.

2. EEG showed severe pain immediately after stunning.

3. The hearts of the animal stunned by C.B.P. stopped beating earlier as compared to those of the animals slaughtered according to the Halal method resulting in the retention of more blood in the meat. This in turn is unhygienic for the consumer.

All praises are for you Allah.....

by Syeda, a 17 year old sister.

YA ALLAH

All praises are for you Allah, how I hope that you are there.
For sinful though I know I am, your displeasure I can not bear.
Never, till this moment, did I realize how much I've strayed.
Never, till now, was I more conscious of all those times when I should have prayed.

For sins are like heavy baggage, that one carries through Life, the airport.

Why didn't I realize sooner, that Earth is but a place of sport ?
Ya Allah ! Forgive me. Save me from the fire of Hell.

Forgive me as you did my parents, from Jan'ah though they fell.
Ya Allah ! Protect me. From myself for my soul is weak.

Let me not falter ever, for Jan'ah is the abode I seek.

Ya, Allah! Please help me. For I don't understand and thus, I fear.

What happened to all those moments when I never doubted that you were near?

My actions once were guided, by my faith which, once, was strong.

Ya Allah! please guide me . What happened, what went wrong ?

Each footstep that I used to take, I took with you ever near my side.

The Quran was my faithful companion, Rasoolallah my beloved guide.

How I yearn for those bygone days Allah, for I know that the day comes near

When we'll each receive our just rewards, and Truth will stand sparkling clear.

Life is like a spider's web. We get caught in its tricky snare
So thoroughly are we disillusioned, time for salat we can not spare.

I sit here and I wonder, Ya Allah! Why did I fall so low ?

What happened to my faith Allah? Where did my Iman go?

In this earthly life of ours, so often does sin seem right.

Falsehood seems to be the truth, as if days are confused with night.

Man is an imperfect creature. And thus, Man shall always wrong.

For the road to Jan'ah is rocky, and the journey seems awfully long.

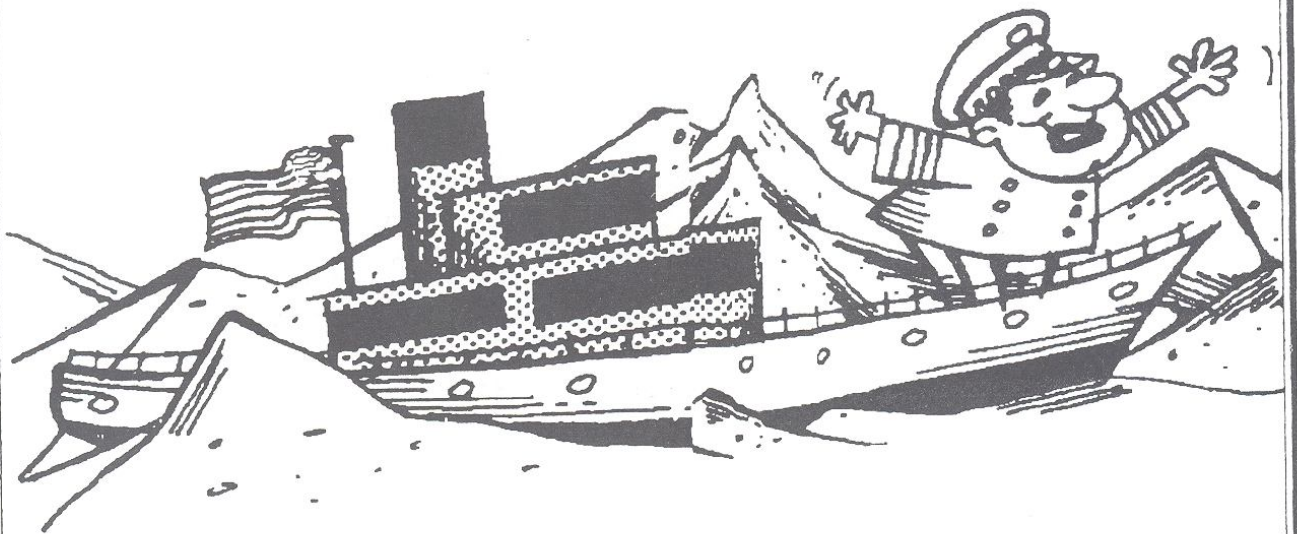
Ya Allah ! Our creator, we are all just peices of clay.

Please help us with our steps in life, and let us not lose our way.

All praises are for you Allah, I know that you are near.

I know that you have read my heart, and my words I know you hear.

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New Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an -- are our scholars vulnerable?

There has arisen certain groups of Islamic scholars in the West who call for "a return to the Qur'an" the call is directed not at the members of the Muslim Ummah and not for a resurgence in the commitment to the Qur'an either.

Strangely, it is addressed to the Islamic scholars in general across the world to seek out a new interpretation of the Qur'an such as would make Islam, according to the call, relevant to modern times!

The call is extremely disturbing because it implies that Islam, that is, its teachings and their interpretation that have existed and been followed since the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.), can be antiquated

or become irrelevant to Muslims in particular and to mankind in general in course of time.

It is no wonder therefore that the terminology such as "modernity" and "contemporary Islam" have been invented to promote a debate in the context of the call of "return to the Qur'an".

The orientalist, traditionally non Muslims, claiming authority on Islam for the gullible West have already for a century or more confused the non-Muslims by distorting and dis-informing on the teachings of Islam. They have been able, through the support of the media, to provoke and maintain a hostile stand against Islam, Muslims and

Islamic values in the West.

One would wonder whether the call for a new interpretation of the Qur'an is an attempt to compromise the principles of Islam as a means of appeasement and thereby belie all that Islam stands for to the jubilation of the traditional opponents who will always be there — restless and relentless, until, according to the Qur'an, they are able to convert the Muslims to their "millat", their thinking and values. Are not some of our Islamic scholars in the West vulnerable or already submissive, be it for pecuniary or other mundane reasons?.

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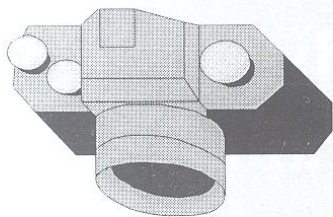
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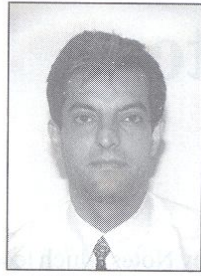
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DOWN MEMORY LANE



1958--
Zawars from East Africa and Pakistan. One question ensues-- - do current groups travelling for pilgrimage still take official group photographs prior to departure? If yes, one wonders who maintains such photographs and if no, is it not right to resume this practice for the record? Any positive action in the name of Allah (s.w.t.) should be recorded for the posterity.



Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

So near, yet so far!

The morning newspapers flash world news before us and televisions plus the Internet keep us updated by the minute on what is happening around the world. All the important things in the world pass before our eyes within a span of a few minutes. Modern technology has greatly enhanced communication of news and events and as a result even transmission of news within our community level has greatly improved. Today the World Federation, Africa Federation and JIBA, amongst others have their own Web Sites which transmit news to surfers around the world and a fair number of Islamic magazines, including the *Federation Samachar*, can also be read on the Internet.

However this improved technology consumes a lot of time and it is essential that priorities are made right with regard to the time that one spends on the Internet or for watching TV. The irony of improved Communication technology is that often people spend a lot of time viewing or obtaining information on celebrities or events at the cost of more important things to do at home or at work.

As a result people often know about the doings of many Presidents around the world or of many celebrities, many of whom are arrogant and behave disrespectfully to the public at large. The irony is that while many of us know of the private lives of individuals residing hundreds of miles away and who don't really matter to us, we are in the dark on the needs and activities of those who live with us, our families.

Of course, we want our children to be disciplined, educated, smart and God-fearing citizens of this country so that they can be valuable members of our community who can help to propagate Islam further in the years to come while

at the same also being involved in community work to enhance the welfare, health and general well-being of community members world-wide and to also be involved in the development of the country they reside in. However have we enough time to spare to give elementary lessons of discipline to them or to know how they spend their time or to analyse what grades they achieve in school or the Madressa?

Man has today become busier than the bee, the strains and stresses of life have increased, the cares and worries have multiplied. Political, social and economic activities sap every bit of energy from an individual thereby leaving little time to care or spend with the children and the family. Moreover the pursuit of materialism has become the vocation and avocation of the common man who is enchanted by the glitter of gold but fails to envisage that not all that glitters is gold.

It's not that life should be knitted to a work-family-work approach. What is required from parents is little time to ensure that their offspring are approaching life in a correct manner. This may mean keeping track on their language, their performance in school or madressa, punctuality, homework assistance, performance in sports, religion, eating habits, health, recreation, holiday needs and the like.

All this does not require a lot of time. A few minutes each day is enough and very often one can know more about one's child over dinner discussions, that is if dinner is not taken at the same time as watching television. Understandably, after a hard day's work, parents require to relax but is not conversation or time with one's children or family a form of relaxation? If one needs to watch constructive programmes or sports matches

on television this can be done after the children go to bed or by re-scheduling time accordingly.

The parent-child relationship is a crucial phase of life and the sad thing is that we take our children for granted, berate at them unnecessarily because we know they have no means to retort, that is, until they become teenagers when we suddenly come face to face with a situation where years have elapsed and it is then too late to make amends or to provide them crucial guidance.

It is for this reason that I also have reservations on the five-day week Madressa system. The important and exemplary work conducted by our Madressas is well known but to enable children to spend more time with their families and to ensure they have adequate time to do their school homework, the Madress syllabus ought to be reduced to span over fewer hours as is done in most Western Country Jamats. This is possible with a more concise and down to earth syllabus which covers essential teaching material. Moreover the madressa syllabus can be spread out and be included in the syllabus of our schools while for non-communal schools, which generally have optional subjects, a request can be made to introduce classes for our youths.

Educational reformers are convinced that students who do more homework perform better in school, even after accounting for differences of ability and background. In life, one cannot exhaust one's energies in one direction and yet reserve them unimpaired for something else. Similarly for our children, burning the candle at both ends will exhaust their energies and hamper their progress while also limiting the time spent with their akin at home.

For the parents, being involved with their children need not stop them from indulging in after-work sporting or other social activities which can be approached with extra confidence when things at home are adequately taken care of. Then, is it not paradoxical that many of us know more about the lives of celebrities like the World Cup footballers or cricketers while we are in the dark about the doings and progress of those near us, our own family who remain *so near but yet are so far*.

Fiqh - Offering Solutions to New Problems*

The fast changing societies all over the world and modern scientific and technological progress has given rise to many questions in the fields of values, rules and regulations and religious laws. Most of these questions are related to *fiqh* and *fiqaha*. As a result, the onus of finding appropriate answers to these questions is on the *faqih*s and *mujtahids*.

Some of these questions are related to personal life of the Muslims, some to social relations and some to the Islamic Governmental System and problems relating to it. The *mujtahids* have to find answers to these questions.

Some of the great *Maraj'e* (Supreme Religious Authorities) have set up Councils consisting of top *mujtahids* who are well aware of today's problems. The main task of these Councils is to find out *fiqhi* solutions to the newly emerged problems affecting Muslims.

One such Council has been established by Ayatullahil Udhma, Syed Ali Khamene'i. The Council mainly handles those problems which have not been discussed by *fiqh* in the past or the issues which are new, the subject matter of which could hence not have been discussed by previous *Ulama*.

Naturally, finding a solution to such problems requires a lot of effort by the *faqih*s. It cannot be compared with discussion of old *fiqhi* issues.

First of all, a topic for discussion is selected. The topic can be suggested by Ayatullahil Udhma himself or referred by other *Ulama* or Governmental Authorities.

Members of the Council select someone from among themselves to carry out the research work necessary on the topic. In carrying out the research, the person selected by the Council consult experts of that particular field and/or invite them to explain details at the

meeting of the Council.

He then submits a draft of his research which is circulated to all members of the Council. The Council members discuss the findings of the research in one or more sessions. If the researcher agrees with the criticisms or proposals of other members, he will make necessary corrections and prepare the final draft.

The research takes considerable time. Sometimes, the researcher comes across new problems. Sometimes, he has to respond to criticisms and evaluate proposals put forward by other members. He may also come across other problems whilst studying an issue. Hence, no time-limit can be fixed for him to submit his proposals.

The Council evaluates his findings on submission. If the researcher defends his findings successfully, it is approved otherwise he has to revise his findings.

Members of the Council understand the *fiqhi* principles involved and are well aware of the problems facing the Muslim society.

Ayatullahid Udhma attends and participates in the meetings of the Council. He, then, gives his *fatwa* on the issue.

Some of the issues researched and discussed by the Council established by Ayatullahi Udhma Syed Ali Khamene'i are:

Slaughtering of Animals by Machine;

Postmortems;

Ghusl of dead body with a machine;

Ghina (profane singing);

Iddah of a woman without a womb;

Women reciting Qur'an in presence of men;

Treatment of money Notes which lose their value due to inflation;

Indirect losses inflicted upon a victim by hospital charges;

Unemployment during hospitalisation;

Limitations of an Islamic Ruler in pardoning the punishment of a thief;

Owner's use of his own property when it inflicts loss on others;

Jurisdiction of Islamic Government when personal and public affairs overlap;

Amount of *diyah* that a culprit should pay to a victim.

* Adapted from Message of Thaqalayn - Vol.2 Nos.3 & 4 Leader's Council of Ifta: An Interview With Ayatullah Mu'min and Ayatullah Hashemi - published by Ahl al Bayt (A.S.) World Assembly, P.O. Box 15815-3516, Tehran (Iran).

From the Nahjul Balagha

Perform good acts while you are still in the vastness of life: *the books are open (for the recording of actions), repentance is allowed, the runner away (from Allah) is being called and the sinner is given hope (of forgiveness) before the (light of) action is put off, time expires, life ends, the door for repentance is closed and the angels ascend to the sky.*

Therefore a man should derive benefit from himself for himself, from the living for the dead, from the mortal to the lasting and from the departed for the stayer.

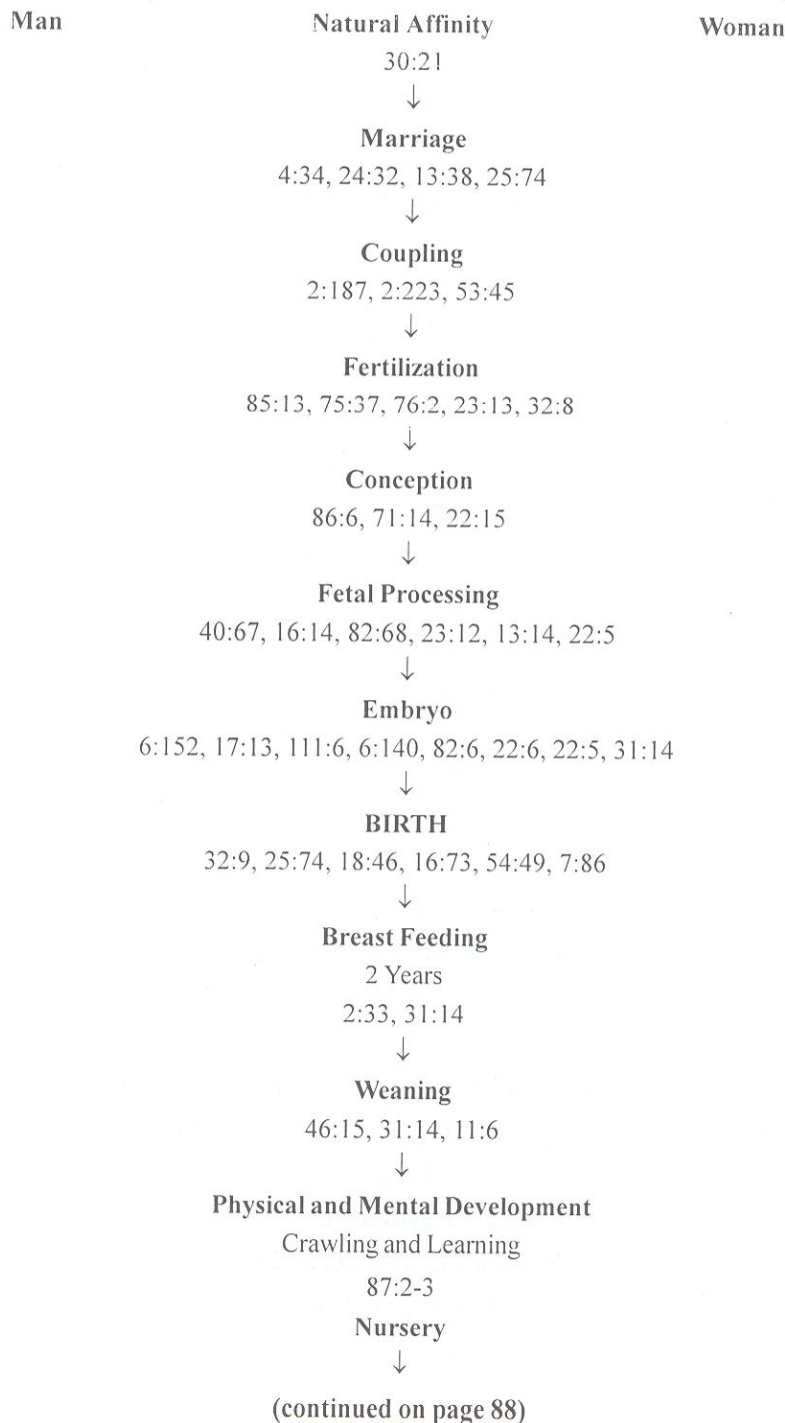
Imam Ali (A.S.), Nahjul Balagha



HUMAN BIOGRAPHY IN THE HOLY QUR'AN --- FROM *WOMB* TO *TOMB*

by Dr. Sayyed QMM Kamoopoori

Concept maps are common in biology and other branches of sciences. Scientists use concept maps as a study tool to connect large number of facts scattered in different fields of knowledge. I have also prepared the following chart from the Holy Qur'an to show the full spectrum of human existence. This is a precise record of events that occur from womb to tomb and thereafter. The Quran has described these stages in various places which are easily understandable to men of average intellect. I have simply summarized them in a map to show that these facts are in strict accordance with what has been discovered by scientists and what will be discovered much later on. Science progresses by observation, experiments, and exploration. But unfortunately in many cases, these accurate modes of perception are flawed by wrong interpretation. An honest researcher in science can testify these clearly defined stages of human existence.





.....from womb to tomb

(....from page 87)



Anatomical Development

76:28



Primary Education

Development of Habits



Prime Youth Age

22:5, 23:12-14



Secondary Education

Puberty

Development of Skills

YOUTH AGE

40:67

Marriage

25:54, 4:3, 33:28



University Education

Age of Reason

76:2-3

Age of Production

Intellectual Specialization & Reproduction



OLD AGE

36:68

Climacteric-Senile Psychosis

Mental or Organic Disorder

36:68

DEATH

102:2, 3:145, 3:185, 4:78, 4:78, 3:491, 21:35, 14:24-26, 29:57

Purgatory

36:52

DAY OF JUDGMENT

77:38, 6:31, 23:15-16, 24:24

Paradise or Hell

77:38, 6:31, 23:15-16, 24 36:63, 25: 69,41:28 36:55-56, 57, 58

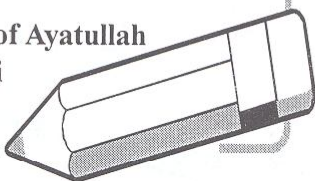
Infinite Life

2:25, 2:39, 2:81-82, 2:217

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



On preference of attending Jumuah [congregational] prayer, provided that it is held according to the conditions [stipulated in canon law]:

Evidently, performing Jumuah prayer is obligatory as a matter of choice. This means that, on a Friday, the mukallaf has the option of either performing Jumuah prayer according to the detail that will follow, or holding Dhuhr prayer. However, performing Jumuah prayer is preferable. If it was performed according to stipulations, it would make up for Dhuhr prayer". Minhajus Saliheen, p. 307.

"The time for holding Jumuah prayer is the start of zawaal of a Friday as urf have it. If it is not held during this time, performing Dhuhr prayer becomes a must". Al-Masaa'il, article 193.

"Does Jumuah Ghusl make up for wudhu?"

"Jumuah ghusl and similar ones have been proved through reliable sources to be mustahab. It is evident that they make up for wudhu". Al-Masaa'il, p.341.

On performing tamam prayer:

"Distance should be calculated from the point where a person is considered, according to urf, a traveller; it is the end of the bounds of the town, which may be the borough or neighbourhood in some very big cities". Al-Minhaj, p.891.

On sighting of the New Moon:

"Sighting of the new moon is ascertained by knowledge of the actual sighting or through solid news of such sighting, or some other means. Certainty can

also be achieved through common knowledge. Amongst other sources of ascertaining the sighting of the new moon is the lapse of thirty days on Sha'ban's crescent for the start of Ramadhan to be confirmed, or thirty days on the crescent of Ramadhan for the new moon of Shawwal to be confirmed [and so on]. Sighting can also be confirmed by the evidence of two witnesses of impeccable character (adl).

However, sighting of the new moon is not recognised by the evidence of women, or by the evidence of one just witness, even with oath, or by the words of astrologers. Neither by its absence after dawn dusk, so that it could be said that it belongs to a previous night, nor by the evidence of two just witnesses, if the evidence is not confined to their own sighting of the newly born moon. Sighting is not recognised too when it is seen before zawaal so that the day of sighting be from the ensuing month. The impression of a ring it may give, proving that it could belong to a previous night, cannot be accepted as well.

There is *ishkal*, rather objection, in ascertaining the birth of a new moon by a ruling from a judge, whose error cannot be verified, neither the error of his source. Of course, if his ruling or his evidence leads to certainty of sighting in the town and the like, it could be relied on". Al-Minhaj, p.335.

The sighting of the new moon in a town could make up for its sighting in another.

"Should the new moon be sighted in a town, it would suffice the sighting in another town, provided the two fall on the same horizon. That is, if the new moon was sighted in the first town, there would be a distinct possibility of sight

ing it in the second, barring any obstacles, such as clouds and high mountains". Al-Minhaj, article 1044.

On the Islamic dress code:

The permissibility of exposing the face and hands [of a woman] to people, other than her mehaarim (immediate relatives -according to a certain classification detailed in shari'a law)

"It is obligatory on the woman to cover her hair and the rest of her body, apart from the face and hands from people, other than her husband and other mehaarim, among the adults in general. Rather, she should cover herself from those who have not yet attained adulthood, if they were discerning, and their looking at her could result in sexual arousal. As for the face and hands, it is evident that it is permissible to expose them, except for fear of falling into a haraam act, or for the purpose of ensnaring man to look at haraam [objects]. In this case, exposing such parts of the body is haraam, even to mehaarim". Al-Masaa'il article 1021.

At Mecca, is it permissible for a woman to stand ahead of a man during prayer, which is not the case elsewhere?

Yes, it is permissible at times of crowdedness.

If it was known that cheeses imported from non-Muslim countries contain animal rennet (calf or goat) or animal enzyme, is it permissible to consume?

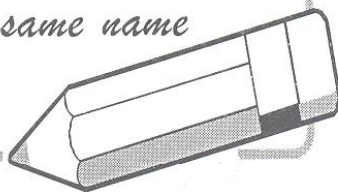
There is no harm in consuming the first two categories; and the third too, unless it is known that it was taken from an unslaughtered animal. Allah is All Knowing.

Is eating carp, prawns, and shell fish permissible?

No marine animal is halal, except fish that has scales, amongst which are prawns. As for other animals, other than fish, like carp as well as other kinds of fish that have no scales, it is not permissible to consume.

Your Questions Answered

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



Q. 1: MORE ABOUT ONENESS OF GOD

Will you throw some more light on the belief in oneness of God?

A. The belief in the Unity of God is the foundation stone of Islam. This belief governs the religious faith, designs the social patterns and gives life to the moral codes.

The first sentence of the Islam *Kalimar*, i.e. "There is no god except Allah", lead a Muslim throughout his life not only in the religious matters but in social behaviors also. "There is no God" shows a Muslim that nothing in the universe is the superior to him. It is observed in the Qur'an that "He it is who has created for you all that is in the earth." So a Muslim knows that nothing in this world is to be worshipped. Neither stones nor trees; neither animals nor human-beings; neither the Sun nor the Moon nor the Stars can be worshipped; because everything is created, and created for his benefit. When a Muslim, thus, has rejected every falsehood and every idea of nature-worship, idol-worship or human-worship, he is ready to believe in the positive truth of the Unity of God. Believing in a supreme being gives an aim to our life and provide a purpose for our actions. Had a man been left with the wrong impression that there was no God at all, his life would be aimless life is dangerous. So it is added that there is no god "except Allah". This sentence has a negative as well as a positive aspect. Both are instrumental in creating the belief that every man is equal to every other person. When nobody is superior, no body is inferior. Thus, the belief is the Unity of God promotes the sense of brotherhood, equality and equity which is another feature of Islam.

Q. 2: RESPECT FOR THE NAME OF ALLAH (SWT)

If I have written the Arabic name of God on a piece of paper, can I throw it away? Suppose this is in English, does the same rule apply? What about the names of the Ahlul-Bait?

A. It is *haram* to throw away the names of Allah or Ma'sumeen.

Such writings should either be buried, put in river or ocean or re-cycled. It makes no difference whether it is written in Arabic or in any other script. (Be careful about the stamps of Iran. Some stamps have Qur'anic verses written on them).

Q. 3: SIGNIFICANCE OF 'ADL

What is the significance of 'Adl?

A. 'Adl means that Allah is just; He does not do injustice to any one. He has ordered us to do justice to our fellow creatures-but He Himself treats us not only with justice but with grace. He created us for His worship, in order that we may attain spiritual perfection through it. That spiritual perfection enables us to reach nearer to Allah.

For this purpose, He has given us freedom of will and choice. When we choose, by our own free will, the Straight Path (prescribed by Allah) we are assured in the next world of everlasting happiness and glory by Grace Allah.

Q. 4: MAN'S FREE WILL

In the above reply, you say that we, by our own free will, choose the path we proceed upon. But I have been told that Muslims believe in predestination - that our all good and bad actions are predestined by Allah. Please explain the reality to me.

tionation - that our all good and bad actions are predestined by Allah. Please explain the reality to me.

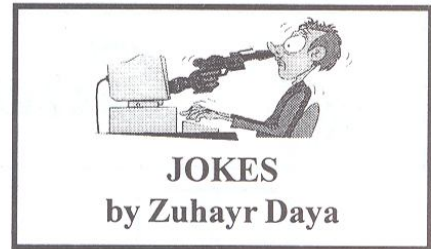
A. We know by our instinct that there are some matters over which we have no authority, concerning which we have no choice, like birth, death, happiness, unhappiness, affluence, poverty: etc. Such matters (which we may call our conditions) are totally in God's hands, although man has to fulfill his duties in that area too, at least in preliminary stages.

Also there are our "actions" which we instinctively known are done with our own will and choice, like speaking truth or lie, helping someone or refusing him help, etc.

Some Muslims think that man has no authority on this matter too. Others believe that man is totally independent in his actions and Allah has nothing to do with it.

But we, the Shi'a Ithna-'ashariyah, believe that man, in his actions, is neither compelled by Allah nor independent of Allah's control; the reality lies in between these two extremes.

To explain this fully, I would like to give you an example written by our late Mujtahid, Ayatullah as-Sayyid Abdul Qasim al-Khoui. Suppose there is a man whose hand is totally paralyzed; he by himself cannot move even a finger. A doctor has fitted a device on his hand which, when activated by a remote-control, restores the hand to normal condition thus allowing the man the use of his hand in whatever way he likes. The doctor has kept the remote-control in his custody. He has switched that control on, and it is the man who decides whether to use his newly-found power and strength for good cause or evil; the doctor does not interfere although if he wanted he could switch it off. Now, the good or bad actions done by that person are not totally independent of the doctor. In the same way, we do whatever we do by our own free will and choice but the power to do so is given to us by Allah who may "switch it off" any time he pleases.



The three Most Important Signs of faith as outlined by Imam Ali (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) said that there are three most important signs of faith. One is to prefer telling the truth to telling a lie, where the truth will be detrimental to you, while the lie will benefit you. Secondly to say no more than you know and finally to fear Allah (s.w.t.) in what you say about others.

The test of faith appears to be easy in the mind and in words; one believes this characteristic of faith in one's inner self. But it is in action where the claim of true faith is to be really tested.

The love of God and true belief in the sacred teachings of Islam is a touchstone of faith. But if we yearn for worldly gains at the cost of our religious values, this means that we have a wavering faith. Hence it is better to tell the truth to telling a lie even if lying would benefit you.

The second sign of true faith is not to say more than we know. This indicates that if we do not speak beyond our knowledge, it adds to our dignity and reputation in society and at the same time saves other from being misguided through wrong information.

The role of true faith in what we say is that the more we come to know God, the more we follow the principles of

religion. When one is in the dark on any subject it is despicable to pretend to know simply because one wishes to impress others. To make a parable of knowledge, especially where this is inappropriate, is despised by Islam.

The third sign of true faith is to avoid an evil tongue. That is, to fear Allah (s.w.t.) and abstain from saying malicious things about others. To slander others is a deadly sin and it also reduces one's reputation in the eyes of people.

One should remember never to be a witness against others or to speak against others if one does not have evidence of what one alleges. This incurs the wrath of God.

Another point to note is that one has to be honest when one quotes others. It is wrong to distort what others have said because misrepresentation or distortion of what others say can easily induce one person against another. This often commonly happens within a household, particularly in large families between brothers, sisters, in-laws and times even the parents. Distortion of what others say is in defiance of strict religious teachings and if the parents insist on this, children learn to follow a similar habit.

Father: My son, do you know that my hair turned white from worries over you?

Son: Now I know why grandfather's hair turned white too.

Abid: Why was six afraid of seven?

Anis: Tell me

Abid: because Seven eight nine!

There were three people named *Trouble*, *Manners* and *Shut Up*. *Trouble* was lost, *Manners* was sitting on the bench and *Shut Up* went to the police where the police asked him his name.

He said, "*Shut Up*".

The police asked him his name again and again he said, "*Shut Up*".

The police asked him, "Where is your manners?"

He said "sitting on the bench"

The police replied, "are you looking for trouble?"

He said: "how did you know?"

The Child

If a child lives with Criticism, he learns to Condemn;
If a child lives with Hostility, he learns to Fight;
If a child lives with Ridicule, he learns to be Shy;
If a child lives with Shame, he learns to feel Guilty;
If a child lives with Tolerance, he learns to be Patient;
If a child lives with Encouragement, he learns Confidence;
If a child lives with Praise, he learns to Appreciate;
If a child lives with Fairness, he learns Justice;
If a child lives with Security, he learns to have Faith;
If a child lives with Approval, he learns to like Himself;
If a child lives with Religion, he learns to appreciate God.

JUNIOR CROSSWORD

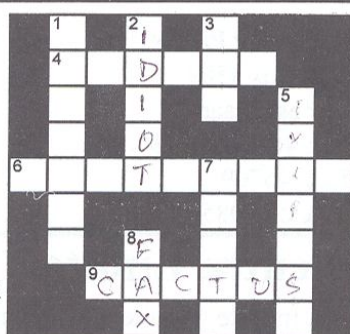
by Sarfaraz Daya

ACROSS:

2. Silly person



5. Not growing old



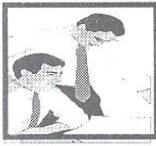
DOWN:

1. Capital of Swaziland Their homes

Solution in next issue



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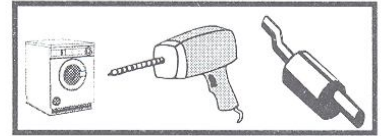
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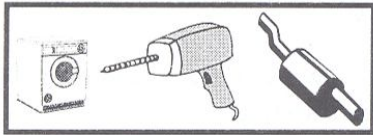


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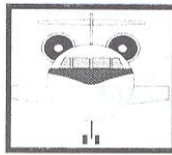
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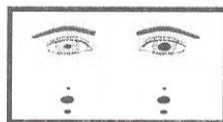
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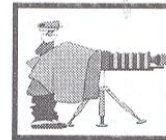
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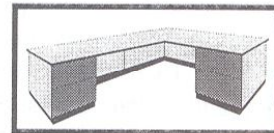
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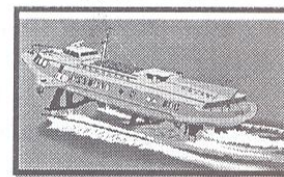
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Conduct in meetings --- a search for the Islamic Approach

Alhamdulillah I have had the privilege of attending various kinds of General Meetings (AGM, EGM, SGM etc.) of various bodies over the past few years at our Centre and elsewhere. By and large the proceedings in the meetings have been somewhat lacking in goodwill amongst the members and/or factions. I am not suggesting for a moment that there was malice amongst the individuals and/or factions. By definition there could not have been any malice among the participants who were all 'MUSLIMS'. Everyone would have attended the meetings as part of his service to Allah (swt) and would therefore have been as positive and as constructive as possible. However, I could not help noticing that instead of showing goodwill to others and being tolerant of their views, some participants did, at times, end up showing the members of our younger generation how NOT to conduct themselves in meetings! Some such proceedings have indeed left me with memories. This is so because I felt that although legally accurate and procedurally correct, the conduct of people and the proceedings of the meetings had decidedly often lacked "Goodwill and Dignity".

The real pity has almost always been the example we set for our younger generation. A fair proportion of the participants in meetings have been the under 18s and some as young as 10 years old! Instead of setting an example of how to conduct oneself in meetings, we ended up teaching them how to go all out to win no matter how one behaved in the process! It is our duty to teach our up and coming generation how to succeed in life. True enough, we have to make them aware of the fact that life is not always a bed of roses; there are some thorns too along the way!

We should conduct ourselves in a manner that allows us to become good Muslims. We should show them examples

on how to control some of our base emotions such as anger and frustration. You see, IF WE ARE IN THE RIGHT THEN WE CAN AFFORD TO BE POLITE and IF WE ARE IN THE WRONG THEN WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE RUDE! It is as simple as that! Yet over the years, there have been contributions which have singularly lacked in tact and magnanimity! Often these attributes were instead substituted by unnecessary harshness and acrimony! Sometimes it made me wonder if we remembered who we were and why we were there! Mercifully rare in occurrence, but one got the impression that the lunatics had taken charge of the asylum!

The use of "Points of order" is another privilege which has now and again caused some problems. Armed with this stick, the most feeble of characters can halt a mighty Chairman in his tracks! Often the users of this privilege had seemed to be only too aware of this power and had used it effectively to strike at the Chairman and/or indeed at the opposition through the Chairman! Occasionally I have witnessed the most unrestrained use of this privilege. Will it not be constructive in the spirit of Islamic goodwill if all sides understand that the privilege of calling for a "Point of Order" is a good servant but a bad master! At the end of the day, the onus should always be on the leaders of the opposing factions to ensure that they patently discourage the misuse of this privilege and if need be, publicly disown the perpetrators! On the other hand, the Chairman must always acknowledge a call for "Point of Order" and accord the caller the right to be heard.

Once the community has expressed its will and put its trust in an individual or a body of individuals then he/they should be accorded full respect and democracy should be allowed to take its

course with civility.

It has always grieved me to note that general meetings are habitually not attended by many who consider themselves above community politics. This group consists of the educated and the not so very educated, the old and the not so very old, the well to do and the down trodden ones! In other words the apathy is rampant right across the board! They seem to have resigned to the fact that "IT is not for them!" What nonsense! All our brothers should attend ALL such meetings. Their very presence should go a long way towards instilling a sobering effect on the general conduct of meetings. I state with regret that all senior members of our community, who do not attend such meetings, cannot escape the collective responsibility for some of the misdemeanours that ensued.

In a democracy all are equal because every one has the right (within reason) to speak and vote. However, by the grace of Allah (swt), by birth or by conversion, first and foremost we are Muslims and then and only then democrats. Even better, we are Shias and better still we are Shia Ithna-asheri i.e. the followers of the 14 Ma'sumeens! If we endeavour to bear that in mind then all we have to do is to conduct ourselves in the manner which is in conformity with the lesson taught to us by our First Imam Hazrat Ali (AS). As we all know, when he was about to administer the fatal blow to his opponent when locked in combat with an enemy of Allah (swt), the kafir spat on his face. H. Ali (AS) instantaneously released his hold and walked away from the kafir. When asked why he did so, his answer was that the kafir's act (of spitting on his face) made him angry and he did NOT want to perform any act where HIS niyyat (of Kurbatan-Ilallah) was tainted by his emotions!

In a General meeting there are always some participants who are senior in status by virtue of knowledge and/or age. Such people deserve and should be accorded full respect.

I pray to Allah (swt) to give us all *nektaufeek* to behave in all future meetings in a manner that is expected of us as "Muslims".

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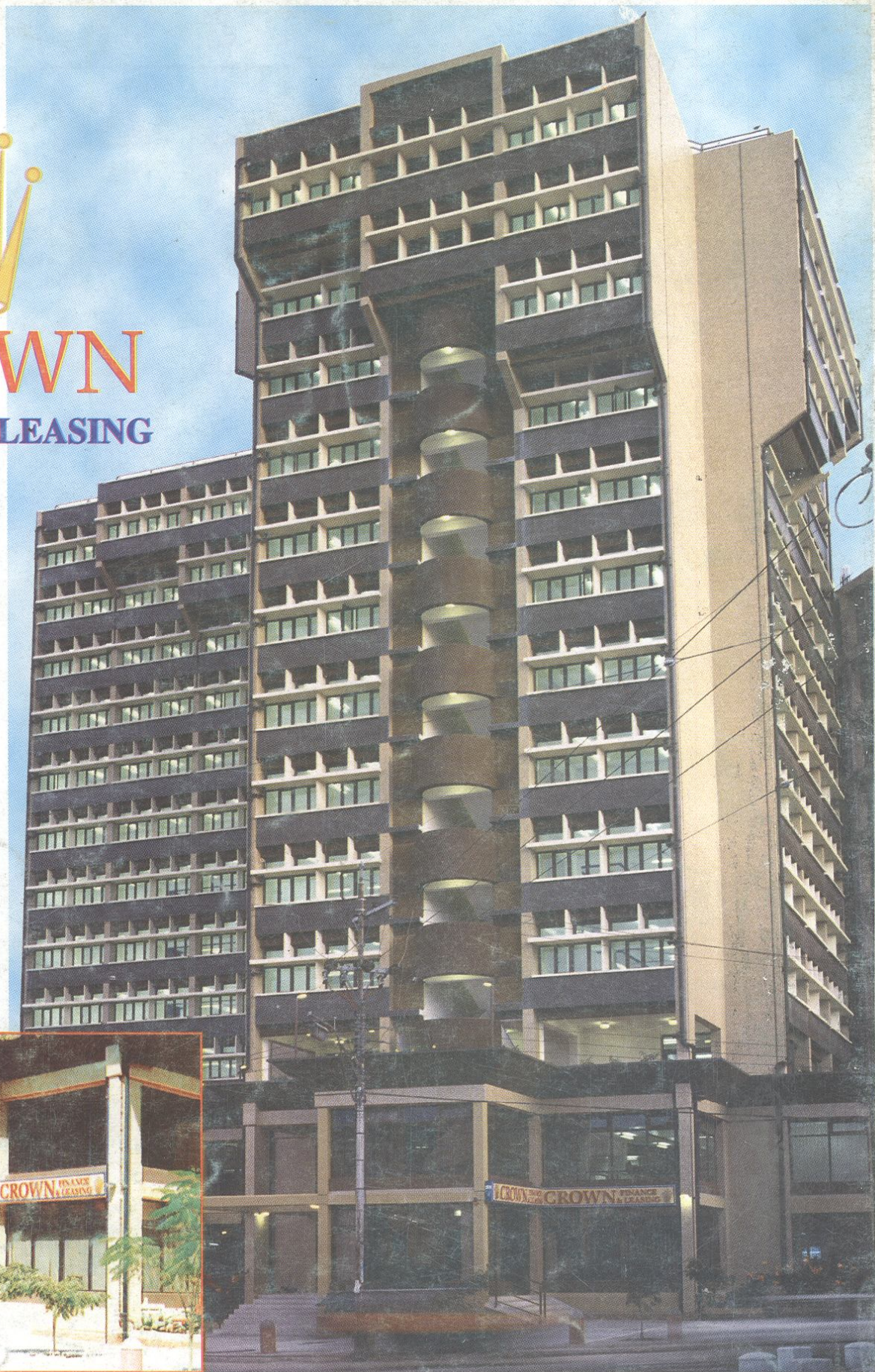
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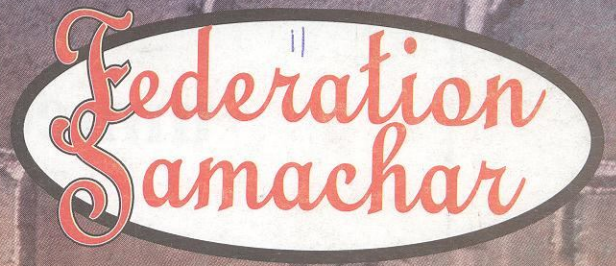
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**FEDERATION
SAMACHAR**

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COVER PICTURE

The writing is on the wall
*"Why the Africa Federation
didn't say NO to
compulsory pre-marital
HIV or AIDS testing."*

STOP PRESS

**Marja rules on the writings
of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina**

Commenting on the writings of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina, Ayatullah Sistani has said: "I have looked at the presentation of the writings and statements of Dr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina that was sent [to me]. Whereas his views on issues presented are based on incorrect understandings and are incompatible with religious and academic standards, and cause confusion in minds of the Mumineen, all the brothers and sisters in Iman are enjoined to refrain from inviting him for lecturing at religious gatherings and not to approach him for seeking answers to questions pertaining to beliefs. And Allah is the Guide to the right path."

Ali as-Husayni as-Sistani
[signed and sealed].
28 Rabi ath-Thani 1419
[21 August, 1998].



**Have we been jesting
ignorantly on April Fools Day?**

When life is punctuated by a little bit of fun and joy it becomes enjoyable and Islam also encourages followers to be cheerful at all times while ensuring that fun and enjoyment is not made at the cost of others or through sacrificing Islamic values. Bearing this in mind, there appeared to be no qualms when, in the name of fun, people played jokes on April Fools Day marked on the 1st of April each year. However an article recently carried in one Bangladesh newspaper raises concern on the history of the April Fools Day, which if true would change the Muslim perspective and outlook towards jesting or joking on the first of April each year.

According to the Bangladesh newspaper, the April Fools Day dates back to the 15th Century when the decline of Muslim power started in Spain. At that time the Forces of the Spanish rulers, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella encountered very stiff resistance from the Muslims in the city of Granada. The valiant Muslim soldiers gathered at Granada and though besieged for a long time they did not give up. The losses suffered by the Spanish Force in Granada kept on mounting and the Spanish King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella then resorted to deception. They gave a declaration that if the gates of Granada were opened for peaceful entrance of the Spanish Force, Spain would guarantee peaceful and unhindered exit of all the Muslim Forces and Muslim civilians. No one would be harmed.

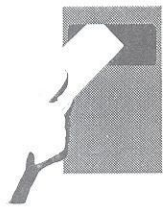
For ensuring that there would be no rebellious behaviour, the Muslim Forces and civilians were requested to assemble in the central mosque premises unarmed while the Spanish Force was also to enter Granada unarmed. About 40,000 Muslims of Granada believed the declaration and all assembled at the central mosque unarmed and opened the gates for the Spanish to enter. However the Spanish Force is reported to have entered with arms and after surrounding the Muslim Forces and the civilians, they reportedly massacred all the unarmed people - young and old ; boys and girls ; men and women without any consideration except that of ensuring that the victims were all Muslims. Then they celebrated the day as a day of joy having fooled the Muslims.

That day was 1st of April 1492 , when mere trickery and deception gave the Spanish an easy but cruel victory. From then onward for hundreds of years, till today, 1st of April is celebrated as the " April Fools Day". This culture has been accepted ignorantly by the Muslim population in many countries as a day of fun and joy. Could any Muslim in a right frame of mind celebrate such a day of heinous crime against his fellow brothers as a day of joy and fun ? Certainly not unless one was ignorant, as many of us have been over the years.

Other than the article under reference in the Bangladesh newspaper I have not been able to obtain any further historical evidence and probably one way of obtaining further data would be to revisit Spanish history and verify on the reported incident which led to the ruthless killings of 40,000 unarmed innocent people by mere deception.

Considering the gravity of the reported massacre, we cannot dismiss the reported April Fool Day killing so easily and as a matter of caution would be better off refraining from jesting on this day unless the historical facts provided are proved incorrect. Surely such an unethical act of deception cannot be observed as a day fun and joy.

Munir Daya



Your letters

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

Dear brother,

On the stand off between AF and WF*fault lies in the very make up of the two organisations*

To a dispassionate observer who has followed the recent debate, without caring much about who did what to whom, the mischief seems to lie more in mathematical figures than human frailties. It seems that the fault lines for recent eruptions are to be found more, in the very make up of these two organizations, than a real swing in people's attitudes.

First of all, there can be no doubt that both, the World Federation (WF) and the Africa Federation (AF), draw their powers from the annual conferences, and not the constitution as we are led to believe. It appears that the constitution is more subservient to the whims and wishes of a particular conference, than vice versa.

Whoever runs the conference successfully, and garners enough votes has his day. Therefore, we need to look into the formula of representation and make changes to the structure from within. It is not surprising that the Africa Federation finds itself in double jeopardy. On one hand, it has to contend with the *de facto veto* of the Dar es salaam Jamaat, the largest voting bloc. On the other hand, when it goes to a World Federation Conference, it loses its privileged status, when confronted by votes from fledgling organizations which carry a larger voice by mere virtue of *pro rata* representation.

For those working on reforming both the organizations, I would suggest they revisit the formula issue and come up with a counter balancing mechanism, so that we are saved from future debacles of this sort.

Wassalaam.

Shabbir Jeraj
Toronto

Dear brother,

Please update Obituaries Section on the AF Website immediately

I was pleased to go through the Africa Federation Website but feel that the Obituary Section must be updated regularly. For example the death of Mulla Bulbul (Kanji) of Mombasa on May 22, 1998 was a shock to us but this was not carried on the Obituaries section of the Africa Federation Website.

If you can update this section immediately, it will be possible for people living millions of miles away to recite *Namaze-e-Wahshat* or *Hadiya*. Please look into this and continue with your good efforts.

Sister Kaniz Mahmood Mavani
Mombasa.

Your point is valid. However we cannot report a death until we are advised of the same. All Jamaats need to appoint someone to undertake the responsibility of informing the Web Secretary immediately after a death occurs. Editor.

Federation Samachar

4

Dear brother,

Let's boycott UPS

Recently I wanted to send my passport together with my visa application form to the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa for a visa to visit Iran for Ziyarat. The UPS Courier advised me that they cannot accept packages or letters addressed to the Iranian Embassy or any company dealing with Iran as UPS is an American Company and the United States has an embargo on Iran.

Well brothers and sisters it is our humble request that all Muslims should stop using this courier company which openly discriminates against Iran.

M. and Z. Habib, Organizers, Haje Assistance Committee, North America.

Dear brother,

Shocked on moon misinformation

I was shocked to discover the following paragraph in an article "*Space odyssey no longer a dream*" in the Dawn Magazine of Pakistan. It read: "*While we back home are unable to sight the moon on the occasion of Eid, here in the United States, landing on the moon is an old event, which at that time was not believed by our learned Maulanas. Now ordinary people here are gearing up for a trip to space.*"

This paragraph is a mere accusation against Islam contrary to reality and I do not know to which "*learned Maulanas*" the writer was referring to. There are two verses from the Holy Qur'an: "*And the moon in her fullness. Ye shall travel from stage to stage*". These verses have been taken from *Surah Inshiqaq*, which is Surah 84, verses 18 and 19. The verses refer to the spiritual as well as physical travels of man in space. They predict even more triumphs in space travel, as verse 19 clearly states. I call upon our brothers and sisters to check the *tafseer* of the Holy Qur'an for further reference.

A. Kamil,
Pakistan.

Dear brother,

Dr. Kalbe Sadiq is a great inspiration for us all

The interview of Dr Kalbe Sadiq that you carried in your last issue (April 1998), apart from being extremely inspirational, articulated very effectively the Shia problem in India. It was the best piece I have read on the plight of the 60-million strong Shia community there and few could match Dr Sadiq's incisive analysis of the issues facing them.

His main point was that so far, little attention has been paid to rejuvenating the community in India. Demographically, the Hindustani Shia rank second to Iranian Shia. Culturally, they are the greatest and most prominent of the various sub-cultures that comprise the global Shia community as can be evidenced from their contributions to the Ashura culture and impact on religious thought (the other Shia sub-cultures being Arab, Hazara, Azerbaijani, Malay-Indonesian, Tatar, Bashkir, Chinese and now European and Black African). But the Islamic Revolution in Iran has catered to the myriad needs of the Shia of Iran while those of the Subcontinent have failed, for one reason or another, to harness resources towards uplifting their conditions.

This is despite their tremendous contribution to culture, politics and social life in bygone ages in Hindustan (most evidently witnessed by the the most historical and largest Imambara in the world - the Asefi Imambara in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and the resting site of prominent Shia saints and leaders such Qazi Nurullah Shushtari [Shahid-e-Thalith] in Agra and the Wali Muniuddin Chishti in Ajmer, Rajasthan). This is where our very wealthy and tightly-knit

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community comes in.

Herein lies our greatest challenge, namely to channel relevant religious and charitable contributions to awaken the community and to cause them to return, in cultural terms, to the state in which they were prior to the British colonisation of India. For instance, it is an undeniable fact that Lucknow, prior to the partition, was the cultural and spiritual hub of the Shia world east of Iran. Not only was it one of the major centres of learning of Shia Islam but it was also the home of Urdu. Our usage of Urdu and the various artistic and cultural expressions and forms of the Ashura culture stems from this place.

Dr Kalbe Sadiq's regional representatives should stop resting on their laurels and must take up the cudgels by catalysing implementation or aiding both projects which Dr Sadiq mentioned as well as other programmes depending on need, India-wide. I hope they read this piece explicitly and clearly. A portion of the Khums and Zakat from this community must also be utilised to lift the people of the Subcontinent from poverty. The amount of Sehme Sadat being generated by our community resident in Africa is enough to lift - if properly utilised and accounted for - all the sayyids now living in utter poverty in India.

Let us aim at this goal. It is not an unattainable one.

Shabbir Bashir Versi
P.O. Box 32739
Nairobi, Kenya.
Email : versinbi@nbnet.com

Dear brother,

Samachar serves a true cause

May I fervently pray to the Almighty s.w.t. to grant long life to your esteemed, honourable Islamic Magazine and may the Almighty bestow you and all those who serve the da'wah work with sincerity, great strength and perseverance to render services for the cause of Islam.

It is indeed inspiring to work for the real cause which gives serenity to the believers and as I am a regular reader of the *Federation Samachar*, I feel I am indebted to congratulate you for the arduous efforts put in creating a true vision of Islam and awareness to the nation of Islam.

In the past I was the editor of The Guide magazine which is published by the Cultural Council of the Embassy of Iran, Nairobi and am very much familiar with the sort of world you work in. Presently, I do contribute articles for various Islamic periodicals and if need be, I would appreciate to serve you.

By the same token, I concentrate on Women's Issues, Imam Khomeini's virtuous works and on many contemporary burning issues within the nation of Islam. If there is any chance for me to render my modest services please do let me know for any little I can do to uplift the status of our community globally through my humble pen.

Ms.Naseem Walji
P.O.BOX 46325
Nairobi, Kenya.

Thank you for your encouraging comments. You are welcome to send us your articles for publication in future issues.
Editor.

Dear brother,

Enjoyable.....

I wish to inform you that I really enjoy reading the *Federation Samachar*. Keep up the good work.

Muslim H Khimji
E-mail: pickauto@nbnet.co.ke
Nairobi, Kenya



AF RESOLUTION: *An Assessment of its worth???*

Now that the dust has settled, let us see if we can assess the value of the resolution of Africa Federation on Dr. Sachedina. In order to do this, we have to acquaint ourselves with the facts. Some facts can be seen on the video, whereas others cannot.

1. I am informed that the Daressalaam Jamaat consists of nearly 7000 (seven thousand) people of whom there are 1799 members. (This probably means heads of families, who pay the subscription and become members).

2. Three months before the conference, the Dar es salaam Jamaat called a general meeting to discuss about the resolutions which were to be presented to the Africa Federation. I am informed that 41 (forty one) people only attended. The general meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum, and reconvened after half hour, to get round the quorum provisions.

Thereafter a discussion ensued on the various resolutions which were to be presented to the Africa Federation, and by the time the matter came to a vote, some people had gone home. Only 30 people were left to vote, out of which there was at least one abstention, if not more. This means that at the most, 29 were in favour of the resolution in question. On a percentage basis, this is less than half percent of the total population of Dar es salaam, or 0.01612 percent (one and one half percent) of the voting members (As I did not get information from the minutes book of the Jamaat, there might be some differences in numbers or dates, but these are not significant. If one wants the exact information, it can be obtained from the Jamaat).

3. Dar es salaam Jamaat forced its delegates on this issue by ignoring the abstention and saying that since the voting was unanimous, all the delegates

had no choice but to vote in favour of the resolution, rather than voting according to their conscience. The reason given was that it was a block vote, and therefore Daressalaam Jamaat would use its muscle to exercise its block vote of 77 delegates out of a total voting of all Jamaats in the conference amounting to 110 delegates. The Daressalaam Jamaat would use the provisions of the constitution to block any voting by one's conscience or conviction. Every delegate of Daressalaam was compelled and forced to vote in favour.

Many delegates must have been nominated after this general meeting, even if they were absent at this general meeting (as I was).

4. This also meant that the outcome at the Conference was a foregone conclusion, since (a) out the total voting of 110 votes, 77 votes (i.e. seventy percent of the total votes) belonged to Dar es salaam Jamaat alone, and (b) Dar es salaam Jamaat compelled its delegates to vote in favour of the resolution. The whole discussion on the subject was hence nothing more than an eye wash.

5. The implications of this move were clear: Less than half percent of the total population of Daressalaam Jamaat (or one and one half percent of its voting members) influenced, controlled and determined the fate and outcome of the meeting of all the Jamaats of Africa put together. Was this really democracy at work. Certainly not.

6. Even if all the Jamaats of Africa (apart from Dar es Salaam) had voted against the resolution, they would still be defeated, because they had only 33 votes out of a total of 110 votes.

7. Prejudice: For the past four years or more, some people in Dar es salaam have constantly spread rumours, back

bite and accuse Dr Sachedina. They would either quote a half sentence out of a whole paragraph, or offer their own interpretation of what Dr Sachedina was saying, thereby making it appear that his book was blasphemous. Listeners, most of whom have not read the book, thereby began assuming that the fellows talking about the book had read and totally understood Dr. Sachedina, and would thus normally accept what they were told, thus forming a mental block against Dr. Sachedina. This was how prejudice spread.

This prejudice reached its climax at the Conference. The whole atmosphere permeated with it. One could hardly count a few who could be said to have come to the meeting with open minds or ready to listen to arguments before passing judgement, although less than five percent of those present could be said to have read and understood the book of Dr. Sachedina. Were they anything other than blind followers, having been convinced by prejudicial statements?

8. The extent of this prejudice can even be gauged by what one delegate said at the Conference. He said words to this effect: *I do not know Dr Sachedina, I have never met him, I have never talked to him, I have never read any of his books, I have never heard his majalis, but he is bad. So we should condemn him.* (Why? Because others say so?) When an educated delegate utters such words, what should one expect from the rank and file? Had prejudice given rise to so much hatred? Another person was heard saying privately that if Dr Sachedina touched him, it would be wajib for him to do Ghusl. Can anyone imagine the extent of such ignorance and prejudice?

9. This prejudice also gave way to wrath against Munir Daya, Editor of

(....continued on page 7)

LETTERS

(.....from page 6)

Federation Samachar, when the *Samachar* paper was being discussed. Munir had interviewed Dr Sachedina and carried it in the *Federation Samachar*, and the interview portrayed Dr Sachedina in a fair vein.

This was embarrassing to the prejudiced lot and in a later debate, though not associated with the Sachedina issue, an unsuccessful effort was made to snatch away the Editorial independence showered upon Munir Daya, simply because he has been impartial and has presented both sides of issues for readers to draw their own conclusions.

An Editor is the voice of conscience, and has a duty to criticise even the President, if need be. (I was myself an Editor for London Jamaat for eight years from 1984 to 1992. My record during those years speaks for itself as to how outspoken, forceful and original I was in my writings).

I will be doing an injustice to the office bearers of those days if I do not add here that although both the President and the Secretary were on my Editorial Board, I was given complete and total Editorial independence, a credit to the then President, Mustafa Chandoo, and his Secretary, Ahmed Dungsari.

10. On several occasions during the proceedings, there were calls by various people that it was entirely unfair and unjust to have the discussion in the absence of Dr. Sachedina. It was said that he should be present and be allowed to have an opportunity to speak so as to explain himself and defend, if need be, before passing judgement. This call for fair play was also augmented by the observation that those present in the conference were playing the multiple role of prosecutor, judge and jury, and executioner, all in the absence of the defendant concerned, which was totally unjust.

I believe it was within the power of the Chair to stop this discussion on the above grounds. But this power was not exercised as was done with the case

with the resolution of Mombasa Jamaat pertaining to the World Federation (item 13 on the agenda) which was disallowed on the grounds that it was *ultra vires* and against the constitution, because the committee was already dealing with it. Therefore there was to be no discussion and no voting on it, until the committee had finished its job. Or was it that if the power was exercised twice, it would give rise to questions?

At the request of some delegates, the wordings of the resolution of Daressalaam Jamaat on Dr. Sachedina were changed. When the changes were accepted, I then pointed out to the Chair that the block vote was demolished because the wordings were changed, and he should announce that every delegate was free to vote as he wished, and not necessarily in favour, since Daressalaam Jamaat had lost the advantage of a block vote. But the Chair refused to make this announcement, saying that it was an internal matter. I refuted this statement, saying that it was a matter of principle and not an internal one, and every delegate should be made aware that he could vote according to his conscience.

When Kampala Jamaat proposed an amendment to the resolution of Daressalaam Jamaat, the Chair ruled that the amendment be treated as a new resolution.

The Chair refused to allow a vote on the amendment first which was contrary to globally accepted and acknowledged procedures of meetings and resolutions. (This amendment asked for the matter concerning this issue to be referred to the Marja' for a decision, rather than taking a decision there).

In his book "The Twelfth Imam", Murtaza Lakha wrote on page 72 that backbiting will be conducted in holy places. Did not the Khojas of Africa prove him right by deliberating, rendering accusations and resolving against an author who was not even allowed an opportunity to defend himself?

Abdulahusein Akbar
Dar es Salaam.

Dear brother,

Zulfiqar Weekly on air

By the grace of God we launched a new daily Gujarati publication '*Qoumi Pukar*' from 27th of November 1997 which can now also be read on the 'Internet'.

Another publication, '*Zulfiqar*' weekly is also on air. Please inform your readers on these sites so that they can surf through them on the Internet. We also welcome any community or general news.

The Web Site address is <http://www.pukar.com>.

Mehboobali Vazir
zulweek@cyber.net.pk
Karachi,
Pakistan.

Dear brother,

Interested in the *Samachar*

I am very interested to receive the *Federation Samachar* and as such request you to enrol me on your mailing list which should then enable me to receive the said magazine regularly.

My UK address is as follows:

Hussein J.A. Janmohamed
8 Bayhurst Drive
Northwood
Middlesex HA6 3SA
United Kingdom
E-mail: ntc@webstar.co.uk

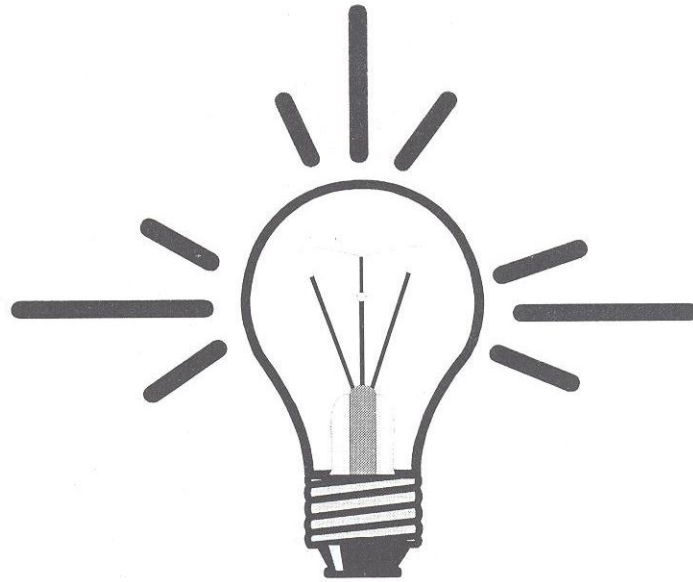
I also would like to have your past issues from August, 1997 to March 1998.

Hussein J.A. Janmohamed
Middlesex, UK.

The *Samachar* is a quarterly magazine which can be read on-line on the Internet. Postage rates in Tanzania are very high and we only mail copies to subscribers. The subscription rates have been stipulated elsewhere in this issue.

Editor.

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Dear brother,

DEAD HAJIS DISGRACED ON SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

This is an APPEAL to fellow Muslim brothers and sisters to protest on this issue. On the 11 April, 1998 Saturday Night Live programme on NBC, 150 dead Hajis were disgraced and made fun of. I usually don't watch SNL but as I was flipping through the channels I saw the picture of *Khana Kabba*. I thought that probably NBC was showing something on Hajj but to my disgrace it was actually the "Funny News Section of SNL."

I don't remember the exact words that were used, but this is what I remember the newscaster said: "This year the Muslims from all over the world gathered to perform their pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. In an annual ritual of the pilgrimage, the Muslims perform an act of stoning the devil but this year 150 people died, little did these people know that the Devil was performing his annual ritual of stomping them to DEATH"

There was also another article related to Eid which was made fun of, but I can't recall that. This is unacceptable and we should ask NBC for a public apology and protest this form of ridicule. To begin with we can send them a protest e-mail on snl@nbc.com.

Secondly, I will try to approach CAIR who take care of such issues for Muslims so as to get this to be a national campaign.

Pirmohamed Bandali
pirmohamed.bandali@swipnet.se

Dear brother,

Samachar archives not accessible

Very good work on the Africa Federation web page. I tried to access the archives but could not read or see any thing. It might be a good idea to put the old *Federation Samachar* in pdf format for us to download and read offline after registering the user. If you need ideas on this please let me know.

Mustafa Juma
mjuma@webstar.co.uk
mjuma@compuserve.com

The *Samachar* archives are generally accessible on the internet. However if you still have a problem please liaise with our Web Page designer Fatema Alloo who can be contacted on fatema@alloo.net.

Dear brother,

Seeking distributorship in Orlando, Florida

I love your magazine. It was the right time to bring the magazine online. I would like to distribute the *Federation Samachar* to our brothers in Orlando, Florida. Could you please let me know how much it costs for 30 copies. Thank you in advance and may Allah (s.w.t.) help you in your endeavours.

Altaf Karim
Orlando, Florida

Please send us your mailing address. We can then arrange to send you the requested number of copies for each issue after determining costs from the local postal authorities.

Editor

Dear brother,

Samachar ought to become a monthly

The tremendous improvement in both the content and presentation of the *Federation Samachar* is laudable and worthy of praise, more so in view of the fact that much effort has been expended to attain this. It is not wrong to say that at this stage a review of the publication strategy is needed.

Federation Samachar ought to become a monthly. The scope and quality of articles must continue to improve and it is my contention that issues such as the existence and location of all the myriad Jamaats, the number of community folk in every town and the critical social problems facing them be highlighted.

With regard to format or presentation, we must not lose sight of the fact that this premiere community magazine be eventually modeled on the U.K. based Impact International, or something akin to it.

Shabbir Bashir Versi
P.O.Box 32739
Nairobi
Kenya.

Dear brother,

A legal column?

I recently read the *Federation Samachar* for the first time. It's wonderful and I take this opportunity to offer my free voluntary legal services to all my brothers and sisters anywhere in this world.

I also suggest you include a legal opinion column in your magazine.

M. HASAN AKBER, ADVOCATE & LEGAL CONSULTANT
M.A (I.R); L.L.B; CERTIFIED HYPNOTHERAPIST, KARACHI.

A law in one country may not apply to another thereby restricting the usefulness of such a column. However you are welcome to send us any article worthy of publication

Editor.

Dear brother,

The 7% Administrative Fees....

I acknowledge receipt with thanks of the *Federation Samachar* vol. 30, no. 7 which shows that you are keeping up with the high standard of substance and the good quality of printing. I would also like to congratulate you on the Web site which is of a high standard.

In the same issue, on page 23, under the heading *London hosts 2nd Executive Council Meeting*, a reference is made to the accounts, namely "presenting the quarterly accounts, the hon. treasurer elucidated on the 7% administrative fees and the manner it was being successfully utilised to bring about a reduction in the deficit of various funds."

The following question arises in my mind -- under Islamic rule of jurisprudence, can an organisation or for that matter any individual, charge any percentage on the *huqooq* of *sahme sadaat*, *sadaqa*, *fitra* or any other *huqooq*.

I personally feel that one may be allowed to deduct 7% or more or for that matter less from *sahme imam a.s.* but not from the other above named *huqooq*. I remain to be enlightened.

Concerned Khums payer
London

The Messenger of Allah (S.W.T) has said: "There shall come a time upon my followers when they will love five things and forget five things:

- 1) They will love the world, and forget the hereafter.
- 2) They will love themselves, and forget their Lord.
- 3) They will love wealth, and forget the accounting.
- 4) They will love palaces, and forget the graves.
- 5) They will love women of this world and forget the pure companions of the hereafter."

Federation Samachar

Dear brother,

We have reacted wrongly to Sachedina

I refer to the general communal reaction to Dr. Sachedina's works. I have seen him speak on a number of occasions and from the attacks that have been laid against him, it seems that many of us are weak in our faith, sorry to say. What makes you think that the work of one man is going to topple our entire faith and belief and mess up the younger people's minds??? This is one man and one book, yet we make it seem like an entire community and a revolution. Have we become so degrading that we cannot bear to accept those who don't conform with our ideas? By the way, don't compare his work to the Satanic Verses if you are going to reply to this. Dr. Sachedina did not condemn Islam and Prophethood. My point is just that we have degraded a man beyond the point of repair, sorry to say.

The Prophet was a mercy to mankind, Allah is the Beneficent, the Merciful, and WE are the cowardly people who have forgotten how to tolerate our differences. We've become too trigger happy to become like those wahhabis we make fun of for saying "bid'ah! bid'ah!". We have become like them, sorry to say, and the only difference is that we portray our fear and arrogance in different, more flowery words. Shame.

I just wish that we would stop being so arrogant and insensitive every time a person seems to go "against the flow". What makes us so sure that their intentions are bad or evil??? Ya Allah, my brothers and sisters, these are fellow MUSLIM SHI'AS!!!! Even more, they are fellow HUMANS who have FEELINGS. Seems that some of us have forgotten what feelings are; pride increases our enemies, but puts our friends to flight. Pride, joined with many virtues, chokes them all.

Behavioural lowliness is just as repulsive as bodily dirt. Thus, it is just as important to cleanse our bodies from dirt as it is to purify our manners of filth. Some people exercise before and/or after sleeping; reflecting on our manners and thoughts is just as important as these exercises. By studying the way we should act and struggling to observe the borders of our designated limits, we can see our realities without any barrier. Our success in decision making is directly related to our inner-selves. It is incumbent upon every one whether young or old, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, to realize what he or she has done by way of daily expenditures and earnings just as scientists write down results of their experiments. By applying such methods with scrutiny and patience, our souls and bodies change for the better. First and foremost, this specifically applies to how we deal with others.

No big surprise then why the awaited Imam hasn't reappeared yet. What a joke that would be, with our present situation where we don't even bother to at least TRY to understand each other. I am disgraced to be associated with some of my elders on this forum. That's the cold truth, and nothing but the truth. We have tossed aside the family atmosphere and instead have adopted the army way of life, where you either conform with the majority or you are disgraced beyond belief. We have forgotten that the Ahlul-Bayt are our leaders.

Islam is a religion of mercy and tolerance, not the fascism we are presently seeing on this forum. Let this be some food for thought. *Fee Aman Allah.*

Hussain
Toronto



Dear brother,

Communal reaction to Sachedina was right

Some people are of the opinion that the communal action against Sachedina is too stern. How ironic? They compare those who stand up for Imam Mahdi and the Wilaya of Imam Ali with the Wahhabis! Do they know any Wahhabis who vigorously defend our 12th Imam and the Succession and Wilaya of Imam Ali?

The text "*Islamic Messianism*" is being used by the Wahhabics in Madina Islamic University to discredit us and question the existence of our 12th Imam, from the point of view of a Shia Scholar! If people think that this has NO EFFECT, then they are sadly mistaken.

To sum up, Dr. Sachedina's works are very easily and convincingly used to prevent people from coming to the path of the Ahlul-Bayt!

Mahmood Kara
Toronto.

Dear brother,

To quote or not...

Please confirm if I can quote news items particularly relating to Africa Jamaats from the *Samachar* in the London Jamaat Newsletter. The Jamaat Newsletter is published bi-monthly and circulated to 1500 households.

Liyakat Jaffer
Editor
Newsletter of KSIM
London.

We have no objection to any extract being taken from the *Samachar* for republication. The objective is to spread the message of truth to as many as possible. Editor.

Federation Samachar

Dear brother,

Lets Not Treat AIDS patients with apathy

It was very interesting to read the above article by Munir Daya on the Weekly Thoughts of the Africa Federation Internet Page and let me assure you that this disease is now ripe in our community. In the last Executive Council meeting of the World Federation, Dr. Walji presented in his report that to date over 80 deaths of our community members have been recorded by the Medical Advisory Board (MAB). These were cases that were diagnosed as AIDS positive. This is of course is a tiny fraction of what the real figures are. Majority of the reported cases are from Africa. Please do not misunderstand me, that I am referring this as an AFRICAN problem. Many more are infected in the west but as they are not treated by MAB due to health facilities available here, the pertinent figures are not available. According to Dr. Walji, the figure of positive cases within our community could be as high as 1000 infected world-wide.

What I find odd is that whenever this subject is raised, people tend to behave like ostriches and wait for the sand storm to pass. The storm is here to stay and will stay for as long as mankind survives or until research work comes up with suitable antidotes. The question then is, how should the community educate its members? Jamaat's should take this issue seriously and before passing any resolution, leaders should get together and prepare a strategy.

Recently I read an article that in Holland, university girls have a badge which reads "NO Sex Please." What we need is awareness rather than imposition in not only our African Jamaats but in all our GLOBAL Jamaats. On this issue we should unite and work hand in hand leaving out political differences aside to discuss issues openly. Remember, AIDS IS A KILLER. It kills individuals, families, generations and societies.

Mohamed. R. Dahya
London.

Dear brother,

Islam despises ideas that cause *fitna*

To those who think the community acted wrongly against Sachedina, do they not also think that the same argument also applies between Ayatollah UI Uzma Khomeini and Salman Rushdie? Or are they also of the opinion that Ayatollah Khomeini was rash in his judgement since Salman also acted alone? Ibn Muljim harmed Islam by murdering Hazrat Ali A.S.. But he was alone. Yet we curse him year in and year out. WHY? He was also alone and what purpose does it serve since Hazrat Ali A.S. was immediately replaced by another Imam.

Islam despises ideas that cause *fitna*, despises actions that cause *fitna*. Islam does not stone an adulterer because it is barbaric as so many western educated scholars love to portray, but it does do so to see that such actions do not persist in society. All its actions are to purify society. Ayatollah Khomeini did not have anything personal against Salman Rushdie nor was his action in anger. His action was based on purely Islamic principles - whatever the West or western minded Shia scholars may state.

Dr Mahmood Hameer
Dar es Salaam



Dear brother,

THE SAGA OF WF AND AF REVISITED

You were generous. You exceeded my expectations. You spared me a whole page of *Africa Samachar* (vol. 30, No 6, January 1998), the prestigious magazine, to express my views!

However, your personal comment was that readers should be allowed to analyse the situation and that forgiveness will not bring a lasting solution. I have now heard rumours that AF (Africa Federation) will soon be calling a meeting to discuss its future relationship with the WF (World Federation). WF will not be invited to attend the meeting. I am therefore prompted to express my personal opinion on the whole saga.

The people or the personalities involved have not been asked to express their opinion. They have not been interviewed as was done in case of Professor Abdulaziz Sachidina to clear possible misunderstandings. Unless they refuse to be interviewed, justice demands that they be given a right to express their opinion on this matter. I, as a reader of *Africa Samachar*, would like to hear their side of the story. I would also like, and perhaps so would others like me, to find out where the mistake lies? Are we not making a mountain out of a molehill? In what circumstances would the mistake occur again?

In the absence of guidance and as the parties have not come forward with their own views, I am being forced to review the whole situation. In doing so I might offend either one or both of them and therefore I am asking their forgiveness in advance.

Should the leader of WF have chaired the meeting? Personally, if in his *Federation Samachar*

position, I would not have. But from past experience Mulla has allowed democracy to prevail by allowing full participation from anyone without fear or favour. Not to do so in this particular case would have been at his peril. I see this to be the main reason that no objection was taken in him chairing the meeting in the first place. In actual fact taking the Chair disadvantaged Mulla, as he had to remain neutral and choose not to speak.

To interrupt a speaker for a minor factual mistake is unfair to the speaker, as it disturbs one's thought. The leader of AF cannot be blamed, as I would have also been tempted. It is due to human nature and not because of habit. But then one has to take the consequence.

Had one of the speakers not made an error pertaining to some figures, the President of AF would not have interrupted and *ipso facto* he would not have been admonished by the Chairman. Had the President of AF, before the starting of the proceedings, raised his objection and not in the middle, the President of WF might not have chaired the meeting. Similarly had he not used the words 'the incumbent chairman was the beneficiary of the chair,' it would have not infuriated the President of the WF into making a harsh remark.

AF was trying to fight a losing battle. Many delegates were in support of removing clause 20.1 from the WF constitution. Mulla Saheb had not made up his mind whether or not to stand for the Presidency. Indeed an attempt was made to force Mulla to show his hands. It would have very well suited AF had Mulla stated he was not going to stand, since then the need to delete the clause would perhaps not have arisen.

Granted the delegates from the AF came prepared with a proper mandate and were represented by a lawyer, the argument put forward on why the said clause should be retained looked little convincing. The fact that AF had similar clause proved against them, because if the incumbent President was not re-elected, WF would face an administrative problem. This fact also reflects to the President of AF. While in Dar-es-Salaam, I vividly remember that there were occasions when Mohamedbhai wanted to take a rest and let a new person be appointed. But when no one was prepared to take up the Presidentship of Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat, at the eleventh hour and with a lot of persuasion from well-wishers, Mohamedbhai had to take up the reins. We are all indebted to him for which Allah (SWT) will surely reward him for his loyalty in this world and in the life hereafter (Amin).

Mohamedbhai is highly regarded in Africa and so is Mulla Saheb in England and perhaps in Europe and America also. Why are they both so highly regarded? The obvious reason is because of their vast experience in leading the community to a better future. They are prepared to listen, learn and accept new challenges. The added quality of Mulla Saheb is that he is well versed with Islamic laws and practice. Therefore his decisions during leadership are not expected to conflict with religion.

Mulla Saheb has become synonymous with the WF. The majority of Jamaats represented in the WF are content for Mulla to serve. And if Mulla Saheb is prepared and willing to lead the community and earn the pleasure of Allah (SWT) then let him do so. Surely a time will soon come when you the Editor will become synonymous with *Africa Samachar*. Like Mulla Saheb you have the good qualities of acting impartially and allowing democracy to prevail. You have allowed readers the freedom to express their views without fear or favour. If in the future readers still want

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you to serve as Editor and you are willing and able to do so, should we readers be deprived of your services simply because some may want a new person to take the post of Editor? Would this be fair to the majority of the readers?

The worst scenario I can envisage is that AF might decide to pull out from membership of WF. I am sure WF would like to retain AF as its member for it has contributed to the development of constructive ideas and criticisms. What will be the consequences if (God forbids) AF withdraws? The WF will continue in its present structure with members drawn from Europe, United States and other countries but without Africa. By retaining its membership AF will have the right not only to actively participate in the discussion of important matters but also will be able to influence the future course of WF. In my view by abstaining from attending WF, AF will be accepting defeat. Once again I insist let bygones be bygones. I am sure everyone has learnt a lesson and it will not be repeated again. We are all adults and mature. We need to impress the present youths, the leaders of tomorrow, with our maturity by setting a good example.

Yours sincerely

Mohammed Baker Hemraj,
Birmingham, England.

As things stand, the Africa Federation (AF) has no intention of withdrawing from the World Federation (WF) and neither is a meeting planned to discuss future relationships.

The AF stand at the meeting pertained to Clause 20.1 rather than to Mulla or any other personality. The AF stand followed deliberations on the Clause that ensued at its annual meeting in Kampala.

The media has been open to the WF as it has been to anyone else and for that matter the AF has written an explicit letter to the WF a few months ago outlining that the issue be discussed candidly with both Presidents involved. The AF letter has not been responded to.

Editor.

Dear brother,

Africa jumped the gun on resolving against Sachedina

The recent resolution passed by the Africa Federation against Sachedina was grossly unfair because it availed him no chance to defend himself. This is different from the situation where the late Ayatullah Khomeini ruled against Salman Rushdie because first, Rushdie never sought forgiveness and secondly Khomeini was a reputable Ayatullah who had the knowledge and ability to make correct rulings on sensitive Islamic issues. Did any one of those who voted for the resolution have similar qualifications as the Late Ayatullah Khomeini to judge in the way they did. Certainly not! And can any one of them tell us what the Islamic ruling is for writers who err and subsequently seek forgiveness?

I believe Islam is a religion of forgiveness and even at The Open Forum in Toronto, Sachedina was told that the Mimbar needs him but that because his book contains sensitive issues, he should not defend it.

Thereafter our brethren began sending him e-mails and letters to question his book. When he opted for silence his silence was interpreted as defeat and publicised so on the Internet. When he then chose to reply to questions raised, it was claimed that he is defending his book.

In the interview carried between the Editor of *Federation Samachar* and Sachedina, he clearly admits that his book is not perfect and even sought forgiveness from Allah (s.w.t.) for anything he did not place in the correct context.

It should be interesting to see how the Marja rules on this issue, that is assuming that the issue will now be forwarded to him. If he decides that the book is in order, it will prove to the Africa Federation why their resolution was premature. If he decides to the contrary, the Africa Stand will be interpreted as correct but the very fact that a further clarification is being sought should be a good indication to the Africa Federation not to jump the gun on such crucial issues in future.

Mahmood Jaffer
Dar es Salaam

Dear brother,

How were Uganda Asians helped?

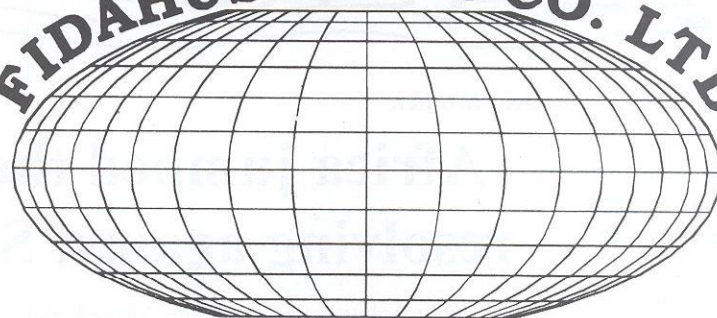
I refer to the *Federation Samachar* Vol. 30 No. 7 Zilhajj 1418 A.H. of April, 1998.

Under the heading, "Noteworthy Developments of the Africa Federation in the 52 years gone by" penned in by Brother Hassan A.M. Jaffer of Mombasa, Item no. 7 says that the Supreme Council helped Uganda Asians before the World Community came to their rescue.

I shall be highly obliged if more details can be given on this subject of rescue and what sort of help was given to Uganda Asians during the time of Idi Amin.

Mohammed Husein Nathoo
Toronto.

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Dear brother,

If you are given stones, build a bridge instead of a wall

~~~~~  
 "Love us, for it is love for Islam. May your love for us never cease even if it becomes a public disgrace."  
 - Imam Zainul Abideen A.S.  
 ~~~~~

There has been a request for objectivity on the issues that revolve around A.A.Sachedina's work. Well, the following is one of the invaluable postings from the recent past by respected brother Sajid Ali (ze@giasbm01.net.in). He has quoted many sources and has rationally gone through the arguments. If you have further questions, I suggest you can put it to him directly. (Since I am interested in learning the truth, I would request Dr. Sachedina to comment on what is written below --- Your participation is needed very much. I have also heard that you will revise the words of the Enc. of Bio Ethics. Please let us know what the changes are and when they will be implemented).

Finally, I request that we all step back and look at our history (as outlined below) and understand it. We may then be able to make better judgements on what is written in Sachedina's book. Perhaps there would then be less arguments and all would then be clear, inshallah.

Imam Ali (a.s.) EXPLICITLY appointed!

On the succession to the Prophet's "religious-political authority", Sachedina wrote that there were no EXPLICIT (that is, distinctly expressed, clearly stated, not merely implied) instructions in the matter of succession to the "Prophet's religious-political authority." He stated that "...it asserts by implication that there

was an IMPLICIT (that is, necessarily involved though not plainly expressed) direction in the matter. This implicit direction of the Prophet was expressed on several occasions in his life-time, including finally at al-Ghadir. It was also because of this absence of explicit statement on these occasions that Imam `Ali never used any of these occasions, including al-Ghadir, to put forward his candidacy as the only rightful successor of the Prophet." (Sachedina's words end).

The Holy Prophet (saw) said: "Whoever nurses a doubt concerning the Imam and Mastership of Hazrat Ali (as), he will be raised from the grave with a chain of fire around his neck." (Manaqeb Ibne Maghazeli p 18; Manaqeb Khaarazmi p 2290). This tradition is an evidence that the belief in Imam and Mastership of Hazrat Ali (as) is an ESSENTIAL criteria for achieving the pleasure of Allah (swt) and salvation and consequently entering paradise.

If this is such an important criteria, how is it possible that the Holy Prophet (saw) left this matter ambiguous? Islam is the only religion till the day of Qayamat, how is it possible that such an important matter would be left unclear?

Well, let us understand this discussion in the light, whether Ameerul Momineen (as) was EXPLICITLY "APPOINTED" or not. Remember, the question is his explicit APPOINTMENT and not unanimous acceptance. Even the *Beyat* of Rasoolullah (saw) was EXPLICIT, yet the disbelievers have denied.

For establishing whether his appointment was EXPLICIT or not, we need to study history. Let us skip all the ap-

pointments, and directly talk about the occasion of Ghadeer. Allah ordered the Holy Prophet (saw): "*O Messenger (of Allah) convey what has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message (at all), and Allah will protect you from the people. Surely Allah will not guide the disbelieving people.*" (5: 67)

The Holy Prophet (saw) ordered a stop, and called those who had gone ahead to come back and those behind to hurry while a pulpit was erected. The gathering was 114,000 to 124,000 or maybe even more!! There he stood and questioned the people, "*Am I not having more authority upon you than you yourselves.?*" One voice came, "*Certainly you have more authority.*". Then he (saw) announced "*Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master.*"

Interestingly, 64 Sunni traditionalists like Ahmad ibne Hambal, Ibne Majah, Nisaai, Tirmidhi, Hakim Neshapouri, Ibne Katheer, Suyuti et al have quoted the initial utterance (*Am I not having...*). Now, in a gathering of over 100,000 people and with quotations available in renowned and prominent Sunni scholars works, wouldn't we say the declaration was EXPLICIT?

After the announcement, the Qur'anic verse, "*This day I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My bounties upon you, and am satisfied with Islam as your religion.*" was revealed.

This incident has been recorded by many Sunni scholars, including Tabari, Waheedi, Sa'labi and others. Even the Sunni Quranic exegists have recorded this, Qazi Abu Bakr Baaqelaani (Kitabut Tamheed), Qazi Abdur Rehman Eejee Shar'ee (Al

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Mawaqef), Sayed Shareef Jorjaani (Sharhul Mawaaqef, Beizaawi (Sharhul Maqasid) etc.

After this announcement, the Holy Prophet (saw) crowned Ameerul Momineen (as) with his Amama called "Sahaab". What would we call this, the CORONATION ceremony in the presence of over a hundred thousand people?? Doesn't this make the appointment EXPLICIT?? (Tawzeehul Dala'el by Shahabuddin, Arb'een by Jamaaluddin Shir'azi and Nazm Dararus Simtain by Zarandi).

So having established that the announcement at Ghadeer was EXPLICIT, let us see whether people present at the occasion also saw it as an EXPLICIT announcement of MASTERSHIP AND SUCCESSORSHIP or not.

The Holy Prophet (saw) was asked, "What is the meaning of 'Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master'. He (saw) answered: 'God is my Master. He has more authority upon me than myself. My will and authority has no value when compared to His will and authority. Similarly, I am the master of the believers. Their opinion and will has no value when compared to mine. And of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is having equal authority over him. Ali's authority is more over them than they themselves. Nobody's will is valid and binding when compared to Hazrat Ali's (as).'" (Shamsul Akhbaar by Ali ibne Hamid e-Quraishi, p. 38).

There is ample evidence about the poem Hassan ibne Thabit composed in praise of Ameerul Momineen (as) immediately after the incident: "Then he said to him, 'Stand O Ali...For certainly I am contended to have thee as a leader and guide after me.'"

And even Umar ibne Khattab acknowledged Ameerul Momineen (as) as his master, "O son of Abu Talib ..congratulations!! You have become the master of every believer, men and women." This has been narrated by Federation Samachar

sixty well-known Sunni scholars. Details available in Al-Ghadeer Vol. 1, page 271.

Sayed Ali Hamadani after narrating a part of the sermon of the Messenger of Allah (saw) at Ghadeer writes in Mawaddatul Qurba, "O People is not God my master? He gives me commands, orders prohibitions and I have no authority over the Almighty?" Everyone said, "Yes O Messenger of Allah." Then he (saw) said, "Of whomsoever God and His messenger are masters, this Ali is his master. He will give you orders and command prohibitions. You don't have any authority to command or prohibit him."

The great Sunni Quranic interpreter, Zamakshari in his book "Rabiul Abraar" narrates the following incident, "One year Moawiyah went for Haj. There, he called a black but brave woman named Akromiyah and inquired, "Why do you like Ali and hate me?" That lady replied, "Will I be safe if I give a true reply?", Moawiyah replied in the affirmative. The lady answering his question said, "I like Ali because on the day of Ghadeer, when you too were present, the Holy Prophet (saw) announced his mastership. Further, because he loved the poor and respected the religious people. But you indulge in killing Muslims, creating rifts between them and acting unjustly in your judgements."

DID AMEERUL MOMINEEN (AS) EVER USE GHADEER TO PROVE HIS SUCCESSORSHIP?

It was thirty five years after hijri, twenty five years had passed since the occurrence of the event of Ghadeer. Many early-day Muslims had either died or were martyred or had migrated to other cities. Some had told the truth while others hid their identities due to the fear of enemies. The situation was such that those who were not present in Ghadeer, nor firm in their beliefs started doubting about the event of Ghadeer. Noticing the gravity of the situation, Hazrat Ali (as) gathered the companions of the Holy Prophet (saw) and the Tab'e'en. After delivering a sermon, he asked ONLY those people to stand as

witnesses who had THEMSELVES heard the Holy Prophet (saw) on the occasion of Ghadeer. Approximately 30 people (12 of them participants at Badr) stood up and witnessed that they had themselves heard the Holy Prophet (saw) say: "Am I not having more authority upon you than yourselves?"

We said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah. Then he (saw) said, "Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too." Amongst those who testified were Aby Ayyub Ansari, Abu Zainab Ibne Auf, Sahl ibne Hanif, Abdur Rehman bin Abdur Rab, Abu Huraira and others. But, Zayd ibne Arqam, Jurair ibne Abdullah, Anas ibne Maalik and some others present in the crowd, refused to be a witness. Hazrat Ali (as) said: "If they have concealed the truth on the basis of enmity and malice may God incur His wrath on them." Due to this curse Buraa and Zaid ibne Arqam became blind, Anas suffered from leprosy and Jurair became Murtad (apostate).

This incident is famous as "YAUMUR ROHBAH" and has been narrated through four Ashaab of the Holy Prophet (saw) and twenty-four Tab'e'en (those who had seen the companions but not the Holy Prophet (saw)) in famous and reliable Sunni books like Nisai in Khasaaes, Ibne Kathir in Kaamil Vol 5 p 211. Ibne Atheer in Usdul Ghaba Vol 4 p age 28, Imam Ahmad ibne Hambal in his Musnad Vol 4, p370. Al Maaref of Ibne Qutaiba p 251, Al-Arb'een of Jamaluddin Shir'azi vol 1 page 211 and many other books.

With the above analysis is it not clear that the announcement of MASTERSHIP AND SUCCESSORSHIP WAS EXPLICIT? May Allah (swt) hasten the reappearance of the Last Successor of the Holy Prophet (saw) and include us all among his servants and helpers. And for the community at large, let's not forget that if given stones, one should build a bridge instead of a wall.

Zaheer Abbas Karim
Toronto.



Dear brother,

Is Sachedina rightly blamed?

I have been following part of the debate around Dr Sachedina and was not very sure what position to take. Well, he was recently there at the Imam Khomeini's (RA) conference in Columbia university in NY City and according to many attendees who did not know him before, his speech was the best, and indeed it was a truly inspiring and brain-stimulating one.

However, after the Conference, I approached Dr Sachedina with other brothers, and asked him very frank and direct questions. These included:

Q: do you believe in Imam Mahdi (atf), and our duty to await ?

A: "yes of course" (smiling), "otherwise I wouldn't be here".

Q: what about "wilaaya" and the fact that the Prophet (saw) appointed Imam Ali (as)?

A: I believe that the Prophet appointed him, explicitly, with no doubt. There were strong hadiths, and *nusus* (texts) that the Prophet told people that Ali is the *wali*. People misunderstood my words, and others have twisted them and attacked me personally... I said there was an explicit designation of Imam Ali (as), but I said there was not an "*explicit instruction*" from the Prophet to the people as to how they should obey and follow the Imam.

Q: What does it mean? should not they just follow whatever the Prophet said? what about the interests of the elite who refused because of their interests....

A: yes of course, they acted out of their own desires and each group wanted it for themselves...etc..

I cannot remember every word and the above quotes are not a 100% literal transmission, but they are as close as I can remember and describe. My opinion about him is unimportant, but the bottom line is that:

1. we should not accuse people of anything we are not sure of.

2. whatever issues are considered controversial about him might be open for open-minded debate rather than personal attacks and hiding or escaping away from anything that looks "new" to us.

3. His case resembles how people treated Dr Shariati in the beginning, but later tried to understand him open-heartedly.

Hussein A Sharafeddin
USA

sharafch@cr4.cng.ohio-state.edu

Dear Brother,

NASIMCO has a role to play to address the plight of North American Muslims

I am a regular reader of your esteemed magazine. It is not very often that a reader comes across a thought-provoking letter of the like that I enjoyed reading in the April 1998 issue.

The one in question was by "Practising Doctor", captioned "*Muslims have no voice in North America*". I wish the author had revealed his or her identity not only for a direct communication of appreciation but also for more exchange of views on this important subject at the historical cross-road of the Muslims' settlement in this continent.

What Muslims now urgently need, however belated, for the US and Canada are apex organizations of the regional organizations spread out across North America, of which NASIMCO is one. What is suggested are the likes of a Muslim Parliament which is presently functioning in the UK very effectively and has registered its presence in the political, social and educational fields in the context of its religious identity at the national British level.

So Brother Editor, the letter by "Practising Doctor" was THE LETTER OF THE ISSUE. Let us see what initiatives NASIMCO may wish to take in establishing a report with other sister Muslim organizations on the subject and perhaps they will respond to the letter for the information of your readers.

Baqir Alloo
Toronto.

Write to the Samachar

The Federation Samachar invites letters expressing constructive opinions or suggestions from readers. Letters should preferably be short and to the point. Letters are subject to editing but at all times effort will be made to maintain the original theme of a letter without distorting the subject matter.

Dear brother,

Sachedina fell prey to Dar's voting strength

After the last Supreme Council Conference in Dar es Salaam you sought my views on the RESOLUTION that was passed on AZIZ SACHEDINA AND ITS LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS.

The tragedy today is because of the big voting strength/power of Dar-es-salaam Jamaat (assuming that the official figure is about 7000 - I am told this could be more!), which is 70 delegates and 14 Councillors which along with the voting strength of the secretariat makes any resolution, which they bring almost a walk-over.

Therefore the opinions of the other Jamaats, if they are contrary to that of Dar es Salaam Jamaat will only be of academic importance (and waste of time in discussions etc.!!) but will have no bearing on the implementation of any RESOLUTION itself.

I believe that the passing of the Sachedina resolution was mainly because of the apparent anomaly in the voting strength of Jamaats making up the Africa Federation. This really means that the majority of the Jamaats were not in favour of this resolution *per se* but all I believe were in agreement that the UNISLAMIC WRITINGS OF PROFESSOR AZIZ SACHEDINA SHOULD BE CONDEMNED.

The reason for not supporting the second part of the resolution of debarring him from an official platform of the Jamaats was that this resolution would bring about DISUNITY and DIVISION AMONG OUR COMMUNITY. There would be Jamaat leaders outside Dar es Salaam who would at least like to listen to PROFESSOR SACHEDINA on other non-conflicting issues etc., and they would invite him. This would make a mockery of our resolution.

As a result of the passing of this resolution there are two camps in our community world-wide -- THE PRO-

SACHEDINA AND ANTI-SACHEDINA CAMPS. I do not know and cannot predict if PROFESSOR SACHEDINA CAN OR WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE of this division TO further his own aims and objectives!!! This will only depend on his NIYYAT!!

The biggest danger of the above controversy is that our youths will remain gullible, especially those who do not have a solid RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION. The solution would have been to refer this matter to our MARJA-E-TAQLEED and seek his opinion and guidance. Any ruling or guidance coming from our MARJA would not have divided our community as everyone would have respected the decision of the MARJA.

My personal feeling is that the resolu-

Dear brother,

Samachar is male chauvinistic...but we enjoy the unbiased coverage

I am a keen reader of the *Federation Samachar* and enjoy your unbiased coverage. However a lot of male issues are discussed and debated and I feel women are not getting enough coverage.

I therefore propose a *Womens' corner* in each issue whereby we women can share views, personal experiences of our lives in order to learn from each other and also to benefit others. I am willing to run this section for you, if you approve of it. Please consider this proposal and do let me know.

Mrs. S. Peera Alidina
Nairobi.

Thank you for your proposal. As a matter of fact we have attributed between two to four pages of each issue for women issues but do agree that this may not be enough.

We appreciate that women of the community currently do not have their own forum to exchange ideas or viewpoints in print. At the 1996 Supreme Council Meeting in Nairobi the *Samachar* Editorial Board made a special appeal to all Jamaats to encourage women to be more involved in the print media by exchanging their opinions, complaints and suggestions in the *Samachar* with the intention of uplifting the status of women in the community as prescribed by Islam.

You are welcome to send us articles on women issues which offer analysis through an Islamic perspective. The material could also cover real-life incidents or problems being faced by our womenfolk, if any. Confidentiality can be maintained by replacing real-life names by pseudonyms but it is absolutely necessary to ensure that the narrated incidents or reports are true.

Editor.



Dear brother.

Islam did not advocate slavery....

I enclose a cutting of a reader's letter from a local English Weekly. You will notice that the reader offers some useful corrections to certain statements with regard to the proclamation of Allah (S.W.T.), OIC membership, slavery and Islamic public religious preachings which had appeared in a feature article earlier. I am sure that your readers will find the letter enlightening, especially those who reside in the West.

Mohamed Khalfan
Dar es Salaam.

"God could not have manifested Himself to the Arabs as Allah (S.W.T.) as mentioned by the author when he claimed that God manifested Himself in other different names to others. The Arabs were engaged in the worship of idols for centuries until the advent of Islam in the sixth century. To the Arabs then, the God known to them was "Llaah".

The name "Allah" provides a unique concept of a unique "GOD" to all Muslims - non-Arabs included - unlike the God known to others. The concept is of that God who is one in His absolute unity with no associates and none besides Him.

It is for this reason that mostly the name for Allah for God is used by Muslims, even if the language He is mentioned in is other than Arabic.

The memberships of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) is no acknowledgement that a member is a Muslim country. Uganda is one of the few examples in Africa which has a small minority of Muslims but is wise enough to avail herself of membership and draw economic benefits in purely a secular relationship.

OIC membership is said to be extended generously to any country which has a small Muslim population, however small, on the Islamic philosophy that all Muslims spread out across the world

are one "people" (ummah). The country they live in can also benefit from the OIC membership.

As for public religious preachings, one cannot preach Islam without informing and expounding the Islamic concept of Allah - who begets no sons nor is he begotten. And then the Qur'an was revealed after the advent of Judaism and Christianity. It therefore, discusses their beliefs and reasons out disputation of the beliefs.

On slavery, Islam does not advocate it. On the contrary Islam placed restrictions on the acquisition of slaves, imposed obligations for their welfare no different from that for the family-members and what is more, it provided canonical laws for the liberation of slaves to attain penance or expiation of a number of sins.

To quote a few examples of the practices rampant in other parts of the world, but negated and nullified by Islam: the captives in wars could no longer be enslaved unless the enemies were idolaters who had provoked the wars. The enslavement served as a guarantee for the preservation of their lives and avoided death. And yet they would be released with or without ransom.

A chief or ruler could not at his will enslave any person residing in his chieftom as of right. Parents could not sell or gift their offsprings as slaves and debtors could not be turned into slaves.

Islam also eased the matrimonial conditions for slaves to facilitate their integration into the masters' families. It is no wonder therefore that there is little or no trace of any existing identifiable communities of the descendants of the former African slaves (apart from former Arab slaves) in the Arab lands, as are seen in America. They are now racially Arabs.

Slaves were given a right to ransom

themselves on certain easy terms, if not freeing them, for the pleasure of Allah (S.W.T.). Islam is the first and the only religion which has prescribed liberation of slaves as a virtue and a manifestation of genuine faith. Chapter ninety of the Holy Qur'an is quite eloquent in this respect.

History testifies that among the early converts and adherents to Islam, despite their persecution as a minority by the Meccan idolaters, were a sizeable number of slaves who included Africans. Some were bought off from the masters and freed by the Muslims. The first person to hold the enviable position of Muazzin (herald of the daily prayer call) in the history of Islam was Bilal, a former African slave."

Dear brother,

The missing Federation emblem.....

I refer to the letter written by Husein Khimjee of Toronto in the *Federation Samachar* Vol 30, No. 7 of April, 1998 on Page 18, Paragraph five.

He writes, "...even these scholars have made mistakes." I would like to ask him whether these scholars have made mistakes with regard to *Usoole Din* or *Foorue Din* or history?

After all Sachedina's writings have created misunderstanding and confusion on fundamental Islamic issues. I believe this is not a mistake.

Meanwhile may I point out that the Federation Emblem has suddenly disappeared from the cover page of the *Samachar*.

Habib H. Haji
Tanga.



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LOS ANGELES MEMORIES

from Yasmin Kermalli

Eleven youths from the Abbassi Madressah travelled from Paris to Los Angeles accompanied by their Principal, Sabir Charifou and two supervisors, Riaze Vasram and Sr. Naznin Vasram. The youths, five girls and six boys, age 11 years to 14 years were on vacation and this trip was primarily to familiarize them with youths from the USA who share common religious beliefs but are yet worlds apart. Accommodations were graciously provided by members of the Los Angeles Jamaat who warmly welcomed the youths and made them feel "at home."

On April 11, the Los Angeles Jamaat witnessed a unique program (in five languages) during the celebrations of Eid-al-Ghadeer. The program included a welcome speech by the Jamaat President, Iqbal Somji, an introduction of Paris Madressah-Jamaat by Br. Sabir in Gujrati, and a presentation by Abbassi Madressah youths, Dua Tawassul and a short speech on the events of Ghadeer in French and Urdu on Imam Ali A.S. The Huseini Madressah boys wrapped up the evening by presenting a skit in English.

The Huseini Madressah arranged for a visit to the Islamic Cemetery in Adelanto. The visitors were in awe to see a full Islamic Cemetery and mosque in California. Imam Sh. Zaid Assfy led the noon prayers followed by a lecture and lunch. Sh. Assfy is also the Commissioner of Police in the city of Adelanto and he proudly displayed his police badge for the youths to admire. All the youths were presented with gifts by the Shaikh.

The youths visited the Islamic Center of Southern California where a French guide had been arranged to show them the facilities which include an Islamic school and a bookstore and media center. They also visited the City of Knowledge, a full-time Shia school, where Salaat-ul-Juma'a was offered by Syed Ali Al-Qazwini. The visitors were all given gifts. Later they visited Br. Pyarali Hasanali's Signs and Screen Printing factory. The youths were fascinated with the technology as demonstrated by Br. Pyarali.

The youths were also taken to Disneyland in Anaheim and to Universal Studio in Hollywood. They spent a day at SeaWorld in San Diego and had the privilege of taking a bus tour to Hollywood and Sunset Blvd. A soccer match was also arranged at As Sadiq Foundation by Dr. Murtaza Khaku, Principal of Huseini Madressa.

Sabir Charifou and Riaze Vasram expressed deep gratitude and thanks to the Shia Ithna-Asheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles and its Huseini Madressa. The hosts were astonished at the way the youths blended so well despite some language barriers. The visitors found this to be a wonderful experience and finally on April 20, 1998 the host families bid *au revoir* and *bon voyage* to the visitors.

Disaster in Gujarat (Kutch and Kathiawad)

A recent cyclone, which hit Gujarat, India has resulted in widespread disaster, affecting areas like Jamnagar, Lalpur, Maliya, Miyana, Nawlakhi and Mandvi. According to reports received from Indian Press, thousands of families have become homeless and many people have died.

The Council of Gujarat has confirmed the heavy losses suffered by the public living near the harbours in Gujarat. Members of our community have had to move away to the nearest locality to save their lives, after having totally lost their possessions. The reports received do not indicate any loss of life in our community.

The World Federation requested the Council of Gujarat to embark upon a relief programme so that the affected families can be provided with necessary supplies to assist them to be rehabilitated.

The World Federation estimated that this emergency relief exercise would require about Indian Rupees 500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand). Members of the community are requested to assist our brethren living in Gujarat.

AIDS in Pakistan - moment of truth

Medical experts, worried about the growing incidence of AIDS in Pakistan, disclosed at a seminar held in August, 1998 in Rawalpindi that over 800 victims of the fatal disease have been detected in the country while the number of HIV virus carriers has increased to 50,000.

The deadly disease has been insidiously making inroads into the country, infecting the unwary and claiming more and more lives over the past few years.

Many undetected AIDS cases are believed to exist in far-off areas where, because of poverty and lack of awareness, people are particularly vulnerable.



Muslim Unity Conference accentuates on need to do away with Sectarian differences

The importance of Muslim unity, the preservation of the Ummah against international plots, the support for the Intifadah in Palestine and the Islamic resistance in Lebanon as well as condemnation of zionist attempts to usurp the holy city of al-Quds were major themes discussed at the Eleventh International Conference on Islamic Unity in Tehran on July 10-12, 1998. The Conference also raised concern for the plight of Muslim minorities, especially in Europe and the missionary activity in Muslim countries like Central Asia, Afghanistan and Bangladesh while it condemned attempts to suppress Islamic Movements.

The unity of the Ummah and the necessity of the Qur'an was reaffirmed by delegates who came from all over the world. The Congress was held in the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Conference Centre, an impressive hall with excellent facilities. Last year, foreign ministers of Muslim countries had met in the same Centre in preparation for the OIC summit.

Repeatedly, speakers—both Shias and Sunnis—reaffirmed their commitment to Islamic unity and warned against the plots of the enemies of Islam. Attendees included ulama, muftis, scholars, teachers, students and Islamic activists and among those who participated were Muslims from Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenstan, Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Western Europe, Albania, Bosnia, Serbia, North America, Sudan, Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa.

As is customary at such Conferences, a large number of speakers were accommodated. This necessitated limiting each speaker to 10 minutes although a few were allowed to speak longer. The inaugural address was delivered by former President Hashemi Rafsanjani, who now heads the Expediency Council. He welcomed delegates and talked about the *fitrah* of man which he said has been created

pure by Allah (swt). This was a reference to the Qur'anic verse (30:30), which states that there is no altering of the [pure] nature in which Allah (swt) has created human beings.

In his remarks on the last day of the Conference, Ayatullah Muhammad Ali Taskhiri, head of the Organisation for Islamic Culture and Communication in the office of the Rahbar, also drew attention to this. He reiterated what the Rahbar, Ayatullah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had said earlier on the issue of the Judaisation of al-Quds by the zionists. He also referred to the address by President Mohammed Khatami who had stressed on the importance of the *Majma-e Taqrib* Conferences. He concluded by emphasising that "Islam has all the features which fulfil the needs of humanity."

Earlier Ayatullah Taskhiri's paper on the first day about '*Balance, leniency and ethics in Islam*' drew much interest. Other speakers not only talked about the importance of Muslim unity but also highlighted some of the problems faced by Muslims in their societies. In the morning session of the first day, speakers included Ahmed Muhamed al-Khalili (Yemen), Shaikh Sabri Coci (Albania), Ayatullah Jafar Subhani (Iran), Dr Yusuf Kettani (Morocco), Shaikh Ali Shay (Kenya), Shaikh Yaqu Ismi (Philippines), Shaikh Ahmed az-Zain (Lebanon), Dr Abdallah al-Nafisi (Kuwait), Ayatullah Ibrahim Jannati (Iran) and Dr Jibril Aminou (Nigeria).

The afternoon session speakers included Shaikh Habib Khojeh (Saudi Arabia), Maulana Ishaq Madani (Iran), Shaikh Abubakr Siddiq (Bangladesh), Wahba al-Zuhaili (Syria), Ayatullah Ahmed Asifi (Iran), Mufti Shafqu Omar Basic (Croatia), Imam Muhammad al-Asi (US), Allama Sajid Naqvi (Pakistan), Abdullah Azmi (India), Syed Munawwar Hassan (Pakistan), Dr M. Taufik Ashawi (Egypt), Shaikh Mahmoud Siyam (Palestine) and Dr Mustafa Ceric (Bosnia).

The first day's session ended after 11

pm. On the second day, the delegates were addressed by the Rahbar on the occasion of the birthday of the noble Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace. In addition to foreign guests hundreds of Iranians were also present.

When the formal session resumed in the late afternoon, Ayatullah Baqir al-Hakim addressed the issue of the crimes by the Iraqi regime against innocent people. Other speakers included Ustad Fadhil Noor (Malaysia), Ayatullah Amid Zanjani (Iran), Mufti Hamdi Yusuf (Belgrade), Omar Madani (Jordan), Nooru Musa Habib (Ethiopia), Shaikh Hussain Gabries (Lebanon), Shaikh Abdur Rahman Mullahzehi (Sistan-Baluchistan, Iran), Sister Safynaz Kazem (Egypt), Zafar Bangash (Canada), Professor Mukashifi Taha Qabashi (Sudan), Dr Abdul Aziz al-Tuwajjari (head of ISESCO), Dr Anissa Abdul-Fattah (US), Shaikh Nur Baba Nuri (Sulaimaniya, Iraq), Hasan Abdul Karim (Nigeria), Dr Amel al-Bayati (Iraq), Professor Vaezi (Afghanistan) and Shaikh Abdul Razak Rahbar (Turkmenstan).

Informal sessions that followed enabled participants to meet and greet each other and to exchange views. This year, there was a strong presence of Muslims from Europe, especially those parts which face a direct threat to their very survival like Bosnia, Kosova, Albania and Serbia. A plea by the Mufti of Belgrade to establish an Islamic army in defence of Muslim minorities, though appreciated, was considered impractical. Similarly calls by some delegates to establish an Islamic common market to enhance economic co-operation between Muslim countries were discussed but it was deemed that more time is required for this to materialize.

Delegates were urged to convey the message of unity to their respective communities and to eliminate misunderstandings between different *madhahibs* in Islam. It was also proposed that branches of *Majma-e Taqrib* be established in other parts of the world.



First Islamic Website on Imame Zamana (A. T. F. S.) is launched on the Internet

The first Islamic Website on Imam-e-Zamana (A.T.F.S.) has been launched on the Internet. The name of the Site is AL-MUNTAZAR Islamic Web Centre and can be accessed at <http://members.xoom.com/almuntazar>

The various topics included in the site include:

- 1) Articles on Imame Zamana (A.T.F.S.)
- 2) Duas & Ziyarat of Imame Zamana a.s. (including Ziyarat-e-Nahiya, Doa-E-Ahad, Doa-E-Faraj, etc.). All the duas are in arabic.
- 3) A very good section which was not earlier available on the net is of TABARRA (audio).
- 4) Islamic multimedia (including photos & Calligraphies).
- 5) Some important traditions from the Usool-E-Kafi book.
- 6) Islamic Wallpapers & Screen Savers.

Previously the site had some links which were not working but these have been subsequently corrected and the site has also been updated.

HOLY QUR'AN FROM UNDER THE ASHES

A copy of the Holy Qur'an which was believed to have been burnt in flames that destroyed a Mosque in the Philippines 22 years ago, was retrieved intact from under a layers of ashes.

According to a despatch carried by the German News Agency, DPA, a Filipino army commander was quoted as saying that the 400 year old copy of the Holy Qur'an was in the possession of a Mosque in a Muslim populated town near Manila, which caught fire and sustained heavy damages 22 years ago during clashes between Government forces and Muslims.

It said that three days after the discovery, army Major, Ramo Arseno found the Holy Qur'an unburnt and surprisingly unscathed.

UN to close for Eid

The Reuters News Service announced in the first week of April this year that the UN General Assembly had on March 30, 1998 "approved making two Muslim holidays mandatory for all staff." On these days, the United Nations buildings will be closed to the public and no United Nations meetings are expected to be held.

The document to have the two holidays recognized was proposed by about 100 non-aligned countries and China. During the committee session, Qatar's ambassador, Nasser Bin Hamad al-Khalifa, argued that more than a third of UN Members and more than a billion people worldwide subscribed to the tenets of Islam. The Syrian representative also pointed out that the UN recognizes other religious holidays.

Reuters reports that US Ambassador, Bill Richardson told the Assembly, "We remain deeply concerned that the current decision to make mandatory the observance of two religious holidays at all UN duty stations is not in conformity with the secular nature of the United Nations." He also opposed increasing the total number of holidays to 10 for UN staff, saying it did not bode well for the efficiency of the organization. "The perception alone of such a move is contrary to reform," he said.

More to get visas through US lottery scheme

The US lottery scheme for "Green Cards" for the year 2000 will be launched on Oct 1 to 31 this year. Officials said the total number of immigrants to be allowed in the US in year 2000 would be 50,000 — 5,000 less than the current number as a special quota of 5,000 has been set aside for Nicaraguans.

In 1997, about 3.4 million qualified entries were received during the one-month application period. The mail-in period will be from noon on Thursday, October 1, 1998, through noon on Saturday, October 31, 1998.

The countries likely to be declared ineligible for the lottery visas for the year 2000, are: China (mainland and Taiwan), India, Philippines, Vietnam, South Korea, Poland, UK and dependent territories, Canada, Mexico, Haiti, Jamaica, El Salvador, Colombia and Dominican Republic.

Officials said the criteria for eligibility of a country was the number of normal immigrants coming to the US from that country and those with 50,000 immigrants annually were barred from participating in the lottery.

The visas will be apportioned among six geographic regions. A greater number of visas will go to those regions that have lower immigration rates. There is a limit of 3,500 visas to any one country.

Officials said an entrant into the lottery must be a native of a qualifying country. He or she must also have either a high school education or its equivalent, or in the past five years should have two years of work experience in an occupation that requires at least two years of training or experience.

There is no initial application fee or special application form to enter. Applications must be typed or clearly printed in English on a sheet of plain paper and must include the applicant's full name; date and place of birth for both the applicant and for the spouse or any minor children who might also wish to immigrate; the applicant's mailing address and, if possible, a telephone number; the applicant's native country if it differs from the country of birth; a recent (preferably less than 6 months old) photograph (1-1/2 inches by 1-1/2 inches) of the principal applicant with the applicant's name printed across the back of the photograph.

The applications have to be mailed to a US address that will be provided.



ON MOON SIGHTING from the World Federation

The calculations for forecasting the sighting of the moon is a complex one and depends on the time of the year, time between moonset and sunset, age of moon at sunset, position on earth of the person watching, pollution in the atmosphere etc.

The World Federation has been calculating the time and place of moon sighting since 1987 and has then declared a new month AFTER the sighting has been confirmed.

The place of first possible sighting of the new moon is announced one month in advance on the following Internet address:

<http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/wfrescent.htm>

On this site, other interesting sites on the topic of moonsighting can also be accessed. For example, one can access the criteria used by the Saudis in declaring the new month on:

http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/saudi_date_system.htm

Another related article can be read on:

http://www.world-federation.org/moonsighting/allah_universe.htm

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid of standing still.

Examine what is said, not him who speaks.

Fear less, hope more,
Eat less, chew more,
whine less, breathe more,
talk less, say more,
hate less, love more,
and all good things will be yours.

He is rich who owes nothing.

A journey of a thousand miles
begins with a step....without the
first step nothing can be achieved.

Never write a letter when you are
angry

Canada Jafferries deprive New York of second consecutive volleyball win

Twelve teams from the cities around North America participated in the Easter Volleyball Tournament hosted successfully by Allentown Challengers in Allentown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The two day tournament featured five teams from Allentown, Challengers 'A', Challengers 'B', Allentown Union 'A', Allentown Union 'B', and Young Muslims and three teams from New York, Union Islanders 'A', Union Islanders 'B', and Union Islanders Juniors, a team comprising of young brave kids. Three teams came from Canada, namely United Stars, Jafferries Stars 'A' and Jafferries Stars 'B'.

One could feel the excitement, the anxiety and joy in the massive compound at all times. New faces were everywhere. The tournament saw the return of some old faces such as ever-popular Najaf Dhirani of New York Union Islanders 'A'. The weather was good, the food was excellent, the event challenging and the people very nice.

Orlando Union, which had hosted the first ever tournament in Orlando back in December, participated for the first time in Allentown. However, most of the players representing Orlando were not new to the surroundings. In fact, three players, Riyaz Jivraj, Raza Dhanji and Sajjad Dewji, were members of the victorious New York Union Islanders last Easter when they won the championship in New York. The captain of Orlando team was a veteran but one of the most popular players in North America, Shabbir (Johnny) Bhojani. The team also comprised of former secretary of New York Union Islanders, the always exciting, Mustafa Jacksi. Faisal Virjee played after thirteen years of absence while Sikander (Chiku) Kermali, who until last year played for the New York Union Islanders juniors, made his debut with the big boys! Abbas Virjee, Raza Meghji and Murtaza Rahim were over whelmed as they participated for the first time.

Last year's Easter champions, New York Union Islanders had different players from their last year's championship side. Gone were Riyaz Jivraj, Raza Dhanji, Sajjad Khimji and Sajjad Dewji. Their replacements were Najaf Dhirani, Mohamed Kermali and Shabbar Fazel. This team was as good as last year's. With Najaf Dhirani, Fayaz Dewji and Aliraza Manekia at the back and Sajjad Juma, Mohamedraza Kermali (Kabana), Shabbar Fazel and Fuad Jacksi in the front, this team was one of the favorites to win the tournament. Mohamed Kermali played in net center, a position currently dominated by youngsters. However, he proved that age has not caught up with him as he won the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award for the tournament.

Other favorites to win the tournament were Jafferries Stars 'A' who had G. G. Merali brothers, Muna and Mehboob; Jafferries Stars 'B' who had Hussein Rai and Hasnain G. G. Merali, Allentown Union, who had one of the top players in Mohamed Bhanji, and Allentown Challengers with Kausar and Sameer Hirji.

The two of the best and most exciting games of the tournament were the semi finals. New York Union Islanders 'A' beat Allentown Union while Jafferries Stars 'A' beat their younger team Jafferries Stars 'B' in the other semis. Both these games were long, exciting and tense. At one point some players also lost their cool and tempers flared due to the intensity of the game. However, no love was lost and the integrity of the game remained. In the finals, Jafferries Stars 'A' beat arch-rivals Union Islanders 'A' in a hard fought battle that avenged their last year's defeat.

The tournament was a great success once again and there were bonds of friendship as participants bode farewell after the presentation ceremony and dinner. In August, United Stars are expected to host their tournament in Toronto. And who knows maybe Union Sports Club will host their tournament later this year in the sunshine city of Orlando.



The Islamic Education Board (IEB) presents annual report at Toronto session

The Islamic Education Board (IEB) of the World Federation presented its report for the period October 1997 to May 1998 at the Jafari Islamic Centre, Toronto on Friday 19 June 1998.

The Board is made up of the following members:

Mulla Muhsin Jaffer	Chairman
Mustafa Jaffer	Resources Manager
Naushad Mehrali	Audio/Video Library
Semiz Seper Abdullah	Bosnia Desk
Ummulbanin Merali	Madrassa Resources

The report covered the following :

Dhakhir's Seminar

The first Dhakhir Seminar was held in Toronto by the Islamic Shia Ithna-asheri Jamaat of Toronto in Nov 1987. Since then several have been held in different regions to discuss issues related to those regions. The last seminar was held on 14 March, 1998 at Birmingham, UK. This seminar was chaired by Mulla Asgharali M M Jaffer.

After the delivery of two papers, one by Mulla Bashir Rahim and the other by Mustafa Jaffer, several issues were discussed and the following were proposed:

- * The Dhakhir should understand the importance of being consistent in words and deeds.
- * Young and upcoming Dhakirs to be encouraged.
- * Majlis recitation competition amongst the young ones be organised.
- * Training seminars in all fields related to Dhakirs be organised.
- * Every Dhakhir/Dhakira should write a brief report after a visit to any guest Jamaat which would be for future reference by Dhakirs/Dhakiras visiting the same Jamaat.
- * The difference between a Dhakhir and an Aalim should be understood and differentiated by the public.

* References in English, particularly relating to the tragedy of Karbala, should be made available for Dhakirs/Dhakiras

* Focus on contents of Majalis be shifted from less to more practical issues

The papers presented in the seminar can be seen on the World Federation Internet site. All the attending Dhakirs/Dhakiras were presented with a Dhakhir's Compendium containing the method of reciting Namaz-e-Mayyit, Talqeen and the Khutbas of Namaz-e-Juma. This was to help Dhakirs who assume the role of Resident Aalim in guest Jamaats.

Budding Dhakirs

To encourage the training of children to become Dhakirs, the Islamic Education Board has published 6 books containing a total of 78 short Majalis. These have been produced in draft form and a feed back is awaited from Jamaats for further development of the project.

Madrassa

In conjunction with the Council of European Jamaats, the IEB organised a meeting of Principals of all UK Madrasas on Sunday 26th April 1998 at the premises of IEB, Dar al Tableegh.

Principals and a few individuals whose contribution to the institution of Madrasa is renowned were invited. 15 people attended and the meeting was facilitated by Brother Yaseen Rahim.

The purpose of the meeting was to exchange ideas and experience, enable learning and networking and avoid duplication of efforts. The IEB also wanted to hear from the Principals what support they needed in their challenging task of making the institution successful.

The theme was 'Building on Excellence' and the first part of the meeting heard all the Principals sharing their

achievements. A list of 57 items, without repetitions, were recorded. After a break, the Principals got together to suggest that IEB support them in the following manner:

- * Prepare Information Packs on Sex Education; Madrasa Starter Pack; GCSE requirements in Arabic; Rights of students in secular Schools; Education for children with special needs;
- * Facilitate common examinations;
- * Train teachers on how to teach;
- * Maintain a database of teachers specialized in certain subjects/age range;
- * Commission people to write books for use as textbooks by Madaris;
- * Organise teachers' conferences;
- * Arrange for external facilitators to help individual Madaris achieve goals.

The above is but a brief list of the fields in which Principals of Madaris in UK need assistance. The Principals expressed their willingness to help in any way they can to fulfil these proposals. The IEB is meanwhile studying all the above proposals.

The Council of European Jamaats has carried out some work on the issue of common examinations. A paper had been presented to the Principals and together, the IEB and COEJ are now working to translate the recommendations presented in the paper so that they can be implemented.

It was also pointed out that Mustafa Jaffer who visited New York for the *Ashra* of Muharram met the Madrasa teachers there on 2 May, 1998. The meeting was chaired by Haiderbhai Ladha, the representative of IEB NASIMCO in New York. Among other things, the teachers voiced out the problems they face in New York. The main problem highlighted in the meeting was the lack of proper resources and

(continued on page 26)

(continued from page 25)

personnel in teaching. The IEB has promised to extend assistance.

Bosnia

During the course of the last six months, 2 issues of *Muslimanski Zivot*, a quarterly in Bosnian language published by the IEB was printed and distributed. Moreover 1000 copies of *Sahifa-e-Sajjadiyya* in Bosnian language purchased by the IEB from Bosnia were distributed selectively among the Bosnian Mumineen worldwide who are in contact with the IEB.

Haji Semiz Seper Abdullah, the brother in charge of the Bosnian desk, visited Bosnia during this period. He was well received by the indigenous Shias in Bosnia. His report can be found on the World Federation Internet site in which he has commented on the state of the local Shias. They need continuous support by way of Islamic literature in Bosnian language. The form of Islam practiced even by the Shias has been distorted with their cultural practices being misconstrued as Islamic ones. Haji Semiz is in contact with them and is arranging to send literature regularly.

Multifaith & Interfaith

The Islamic Education Board has always been a recognised participant in all Interfaith activities. Through the co-operation of Al Haj G.D. Musa of Gloucester and more recently, Brother Yaseen Rahim, the IEB has stretched its representation.

The University of Derby recently launched a Multifaith Net which is in actual fact, Interfaith network on cyberspace. The site is at <http://www.multifaithnet.org/> and the IEB has been appointed as a consultant of the Islamic faith in the network.

Brother Yaseen Rahim, on behalf of the IEB, attended a 'World of Faith Seminar' organised by Radio 2 and BBC World Service. In the seminar, Brother Yaseen was asked to facilitate a discussion group and submit recommendations from the group. The recommendations the group made were:

* To ensure that BBC Radio 2 and World Service both pick on the different books of faith in their programme;

* To ensure that speakers from the various faiths cover topics that contextualise the faith;

* To share how the faith is lived today in this country;

* To ensure the speakers from various faiths who speak on the faith are experts in the faith;

* To undertake voluntary media training for the different faiths.

The organisers requested for names from our community who would be willing to take part on the Radio 2 or World Service 'Pause for Thought' Programme.

Insight Magazine

The IEB has launched a new magazine, 'The Insight'. This is a forum of the IEB to facilitate discussion on issues that concern the community and Islamic education. The first issue was launched in Muharram 1419 and the theme of the issue was 'Dhakiri'. The magazine has been posted to all Jamaats worldwide and has also been sent to Madrasas and Dhakirs. Anybody interested in reading the magazine can access it from the World Federation Internet site.

The term 1997-2000

The present term of 1997-2000 has been dedicated for the Islamic Education Board by the Triennial Conference of October 1997. The IEB has published a booklet on this topic and distributed 4000 copies to households worldwide. The appeal is for the cost of a loaf of bread a day (Canadian dollars 180 per year) to be spent by each member of the Community on Tableegh work. It is hoped that Mumineen will respond to this appeal so that Tableegh work can be advanced further.

The address of the IEB is:

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Iran defends Press freedom

Iran's moderate government of President Mohammad Khatami is determined to protect the freedom of press and expression in the Islamic Republic, Culture Minister Ayatollah Mohajerani recently pledged.

He told a press conference during the Fifth Press Fair held in Tehran, "We defend all publications which perform within the law."

Since taking over as Culture Minister last August, Mohajerani has relaxed restrictions on the press and has allowed a record number of independent publications to run.

Hardline conservatives have however expressed fear that this liberty will undermine fundamental principles of the 1979 revolution and some groups have even attacked newspaper offices they deem anti-Islamic.

Khatami said that he was "worried about methods used by certain groups to defend Islam and the revolution."

He said, "with a negative conception of freedom and democracy, some people want to create an atmosphere of terror. But this will lead to separation of religion from society," he warned.

The press fair is part of the Government's efforts to promote the status of the print media in Iran. About 600 publications of all political tendencies took part in the six day Fair.

A total of 991 newspapers, magazines and periodicals are published in Iran and the deputy Culture Minister, Ahmad Burqani, a former journalist with the official IRNA news agency said that the Government sought to increase the number of publications.

He said, "UNESCO estimates that a country like ours should produce six million copies of newspapers a day, while we are only publishing around 2.4 million copies."

Undergraduate Sponsorship Programme bears fruits

Over 10,200 boys and girls are at present (figures based on May, 1998 data) being sponsored through schools by the Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme of the World Federation. The rate for sponsoring is £90; Can \$ 180; US \$ 144 per student every year.

The scheme has been in existence since 1981. As time goes by, more and more students are entering Universities. To date, 90 young men and women, Sadats and Non-sadats, have qualified and are now earning their own living, supporting their families, as well as serving their local communities. Another 207 are currently studying. The table below gives details of what these young men

and women have chosen to pursue to enhance their careers.

Until recently these students were supported from surplus funds of the Zainabiya scheme. As the numbers increased, the financial burden on Zainabiya became very onerous. Zainabiya therefore evolved and launched an Undergraduates Sponsorship Programme. Through this Program, for £500 (Can \$1000; US \$ 800), one can support a student in University for one academic year. One has a choice of committing support to a time between 2 and 4 years.

A glance at the table below shows that sponsors' support is bearing fruit.

Undergraduates and Graduates of ZCSS as at 31st May 1998

	Undergraduates (207)				Graduates (90)			
	Male	Female	Sadat	Non Sadat	Male	Female	Sadat	Non Sadat
Aalim	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Architecture	3	-	3	-	-	1	1	-
BSc/MSc	21	5	14	12	4	1	3	2
Chartered								
Accountancy	4	-	1	3	1	-	-	1
Commerce	12	2	4	10	7	3	5	5
Dentistry	4	-	2	2	-	-	-	-
Computer								
Science	15	5	6	14	17	2	7	12
Education (BEd.M Ed)								
PIIB	44	26	54	16	8	5	10	3
Engineering-								
Automobile	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Aviation	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Civil	1	1	-	2	9	1	2	7
Electrical	3	-	2	1	1	-	1	-
Electronics	5	1	2	4	5	3	6	2
Mechanical	18	-	13	5	6	-	4	2
Television	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Hotel								
Management	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Fashion	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Law	3	1	1	3	2	-	1	1
Medicine (MBBS)	13	7	14	6	4	7	6	5
Pharmacy	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	2
Physiotherapy	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Total	158	49	127	80	67	23	46	44
Total	207		207		90		90	

JIBA Ontario Chapter launches its own Web Page

JIBA's Ontario Chapter have now got their own Website on the Internet which is accessible on <http://members.xoom.com/JIBA>.

The site, designed by Shabbir Mohamed, contains a wealth of details about JIBA's Ontario Chapter. It is also planned to include the proposed JIBA newsletter on this site.

Iran protests to film

Iran filed a protest note with the French embassy in Teheran over an anti-Iran film aired on French television and demanded an official apology, the official Iranian News Agency *Irna* reported.

A statement by Iran's Islamic Human Rights Commission said, "the move was detrimental to the morale of the Iranian soccer players in the World Cup games, and we demand that France punishes the parties responsible for the episode" — and furthermore demanded an official apology to the Iranian athletes and nation over the incident.

"The emphasis given to sports internationally is an instrument of enhancing understanding and compassion in the world, but the behaviour by some countries contradicts their claim of subscribing to these slogans and this is totally unacceptable," the protest note said.

"The move constituted a violation of Iranians' rights besides (being an) insult to the sanctities of Muslims and the Iranian nation's traditions," the statement further said. It added that the movie, *Not without my daughter* presented a backward image of Teheran.

Irna further reported that the head of the Iranian Football Federation, Mohsen Safaie Farahani, and members of the Iranian national soccer team had earlier handed a protest note to the International Football Federation (FIFA) and the World Cup organising committee over the incident.

FIFA however responded by saying that the airing of the film was not within its scope of activities and that it did not have the authority to intervene in such issues.



Iran's World Cup Coach...and putting religion before sports

On Wednesday 17 June, 1998 during a press conference held at Yssingaux, Jalal Talebi, Iran's football team coach was the focus point of questions asked by American journalists. The questions mainly concerned his life in the USA.

Jalal Talebi said that he has three sons. The youngest, 17, is still at school. The eldest, 25, is a university art student. Both live with their mother in the USA. In this friendly atmosphere, Talebi said that he had a peaceful and comfortable life in California.

A Persian dinner specially organised for the Iranian delegation by M. Barot, Mayor of Yssingaux, prolonged the pleasant evening. He was accompanied by the Prefect and the under-Prefect of the Haute-Loire, as well as 700 other guests, mostly Iranian.

The players and their executives were able to taste a dozen specialities from their country prepared by an Iranian chef, with the help of three French cooks. These young sportsmen were able to relax in spite of the World Cup tension. As a gesture of appreciation, a national team shirt was given to the organisers of the evening, who had also arranged a projection of slides showing the main Iranian tourist sites with some traditional Iranian background music.

Iran's preparations took a unique turn when on one day, players held a three-hour religious mourning ceremony to mark the death of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Players beat their chests and wept in a ritual that ended around midnight, about the same time that some 200 English fans were causing trouble in Marseille. This was at a time many teams were getting a good night's sleep before their forthcoming games.

Meanwhile Iran's Coach, Talebi resigned from his post in mid August, 1998 saying that this was due to "family reasons." He will however continue to be the technical advisor of the team. He was a member of Iran's national

DATELINE IRAN

Soccer Diplomacy

The olive branch recently held out to Iran by US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright has come as a surprise and it is reasonable to assume there is more to it than meets the eye. Evidently, her remarks were timed to generate diplomatic synergies from the soccer world cup tie, the first major international sporting encounter between the two countries in years. Though Iran won the match, the US administration will not be too worried, since an Iranian defeat would not have made the task of repairing relations between the two countries any easier. Now that Teheran has scored a victory of immense symbolic value against the USA on the soccer field, it is believed that there will be room for magnanimity on the political front.

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's liberal outlook and his desire to normalise relations with the US are well known. Washington's recent decision exempting European companies dealing with Iran from the sanctions mandated by congressional legislation indicates that it is willing to recognise how counterproductive its approach of 'containment' has been. It is likely that the slight softening implicit in Albright's speech is a response to the new situation created in West Asia by South Asia's recent nuclearisation. The warm support Pakistan's nuclear tests commanded among the Arab states has alerted Washington. Though it is foolish to think of Chagai in terms of an 'Islamic Bomb', it is clear that Israel's nuclear dominance over the entire region has ended. Washington knows it can no longer act in the old way.

Given its suspicions about Iran's nuclear ambitions — and its failure to detect the preparations for the Indian tests — the Clinton administration is realising the folly of trying to isolate Iran. With Chinese long-range missiles in Saudi Arabia and Chinese-assisted nuclear weapons in Pakistan, Iran is bound to feel extremely vulnerable. Despite the Clinton administration's permissiveness towards Chinese proliferation activities, there are influential sections in the US foreign policy and intelligence establishment which consider China's policies to be aimed at countering Washington's influence in the West Asian and Gulf region. One way for the US to attenuate the impact of China's power projection is to normalise relations with Iran. Iran is the shortest export route for Central Asian energy resources and the US may now be inclined to reconsider whether the pipeline from Central Asia to the Sindh-Baluchistan coast is in its best interest, given the China-Pakistan nuclear axis.

Objectively speaking, a nuclear Pakistan backed by China poses more problems to the US than a nuclear India or an unfriendly Iran. No doubt in the short run the US may not want to annoy Pakistan since the latter can always threaten to proliferate nuclear weapons. However, in the longer run, the US will find it has no alternative but to cultivate ties with Iran. Certainly its attempt to isolate the country will prove counterproductive. The present divide between 'radicals' and 'moderates' — exemplified by the trial of Teheran's mayor and the impeachment of interior minister Abdollah Nouri — has more to do with internal liberalisation than external relations. If the US sheds its fundamentalist anti-Iran policy, major sections of Iranian society are likely to respond positively.

On the internet.....

Iran has for the first time put majlis, nawha ('nawhe'), taziya, history, etc. pertaining to the Kerbala Epic on the Net. It is accessible through Netiran.com and also directly through www.irna.com/ashura.

soccer team in the early 1960s and then coached club sides in Iran, the UAE and Singapore as well as the Indonesia Olympics team in 1996.

In the World Cup, Iran impressed many observers by losing narrowly 1-0 to Yugoslavia and 2-0 to Germany after they beat the United States 2-1.



Alarming disclosures from Pakistan

A Report released recently by the UN Drugs Control Programme about drug abuse in Pakistan makes alarming reading. It says that the use of heroin is increasing at a horrifying rate. According to the report, the number of drug and heroin addicts (1.5 million of the latter among 3.7 million total drug-abusers) is the highest in developing countries. These disclosures indeed are mortifying and would lead one, not unjustifiably though, to believe that narcotics control was not deemed a priority issue in Pakistan. In addition to thousands of lives, mostly young, being destroyed by drug addiction, the country's image and reputation is also being tarnished in foreign lands as a supplier of narcotic drugs. The number of Pakistanis languishing in jails in foreign countries or who have been executed for drug-related offences is by no means small.

The domestic aspect of the problem of drug menace is most disturbing. It is true that the country is not wanting in laws against drug-related offences. Yet the menace is spreading, testifying to the fact that laws are not being enforced strictly while publicity on the dangers of drug abuse are inadequate --- it is necessary to drum into the ears of the people the colossal damage drug abuse causes the nation. The most disturbing fact is that the majority of the country's addicts are under 35 years of age which should be a matter of serious concern to leaders and administrators.

Pakistan cannot let the youth who are the bloom of the population to wilt under the pernicious influence of narcotics. Not only there should be adequate number of rehabilitation centres for those who wish to come out of the evil influence, there should also be enough effort to dissuade people, especially those who are likely to be more prone to fall under the influence, through extensive and effective propaganda by all possible means. What is needed is a well thought out and well executed campaign to raise the people's awareness about the problem. To be effective and useful, such campaigns should be sustained and should be relentless. However as things stand now, one is pained to note the absence of even a sustained campaign on the audio-visual media against drugs abuse.

Book Review:

A Guide to Islamic Medical Ethics: Based on Authoritative Con- temporary Sources

Translator: Hamid Mavani

Price: CDN \$5 plus postage for
CANADA

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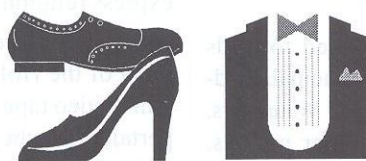
H3G 2M7

Canada

E-mail: hmavani@nls.net

This booklet is an English translation of a Persian monograph on Islamic medical ethics that was composed on the basis of the rulings (fatawa) of three eminent jurists, namely, Ayatullah Khumayni, Ayatullah Gulpaygani and Ayatullah Araki. It examines many issues that have been raised in the scientific community on account of rapid advancements in the field of bio-technology. Issues such as doctor-patient relationship, liability, professional fees, euthanasia, organ transplantation, sex change, abortion, surrogate motherhood, autopsy, experimentation, blood transfusion, and dentistry are among the many subjects dealt in the booklet. It is an authoritative guide and easy to read. It is useful even for those who are in the taqlid of other mujtahids as there is generally a consensus among the jurists on these issues.

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IEB and NASIMCO initiate unique lecture facilities for Madrasahs

The Islamic Education Board and NASIMCO have initiated a series of lectures and workshops targeted to all Madrasah personnel, youths and the community at large that can be held at any location.

This pilot project has been initiated after several requests and suggestions by members who have attended these courses and found them very useful. Those who have previously participated are convinced that the lectures and workshops should be made available because of the immense benefits they offer.

These Portable Courses will:

- * Make available to all Madaris the tremendous resources and information that exists within our communities.

- * Invest in substantive education for the teachers and youths of all our communities.

- * Facilitate and allow the Madrasah to benefit from the dedicated volunteers who can be used as resource persons and as consultants in their area(s) of expertise.

These experienced presenters have graciously agreed to conduct their popular lectures and workshops on a voluntary basis, upon request.

All the courses are geared towards Madrasah Personnel: Principals, Administrators, Teachers, and Volunteers. Some are also suitable for parents, youths and the community at large.

The Course titles include:

- *Comparative Religions
- *Teaching Techniques.
- *Crisis of Conscience
- *Electronic Medium as a Madrasah Resource
- *Teaching Qur'an

To organize Portable Courses at one's Madrasah or Jamaat, the following needs to be done:

1. Identify 2-3 possible dates for holding the Portable Course at your site. (Allow at least 4-8 weeks advance notice to facilitate adequate planning and

Shia Ithnaasheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles hosts Husein Day Program

from Yasmin Kermalli, Los Angeles

A Husein Day program was successfully organised by the Shia Ithnaasheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles at the Huseini Imambara on 13 June, 1998. In attendance were, the honorable Mayor of Pico Rivera, Mr. Garth Gardener, Hujjatul Islam Syed Mustafa Qazwini, resident Aalim and founder of the Islamic Center of Orange County, Brother Hassanain Rajabali, visiting speaker from New York, members of the Southern Baptist Church and several friends and neighbours from other religious backgrounds. The attendance was over 200 people and the program lasted about two hours, after which dinner was served on the lawn.

The program began with the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, Sura Al Fateha recited in Arabic by Naushad Khakoo and subsequently translated in English by Emil Ali. The next 20 minutes were spent viewing an edited version of the tape "Introduction to Islam".

Syed Mustafa Qazwini spoke for about 20 minutes on the significance of the sacrifice of Imam Husein and how that event, which occurred only 50 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., shaped the future of Islam. He talked about the freedom to practice religion, which we enjoy in America and the erosion of morality in our society.

Brother Hassanain also spoke for 20 minutes on the actions we Muslims should take in our daily lives. The message of Imam Husein a.s. should not be ignored and the essence of his martyrdom is the fact that when falsehood battles with truth, truth always prevails.

The Master of Ceremonies, Hasnain Khaku, then introduced the Mayor of Pico Rivera, Garth Gardener, who expressed his pleasure at attending our meeting and offered the services of his office at any time. He assured us that his office would always uphold the two guarantees in the American constitution, namely the separation of Church and State, and the freedom to express religion.

Iqbal Somji, President of Los Angeles Jamaat, presented the Mayor with a copy of the Holy Qur'an in English and a copy of the "Introduction to Islam" video tape. The audience was given about 10 minutes to ask questions pertaining to the topics of the day and the program concluded with the Ziyarat of the Prophet and his holy progeny recited in English by Alijawad Kermalli.

Dinner was served in the lawn at about 6:30 p.m. under the clear skies of Southern California. The members of our community had the opportunity to mingle and acquaint each other with our guests.

This is the first time in Los Angeles, where the Husein Day program was entirely in English. Over 100 invitations were delivered door to door to our non Muslim neighbours in the area surrounding our Imambara in Pico Rivera.

An essay competition based on the proceedings was organized by Dr. Murtadha Khakoo, Principal, Huseini Madrasah and Br. Khalil Dewji. The competition was divided into three age groups with prizes earmarked for the winners. Generally the Husein Day program was extremely successful and was funded in its entirety with the help of our community members.

- notifications).
2. Select the Course(s) of your choice.
3. Find out the availability of presenters and make the necessary arrangements.

The host community is expected to arrange for fares and accommodations of the presenter(s). The volunteering Presenters do not expect to be paid.



Zohra Habib, 15 wins 'Democracy' essay competition

Iranian team conquers Mount Everest...saves two lives

A 10th-grade Myrtle Beach High School, USA student, Zohra M. Habib, 15 won \$ 300 for an essay "My Voice in Democracy" which won first place in the Voice of Democracy contest sponsored by local veteran groups.

The daughter of Mazaher and Fatima Habib, Zohra plans to attend the University of South California and pursue a career in pharmacy.

In her essay she wrote:

"Democracy. What democracy? Democracy is the form of government in which a substantial portion of the citizenry directly or indirectly participate in ruling the state. The term democracy is derived from the Greek word *demos* (the people) and *kratia* (rule). The first forms of democratic government developed in the Greek city-state during the sixth century B.C. Democracy has attracted support from the time of ancient Greece until today because it represents an ideal justice as well as a form of government.

Being a US citizen and living in this great country, quite frankly, I have not given serious thought to the word "democracy" until now even though I live in the midst of the world's best democratic country and enjoy its fruits in every walk of my life. In this great country of ours, I have the complete freedom to choose where I live, what school I wish to attend, what friends I want, what clothes I want to wear, what kind of books I want to read, who I want to vote for (that is when I am eligible to vote) and above all, what I want to be when I grow up. These are some of the fruits of democracy I enjoy and whose provisions are guaranteed and safeguarded by our Constitution and included in our famous "Bill of Rights."

On the other hand, this word democracy and its benefits are either unknown or a complete anathema to citizens in those dictatorial, military or communist regimes like Zaire, Algeria, North Korea and many others. How very fortunate we are to be living in this country.

I have friends and relatives living in different parts of the world like Africa, Latin America and South East Asia where in many countries the only "rights" the citizens have are "no rights at all." Might is right and numerous volumes of citizens are made to succumb to the dictators who kill and loot their country's wealth and heritage for personal gain. Contemporary history has a record of brutal dictators like Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Mobutu and Saddam Hussein.

It is inconceivable to imagine how we in the western hemisphere, in countries like the United States, Canada, England, Germany and Japan, live in such abundance of freedom and economic splendour while our brothers and sisters exist in such "brutal and squalid conditions." Like when we go to school, a nutritious lunch is given to the children while the children from third world countries are roaming the streets looking in garbage cans for food to eat. Hearing, reading and seeing tales of human atrocities committed on fellow human beings in places like Bosnia, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, Cambodia and other places makes it even more imperative that the civilised democratic nations utilise all their combined might, especially their economic might, to ensure that certain freedoms such as human rights must be observed.

Free and fair elections must be held and finally the light of freedom and democracy should be spread all over the world. It is not impossible to achieve this goal. Single voices and collective aspirations like those of Nelson Mandela proved this possibility in South Africa.

Wouldn't it be a much better place if the sun were to rise and shine on happy smiling faces of children rather than on sad tear-stained ones? It can be achieved ---through the power of democracy. Democracy is not a destination, it is a journey; an all humans have a right to travel this journey."

On June 16, 1998 President Mohammad Khatami of Iran honoured a 17-man Iranian team which reached the world's highest summit, Mount Everest on May 20 this year.

In a meeting with the Board of Directors of the Iranian Mountaineering Federation and members of the team who conquered the 8,848 metre high peak, President Khatami said that paying due attention to sports is the requirement of a developed community.

He said the government has plans to promote sports in various ways so as to attract and encourage youths who have a good potential to enhance their high talents. He said that those who stepped on to the world's highest peak were symbols of powerful men as well as the symbol of superiority of man to nature.

He added, "*the human power which is superior to that of mountains should be put at the service of humanity. For us, the Muslims, the power should be employed for submission to the Almighty God and for freedom in the face of powers other than God.*"

The President also thanked the Iranian climbers for saving the lives of two other mountaineers who they found stranded on the mountain.

Referring to Iran's role in the World Cup in France, President Khatami said, "*for us, victory or failure is normal. The real victory is that the man (sportsmen) do their best.*"

No revenge is more honourable than the one not taken.

Extravagance is a waste --- a man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two watches is never exactly sure.

Avoid the evil and the sinful and vices will then avoid you.

Listen or your tongue will keep you deaf!

AND GUYANA

A Report from the Secretary of Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas

"This year Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas participated in Muharram Commemoration in Trinidad and Guyana from 1 May to 15 May, 1998. This the fifth year that BMMA participated. Alhamdulillah all went well. Here are the details.

I arrived in Trinidad on May 2. The *Azadari* of Aba Abdillahlil Husayn (a.s.) has already started at our center in Port of Spain. Unfortunately BMMA could not get a suitable lecturer willing to go to Trinidad this time. I continued with the majlises at the center and also visited the various *chowks* where the *tazias* are constructed. I could not attend to all the *chowks* at the same time and therefore had to restrict my talks to a couple of them. Br. Gulam Abbas Jaffer joined me from Orlando.

On Monday morning I was accompanied by Br. Luqman from Baratara mosque at 6.00 a.m. to participate in a morning edition television program which was aired live. This was a very interesting half an hour program and by the Grace of Almighty Allah we managed to cover a lot of ground in educating the public of Trinidad and Tobago on the significance of *Azadari* and the Hosay Procession in St. James in Trinidad. Another TV program was scheduled at 11.00 a.m. This time I was accompanied by the Emir of Imame Zamana Mission, Br. Karim Ebrahim. This was a live program also and our segment was for seven minutes only. We however took advantage of this situation in promoting the school of Ahlul bayt.

The procession in St. James began on Tuesday night. It began with a Flag Night for Hazrat Abbas (a.s.). The small Hosay Procession came out on Wednesday night and the big Hosay Procession, known as *Qatal Ki Raat* was on Thursday night. These events started with prayers at around 7.30 p.m. in respective *chowks* conducted by Sunni mullahs followed by a ten minute talk on the significance of these programs by a representative of BMMA. Niyaz was served (usually was *seero Federation Samachar*

which they call '*malida*') and at around 11.00 p.m. the *tazia* procession came out from the *chowks* on the western main road in St. James. The procession continued till around 3.00 a.m. when the *tazias* returned to their respective *chowks*. 200 books on Imam Hassan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.), 100 books on Islam and 10,000 flyers were distributed by BMMA during these processions.

The majlises and *Azadari* at the center continued every night and on Thursday, the day of Ashura, we performed the aamal of Aashura at the center, participated in an afternoon procession in San Juan which was organized by our brothers in Baratara, returned to the center for maghribain prayers, recited *Dua Kumail* and then proceeded to St. James to participate in the procession with the *tazia* by the St. James and Cocorite Hosay Association. The procession from the center to St. James commenced at 9.00 p.m. This procession arrived at St. James by 9.45 p.m. and we congregated at a Square which was made available to us thanks to the efforts of Br. Hamdu Emamali, the local representative of BMMA in Trinidad and Tobago. This was turning point in the history of Trinidad with Shias clad in black chanting '*Ya Husayn, Ya Husayn*' and doing *maatam* at the Square. Then Br. Emamali gave a speech followed by Br. Luqman and finally by Br. Karim Ebrahim. Ziyarat was recited Br. Luqman and then food was served to the participants. For the first time in the history of St. James, *sharbat* was served to the public. By 11.00 p.m. this program was over and at that point and time the *tazias* with drums poured out on the street. This event was hosted and financed entirely by Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas.

On Friday morning, Br. Gulam Abbas and I drove to Santa Cruz to the School for the Blind in Trinidad. This was a milestone achieved by BMMA on the humanitarian agenda. Br. Gulam Abbas Jaffer donated the much needed Braille Paper to the school on behalf of BMMA. This gift was received by Miss. Borneo, the CEO of the Trinidad

Association for the Blind. BMMA has promised the school to upgrade their computer equipment and supply them with latest Braille machines for the blind children. BMMA will also supply the Holy Qur'an and other literature in Braille to the school. Donations are welcome for this purpose.

After Jumaa prayers, *sharbat* was served to the public in the vicinity of the center. Br. Gulam Abbas and I then proceeded to a place called Karbala where the *Tazias* and the *moons* had gathered to conduct afternoon prayers there. Again history was made. For the first time in the history of Trinidad, prayers were conducted by a foreigner, a representative of BMMA. This time the prayer was not on the format of *Janaza* prayers as was previously conducted. It was a simple recitation of the Holy Qur'an and duas for and on behalf of the participants. The whole process was very well received and appreciated by the local Shias and was televised in the evening on a program called 'Panorama'

Majlises were held at the center in the evening of Saturday and Sunday. The *chowks* held the '*tija*' majlis on Sunday afternoon. I could attend only two *chowks*. Br. Gulam left for George town, Guyana and was scheduled to wait for me there. BMMA donated Islamic calendars, *turbas*, *tasbeehs* and prayer mats to the center. All the *niyaz* for the 12 days of Muharram and other expenses were financed by BMMA. It was noted that computer equipment in the center needs upgrading.

I arrived in Georgetown, Guyana on Monday afternoon and was received at the airport by Br. Muhammad Zanjibari from Linden. I stayed the night in Linden where Br. Zanjibari is running a madrasah called Madrasah AsSadiq under the auspices of Tablighate Madaris. BMMA presented Islamic Calendars and other books to Br. Zanjibari. His request for other books will also be met. Br. Gulam Abbas and I proceeded to Berbice on Tuesday afternoon and visited Br. Latif Ali, the President of Pioneer Shia Islamic Association of Guyana at East Kanje where he is running a madrasah which is financed completely by BMMA. Maghribain prayers are held daily and all the *wafats* and birthdays and other

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Shia events are also conducted. BMMA hosted one *niyaz* and presented calendars and other literature including *turba* and *tasbeeh*. A computer donated to Pioneer Shia Islamic Organization of Guyana by BMMA was seen to require upgrading.

We were fortunate to be introduced to an organization called Guyana Sad'r Islamic Anjuman who are sympathetic to Shias and deadly against the Wahabbis. This organization gets food and other gifts from the USA Embassy in Guyana for distribution to the needy and has gladly agreed to share these with us. BMMA has coordinated the pick up of the food for onward delivery to Linden and Berbice where they will be distributed to the needy. BMMA is exploring other humanitarian avenues to help the needy in Guyana. Another milestone was thus achieved by BMMA.

The present population of Shias in Trinidad is approximately 350. This includes the Indian and African ethnic Trinidadians. Our center is flourishing. There is still some work to be done. The shops have to be rented to responsible persons so that the income generated could offset the very high utility bills. The vocational training center needs to be equipped and furnished. So is the case with the Walk in Clinic. Informal meetings have been made with various ministry officials including the Minister of Education.

With financial help and assistance BMMA will be able to achieve its targets Inshallah. Guyana is also in desperate need of a Shia center. There are more mosques per capita in Guyana than anywhere in the world. This is in the Guinness book of records but sadly not a single mosque is Shi'ite. The Wahabbis have proliferated and millions of dollars are pouring from Saudi Arabia. Their main theme is to stop the commemoration of Prophet's Birthday and denigration and ostracizing the Shias. The former has earned them the wrath of the majority of Sunni brothers and the latter has earned sympathy for our brothers and sisters. BMMA wants

Khomeini's daughter blames media for undermining the ideal role of Muslim women

A two-day seminar held in Mumbai, India by the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai to commemorate the 9th death anniversary of legendary Iranian revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had a distinguished keynote speaker, his youngest daughter.

Clad in a stark black silk *chador* and flaunting a chunky gold ring on the middle finger of her left hand, 66 year-old Khanum Farideh Mostafavi presented a paper on *The Role of Khomeini in Womens' Activities in Society*. In her presentation, translated from original Persian into English for the local audience, Mostafavi extolled her father's appreciation of the crucial role played by women in Iran's Islamic revolution.

Later, this daughter of Khomeini, who had led the 1979 Islamic Revolution that overthrew the Shah of Iran, spoke to the Mumbai press through an interpreter at the Y.B. Chavan Centre.

Recalling her childhood, Mostafavi said, "I was born in Qum, a small town in central Iran not far from Teheran. Ours was a compact family of five children, two sons and three daughters all deeply devoted to Islam. Our father was a warm and sincere man who practised his religious principles with zeal, but he never tried to impose his views on us. As children, we held him in high esteem."

While highlighting the dignity and respect bestowed on women by Islam, she lashed out at the Western media for what she charged was their anti-Islamic stance. "The Western media's propaganda against Islam betrays their hatred for the religion," she fumed.

She exalted Islam's liberal and progressive role in Muslim women's lives, claiming that Iranian women are far more advanced, better educated and dedicated to their families than their counterparts in other Islamic countries. "At the time of marriages, they can lay down certain conditions and they have a legal right to divorce," she stated.

She credited the enhanced status of Iranian women to her late father. "He did not believe in the exploitation of women and treated them with dignity. As a result of his efforts, the women in my country are today as free as men and can make great strides in their respective careers," she observed.

Asked what attributes would define an ideal woman, she retorted, "One who follows her religion with utmost devotion, is highly educated, an exemplary mother and is prepared to go even to the battlefield." With a Ph.D. in Theology and Islamic Studies and being a lecturer on this subject at Teheran University, Mostafavi is conversant in only the Persian (Farsi) language. She has one daughter. At her brief encounter with the press, she exposed only her face.

to capitalize this situation and proliferate the teachings of Ahlulbayt through the *salaam* and *ta'azeem* of Prophet Muhammad(s.a.w.) YOU CAN HELP BMMA HELP OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN GUYANA AND FLY THE FLAG OF PANJATAN THERE. For more information please contact

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Minnesota Retreat a success

The US Memorial Day weekend brought our community members from across North America to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Anjumane-e-Asghari Islamic Center was the host Jamaat for the Curriculum Development Process (CDP) Retreat held from Friday, 22 May to Monday, 25 May, 1998. Of the 65 participants, 48 delegates were from out of town representing 12 different Madaris.

The Retreat was sponsored by IEB-Nasimco and co-sponsored by the Africa Federation and the Council of European Jamaats which also sent a representative. The Retreat was designed to achieve three objectives:

- Elicit input for the Curriculum Development Process (CDP).
- Facilitate networking amongst various Madaris.
- Give glimpses of available resources that can be of use readily by the Madaris

The Retreat revealed the Minnesota Jamaat's skill and professionalism in meticulous planning. The set up and organization were excellent. What was heart warming was that each member of the community was involved and volunteered to do whatever it took, from transporting guests to and fro, preparing and serving snacks and meals, general arrangements, to audio visual equipment set up, in making the Retreat a success. The local cost of the Retreat was borne by the members of the Minnesota Jamaat with their amazing individual contributions of time, effort, and materials. Even the sightseeing tour was sponsored fully by a local community member. All of these were achieved under the seasoned leadership and wise counsel of the President of Anjumane-e-Asghari, Brother Hussein Walji, his Executive Committee, and the commitment, hard work and professional executional abilities of Brother Shabbir Karim and his dedicated team of volunteers.

The Saturday morning session started with an inspiring welcoming remarks from the host Jamaat President, Brother

Hussein Walji, who focused on the need to collectively invest in the well being of our future generation. He reiterated the commitment of his Executive Committee and the community members to the cause of our children, of which the excellent facilities of Anjuman-e-Asghari was a testimony. He welcomed the guests to enjoy the Minnesota Jamaat's hospitality and wished the participants a successful Retreat.

Dr. Liyakatali Takim, Chairman of IEB-Nasimco, followed by inviting the participants not only to fully engage in the CDP but also to provide their continued support to all the projects that IEB-Nasimco has undertaken. He mentioned that the curriculum had been raised as the most pressing issue during his recent visits to all the Nasimco member Jamaat Madaris in North America. Hence, the April Conference in Toronto and this Retreat in Minneapolis focused on the Curriculum Development Process to address some of the issues that were raised.

Dr. Bashir Datoof of Princeton, New Jersey gave an overview of the proceedings. He went on to explain the suggested ten steps in the Curriculum Development Process. To make the process manageable, the initial focus was on two courses, Akhlaq (ethics) and Tarikh (history). The idea is to take the process to the point where the broad outline of the courses are formulated but details may be filled in at a later date. The April Conference in Toronto had done some of the groundwork. The two Saturday workshops were designed to elicit input for the conceptual framework for Akhlaq and Tarikh, while the four Sunday workshops sought input to identify themes and sub-themes that should be folded into the framework. The participants provided a wealth of information and ideas during the workshops. This was truly an attestation to the commitment, caliber and resourcefulness of the participants in these workshops.

The presentations on Saturday afternoon focused on Madrasah Resources. The sessions were very educational and

were designed to give relevant and useful information that the participants could apply to their own Madrasah immediately.

Shaykh Hasnain Kassamali of Vancouver gave an overview of the available texts and distributed handouts. While he encouraged the use of new texts, he cautioned against indiscriminate use of the new texts without adequate review.

Sister Sakina Dewji of Toronto held a session on classroom management. She stressed the positive approach to prevention and intervention of undesirable behavior. She had a very entertaining presentation where she also redefined "give me five" as a call to summon all five senses of students in order to better engage them in the classroom.

Brother Shabbir Yusufali of Minneapolis gave a glimpse of available electronic resources on the Internet, from programs teaching Arabic, to those teaching Quranic recitation and Tajweed. He also made an impressive multimedia lesson presentation on the ahkam of the Pilgrimage of Hajj.

The method of efficiently organizing a library was presented by Sister Kaniz Sumar of Toronto. She presented elements necessary to set up a good library, including issues of physical set up, classification, operating procedures and rules and regulations. She is also working to identify software to automate library functions. Once tested, she plans to make the findings available to all those interested. Sister Sumar has been involved with the Jafferi Islamic Center Library in Toronto since its inception.

The keynote speaker on Saturday night, Dr. Muhsin Alidina of New York, made a brilliant presentation that was enlightening, witty, and at the same time challenged all to think afresh and consider a paradigm shift. After elaborating on various terminology and processes of curriculum versus syllabus development, he went on to tease the audience

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with his contention that we should be bold enough to look at some successful models of secular and other religious education and selectively adopt some of the relevant methodologies and tools in our Madaris. His talk was as enjoyable and educational as it was thought provoking.

The Council of European Jamaat's representative, Sister Marziya Panju, a teacher by profession in England, brought a fresh perspective on considering the learner in the process of curriculum development. Her perspective emphasized the latent desire in children to learn, stressing that teachers should educate with a view to kindle the fire of learning in our children rather than forcefully try to instill it. This process requires that we listen and hear the children more intently in order to understand their current position, thus enabling us to take them to where we want them to be emotionally and intellectually.

Sunday morning was spent in the workshop, where the participants spoke on the themes and sub-themes for Akhlaq and Tarikh frameworks that had been discussed the previous day. The workshops were moderated by Shaykh Hasnain Kassamali, Brother Hamid Mavani of Akron (Ohio), Dr. Muhsin Alidina and Dr. Bashir Dato. The afternoon saw the high spirited delegates embark on a sightseeing tour of the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The tour was arranged and sponsored entirely by the Minnesota Jamaat. It was a time for socializing and networking, a relaxed and fun afternoon.

The Sunday night program was open to the entire community and commenced with the recognition of Brother Hussein Walji, President of Minnesota Jamaat. Dr. Ansar Ahmed, a member of the Northwest and Hennepin County Board, presented Brother Hussein Walji with a Social Service Award from the Northwest and Hennepin counties, for his outstanding services to the community. This award had been officially presented to Brother Hussein Walji at the County Council Chambers two days earlier.

Brother Mujtaba Dato of Los Angeles, who had in the last two days very ably chaired the sessions, was as usual

eloquent as Master of Ceremonies. He drew the analogy of the Curriculum Development Process to that of a farmer replanting the same seeds seasonally, but using new methodologies of weather condition tracking and reporting, innovative planting tools and techniques, and generally modern information to reap improved and healthier crop and yield --- and so it is with our children. We want to sow the same seeds in them to grow into strong Shia Islamic identities, using an updated curriculum that will help them attain the characteristics enumerated in "The Target Profile of a Madrasah Graduate", which was previously defined and published by IEB-Nasimco. The community in Minnesota was then apprised of proceedings of the prior two days by Dr. Bashir Dato.

Brother Sadik Alloo of Los Angeles, the Retreat Coordinator, made the closing remarks where he thanked the Minnesota Jamaat, and the task force members, Shauzab Dinani, Mumtaz Ladak, Batul Najfi, Shabbir Karim, Sakina Dewji, Seyeda Dato and Nisar Sheraly. Dr. Takim's leadership and commitment was also applauded. And the support of the Nasimco Executive Committee was obvious with the presence of Brother Gulam Sajan (President), Brother Gulamabbas Khakoo (Vice President), and Brother Asghar Naqvi (Secretary) at the Retreat. The participants and all those who contributed their time and efforts made this Retreat a reality and a very successful one. Alloo also made the call to action and involvement by all the community members who have the ability and the desire to make a difference in the lives of our children.

The Retreat was a resounding success. All those who attended felt that they had contributed and put their signatures to the Curriculum Development Process. They learnt from the speakers and the various presentations. They networked, met old friends and made new friendships. The Minnesota community left a lasting impression of their professionalism and hospitality. All the objectives set at the outset for the Retreat were met with a sense of satisfaction and most participants wished that the Retreat could have been longer, a sign that they enjoyed themselves. Now we must all play our part.

View on a Mixed Seminar on Shafa'a

by a correspondent

In June, 1998 a seminar on Shafa'a was held at the Khoja community centre in Milton Keynes. The emphasis was solely on obtaining Islamic knowledge and pooling together of ideas and thoughts. I do not wish to dwell on the content of the seminar but on the format.

It was a mixed gathering. On one side of the hall sat the women and on the other the men - there was no partition. There were youth speakers both boys and girls from different communities speaking on the subject. It was a small gathering and informal but the atmosphere was different to any seminar I have ever been to in terms that it was very relaxed and one was never afraid to view one's opinion.

After Shafa'a, there was a discussion on ideas that could be implemented in order to improve the situation of not only Muslim youths but the whole community in general. It was the first time I saw so many youths from different communities sharing what they had in common.

I really enjoyed the seminar - it was of immense educational interest, it was current, there was respect and it was all within the regulations of Islam. To me, it was a step in the right direction. The location was good, the speakers were good, the contributors were good, the hospitality was good and so was the food!

I suppose this was an example where mixed gatherings actually worked. As I think of it now, it was like a talk show on television. We were seated on chairs and the chairman kept running around with a portable microphone in his hand so that we could give our opinions.

The opportunity to meet Muslims from other communities was also helpful and encouraging. It was a forum where we all shared something in common. What did however upset me at the end was when long speeches were made. The contents of the speeches could easily have been shortened. I hope that in future a forum where Muslim youths from different communities can meet is once again organized; this will bring scattered Muslims closer.



World Federation hosts 3rd Executive Council Meeting at Toronto

The Community of Toronto welcomed Councillors attending the Executive Council of the World Federation by responding in good numbers to attend the "World Federation evening" on Friday 19 June 1998 organised by the Secretariat of the World Federation.

Members of Toronto Jamat saw an exhibition display on the various activities of the World Federation, appreciated the insight given on the activities and working of the World Federation and then heard the keynote address from the President of the World Federation Alhaj Mulla Asgharali M M Jaffer.

In his address, the President emphasised that the breadth of activities undertaken by the World Federation can only be undertaken by a young team at the Secretariat and not by one person. The virtue of leadership, he proposed, lies in building confidence and consensus within the team.

The next day, the host - Islamic Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat of Toronto made arrangements for the Councillors to visit 9000 Bathurst, an expansive 28 acre site where an impressive Al Sadiq Primary School is based. The Councillors were moved by the efforts put in by all concerned in making sure that the school instils Islamic etiquette in our children. The Councillors learned that establishing a school and then running it is a difficult task but it is not impossible when the Community as a whole is moved to appreciate the immense benefit that is accruing to children of the Community.

The Third Meeting of the Executive Council was held on Saturday 20 June, 1998 in the Jaffery Islamic Centre, Bayview where over 200 Councillors, Invitees and Observers attended. Among the attendees were Haji Gulamabbas Sajan - President of Nasimco, Haji Nazir Gulamhussein - President of Toronto Jamaat, Haji Mohamed Jaffer Hasham, Haji Aliraza Rajani, all from Canada. Haji Shakir Mukhi, President of New York Jamat,

Haji Habib M Habib, all from the United States of America. Haji Aliraza Lakhani from Karachi represented the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamat of Karachi. Many Councillors representing member Jamats of Europe were also present. A special visitor to the meeting was the Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Mr Tony Valerie.

Attendees heard the welcome address from the President of Toronto Jamaat followed by the address from the President of Nasimco. The President of the World Federation then reviewed the immediate past quarter.

Reflecting on the international scene, he informed the attentive audience of the calamities that befell Shia Muslims in Pakistan, earthquake victims in Iran and Afghanistan and affliction within our Community due to cyclone in Western Gujarat. He said the World Federation raised its voice against injustices and provided assistance to victims of natural disasters wherever it could.

Massacres of Muslims in Pakistan has been of concern. He said that the World Federation Secretariat wrote to the Pakistan Embassy demanding that the Government of Pakistan take stern measures against the perpetrators and create conditions to remove sectarian killings.

He said that the World Federation provided financial relief to earthquake victims of Iran and Afghanistan and sent Indian Rupees 325,000 for immediate assistance for members of our Community afflicted by the cyclone in Jamnagar, Lalpur, Malia, Miana, Nawlakhi and Mandvi.

In Gujarat, after a 7 year lapse, he said that the World Federation revived the water programme whereby bore wells are dug in suitable places to benefit our and other communities. The President reported that the Water Purification Project in Alipur had been completed. This provides clean water to our Communities and as a result many diseases

previously transmitted from contaminated water will be eradicated.

Finally, the President made an appeal for Islamic Education Board programmes. He reminded the Council that 1997-2000 has been designated as a term for Islamic Education Board. Many projects including publications of books, distribution of books, providing education resources to Madressas, Schools and Universities are undertaken at considerable financial cost. This requires constant funding and he requested the Councillors to make an appeal in their own Community for financial contributions. It was stipulated that £90 per year or 25 pence a day from every individual of our Community would go a long way in ensuring that this work can continue unhindered.

The President of Nasimco, Haji Gulamabbas Sajan, led the delegation of NASIMCO Office Bearers at the Executive Council meeting.

Accounts

The Honorary Treasurer, Haji Ahmed Daya presented the accounts of the period 1 January 1998 to 30 April 1998. Queries were ably dealt with by him and to the satisfaction of the Councillors and Invitees present in the meeting.

Medical Advisory Board

The Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board, Dr Mohamed Taki Walji emphasised the value of screening for our Communities in North America, particularly for Thallasaemia as cousin marriages are common throughout the Community. He informed the Council that in this term, the MAB will be expanding on services already being carried out, so as to benefit the Community even more.

Islamic Education Board

Haji Mustafa Jaffer of IEB informed the Council that IEB will soon embark upon a programme of short Islamic Course for pre-University students. Other activities in the term will include widening of IEB services on the Internet

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and making available Islamic audio cassettes in Bosnian languages for Bosnian tabligh.

Career Education Training Advisory Board

The Chairman of CETAB, Dr Ahmed Hassam impressed upon the Council that member Jamats and Organisations must promote higher education within the Community, particularly for girls. He assured the Council that career guidance will continue for students so that they can choose the right career.

He further emphasised that our aim must also be to improve the standard of education provided within our Community educational establishments in Toronto, London, Karachi and East Africa.

Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme

The Chairman of Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme, Haji Mohamed Visram elaborated on the need to expand the graduate education scheme which was recently launched. He informed the Council that his team is looking into improving the existing schools built by the World Federation and whether a fee paying school can be a viable proposition in parts of India.

External Liaison Desk

Brother Yasin Rahim of External Liaison Desk presented a paper on Inter-faith - An action plan for implementation. The paper if acted upon can go some way towards creating a framework in which we as Muslim minority group in Europe, Canada and United States are able to interact with the wider society.

Karachi

The Council heard Haji Aliraza Lakhani elaborating upon the activities of Karachi Jamat. The Jamat, he said, was registered in 1892 and presently has an infrastructure to cater for the needs of its members in social welfare, health, education and shelter. More needs to be done to economically uplift many members of the Community in Karachi and one way to assist is for

Toronto's Shazia wins two DECA Medals

Shazia Damji of Toronto clinched two medals in the International Distributed Education Clubs of America (DECA) Competition held in April, 1998 in Denver, Colorado.

DECA is a Club for students interested in business studies. To promote students' interest in business studies and general career skills, DECA organises an annual International Competition in oral and written business skills.

Shazia was the Co-Chairman of the Richmond Hill High School DECA Chapter. To qualify for the Colorado event she obtained first place overall in her category in the Ontario Provincial competition beating several hundred other students and was also first in the regional written competition held prior to this.

With these achievements she qualified to join the Ontario delegation for the finals held in Denver, Colorado where several thousand students from five different countries and many different States within the US participated.

The competition was stiff and Shazia was placed in the 'top twenty' overall position in her category and also achieved a 'top ten' ranking for one of the oral competitions, both of which enabled her to qualify for the final round.

For these achievements she was awarded two medals, being among a few other Canadian students who also obtained medals.

Canada experiences difficult times

The Economy of Canada has again slackened and the Canadian Dollar has plunged to its all time low of below US\$0.64. Events in Asia and in Russia have contributed to this downward trend. Jobs are still scarce to find and business experiences tough competition making it hard to survive. Immigrants are advised to be cautious and not to plunge into business ventures before proper consultation, study and advice. There is steady flow of our brothers from Arab countries and East Africa and many have lost their capital in a hurry to buy or set up business. Even schooling and higher education require proper guidance to enable selection of the best institutes with due consideration of travel time. Our local Jamaat and Nasimco are open for advice.

Toronto's Ever Young Seniors....

Toronto's Jaffery Seniors Group, in summer, held one program every two weeks. They went out to places and even took a boat ride on the lake. There was also a trip to Niagara Falls to witness His Creation and experience spirituality. Community seniors enjoy such programmes thoroughly and it is thus planned to stretch these to the autumn season.

businessmen of the Community to invest in Pakistan.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the host Jamat - Islamic Ithnaasheri Jamaat of Toronto.

The next meeting will be held in Peterborough, United Kingdom on 10 October 1998.

Publications

Four publications were distributed in Toronto. Copies were also posted to all Jamaats around the world. Further copies can be ordered from the World Federation Secretariat.

The list of books and cassettes available from IEB include:

Our Health in Our Hands - a collection of 9 Health Education Leaflets produced by MAB for our community

Are They Medically Compatible for Marriage? - Proceedings of a Seminar on community health awareness organised by Hyderi Health Sub-committee

Working together at the cost of a loaf of Bread - Report of the World Federation activities for the period October 1997 - May 1998.

TURNING THE PROPHET'S WORDS INTO PROFITS

Islamic banking, with its strict codes, is growing fast. Last year, Citibank asked the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to approve an unusual type of trade-financing deal that charged no interest and was governed by Islamic principles. The New York Bank promptly gave its blessing. That it did was a testament to the growing role of Islamic banking in mainstream global finance. Indeed, in little more than two decades, Islamic banking has gone from nowhere to the big time, attracting major Western lenders, as well as some 200 players around the Muslim world.

Banks that follow sharia, or Islamic law, boasted assets totalling \$137 billion in 1996, a year in which they earned \$1.7 billion, says Samir Abed Shaikh, who is general secretary of the International Association of Islamic Banks in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Most of the leading Islamic banks are located in the Persian Gulf region, where Al Rajhi Banking & Investment Corp. in Saudi Arabia tops the list with assets totalling \$9 billion. The Islamic banking industry's assets have been growing at an annual clip of 15% for the past decade. "The progress has been fantastic," says Henry Azzam, chief economist of the National Commercial Bank of Saudi Arabia.

NO USURY. In addition to banning interest as a form of usury, Islamic banks follow a host of strict rules prohibiting them from earning money from activities that Muslims regard as unclean. The strict code hasn't stopped Western bankers from entering the fray. Citicorp, for example, set up Citi Islamic Investment Bank in Bahrain in 1996 after serving the market in other forms for 15 years. J.P. Morgan & Co., a long time adviser to some of the Gulf's Muslim rulers — as well as Deutsche Bank and the Netherlands' ABN AMRO Bank also have Islamic units.

Islamic banking took off during the mid-1970s when a surge in world oil prices poured billions of dollars into the coffers of the oil-producing Gulf states. Even before that, the independence that many Muslim countries gained in the 1960s reawakened an interest in Islamic heritage. Today, however, Islamic banking is tapping a new demographic reality. Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion. At the same time, more Muslims in Europe and the USA want financial services that reflect their religious beliefs. That's why some Islamic banks have set up shop not only in Europe but also in the USA. And with many Western-style lenders across Asia on the verge of collapse, some observers believe that Islamic banking may gain a foothold in the region, especially among the largely Muslim population in Indonesia. "These people want their own identity as Muslims, including financing," says Shaikh.

In recent years, Iran, Sudan, and Pakistan have banned traditional commercial banking and adopted Islamic banking models. Islamic countries' regulators also have moved to adopt common international standards for the industry, co-ordinated by a legal academy in Saudi Arabia.

Islamic banks are governed by reams of complex legal rulings that are known as *fatwas*, or interpretative applications of sayings from the Holy Qur'an. Each bank has its own Board of Muslim scholars to determine the suitability of banking services and investments. Islamic banks are limited by "sharia screens," which prohibit investment in such "sin" industries as gambling or weaponry. Everything else is governed by "sharia mirrors," or areas which are sanctioned by Islamic law, including education, food production, and bio-technology. So Islamic banks would be barred from speculating in pork bellies but not in cattle futures.

END RUNS. Bankers have devised

numerous ways to get around the Islamic ban on earnings from interest. For instance, importers and exporters of raw materials rely on a technique that is known as *murabaha*, such as the one that was approved by the New York Bank, to avoid the ban on interest. In this arrangement, a bank buys goods and sells them to a customer who then pays the bank at a future date and at a mark-up agreed upon by the bank and its customer. Another form of financing is known as *mudaraba*, under which investors might supply capital for a project while their bank provides the project with management. The bank and investors then share any profit or loss.

A consumer who wants to finance a new car under Islamic principles might lease it or agree to make a series of payments that total more than the sticker price. As with a loan, until the contract is fulfilled, the bank still owns the car. Just because the contract never refers to interest doesn't mean an Islamic bank can't make money.

Islamic Satellite launched

A Channel from the Satellite EUTELSAT II p3 has been launched, covering all the countries in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The Satellite Channel aims to spread the word of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) to the general public and to those who want to specialise in Islamic studies. The information and guidance about the teachings of Ahlul-Bayt (a.s.) and the real Islam are transmitted through various programmes aired through this satellite.

The International Colleges of Islamic Sciences, London will soon telecast educational programmes through this channel for those pursuing a degree. Transmission commenced on 26 May, 1998 for one hour daily from 0700 hrs. to 0800 hrs. (British Summer Time).



Wessex Jamaat hosts Husein Day

On Sunday, 10 May 1998, Wessex Jamaat, in collaboration with the World Federation, commemorated a multi faith Hussain Day at al-Mahdi. The occasion was attended by Church dignitaries, students from the Institute of Higher Learning in Chichester, local Members of Parliament, school teachers and many other leading citizens from Wessex. Jaffer Dharamsi was the Master of Ceremonies.

The programme commenced with the recitation from the Holy Qur'an and translation of the verses recited. The welcome address was given by Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, the Secretary General of the World Federation. He highlighted briefly the cause of Imam Hussain (a.s.) and the lessons to be learnt from the tragedy of Kerbala by each successive generation not only of the Muslim Ummah but also the entire mankind.

The next speaker was Dr. Abduljalil Sajid, JP, who is a leading member and scholar of the Sunni Community in the UK. He is the Imam of the Brighton Islamic Centre and was on the panel of the Runnymede Trust inquiry on Islamophobia. Imam Sajid is actively involved in the promotion of interfaith in Sussex.

Dr. Sajid spoke on the significance of Muharram and Martyrdom of Imam Hussein (a.s.) emphasising the fact that the event inspires mankind to confront and subjugate tyranny and oppression in every age. With Imam Hussain (a.s.) as a role model the Muslim Ummah, whenever faced with forces designed to destroy basic human values, would rise up to unfurl the banner of the freedom of human spirit.

Miss Arzina Merali, a school girl from Portsmouth, spoke on the Youths of Kerbala. She prefaced her speech with a brief exposition of the cause of Imam Hussain (a.s.). The holy Imam's sole purpose was to reform the *ummah* corrupted by the immorality flowing from the Ummayyade Court in Damascus and threatening to drown the human conscience. Imam Hussain's (a.s.) only weapons were *amr bil ma'ruf* and *nahya anil munkar*.

He had taken with him not an army of renowned soldiers but a few companions and a retinue of women and children. His youngest mujahid was a six-month-old baby who was to be slaughtered by an arrow from Yezid's archer.

The Reverend Michael Yorke, the Provost of the Portsmouth Cathedral and the Chairman of the Wessex interfaith group spoke on the Cost of Discipleship. He explained that he felt that it was an appropriate topic to discuss while commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s.) who had refused to lend legitimacy to a corrupt and dissolute ruler. The Provost also briefly outlined the basic theological differences between Islam and Christianity.

Mrs. Nowsheen Jaffer spoke movingly of the contribution of Bibi Zainab binti Ali. She described how her speech in the market place of Kufa had rekindled the Islamic conscience. She also described the role of Bibi Zainab in the court of Yezid and elucidated on how she exposed Yezid as a murderer and a greedy tyrant in front of his courtiers. Nowsheen then gave an account of how she had used the ruler's palace to begin *aza-e-Hussain*.

Mulla Asghar, President of the World Federation, spoke on the Message of Imam Hussain (a.s.). Responding to the Provost on the question of celebrating and commemorating martyrdom, Mulla quoted extensively from the New Testament according to St. John and illustrated how very poignant the account, according to the Christian belief, of Jesus' last hours on the earth was. When Mulla was reading from the New Testament, the audience, both Christian and Muslim were seen in tears. Mulla also praised the work of the Wessex Interfaith Group.

Mulla Bashir Rahim thanked the guests for attending the commemoration. He highlighted the various interfaith activities in the region and added that for these activities to be able to foster spirituality, it was essential to outlaw religious discrimination.

Summer...weddings...and barbeque at the Crescent Village

from Baqir Alloo, Toronto

The Summer Season in Toronto pulled many people outdoor and a number of activities, picnics, visits to the country and sports activities were arranged. Added to these were a number of weddings on each weekend. We are now poised to enter into autumn which brings the changing of colours of the leaves prior to them being shed. Autumn in Ontario presents magnificent scenery and the faithful remember His Glory and utter His Praise.

Meanwhile the Crescent Village held its annual barbeque program on August 22, 1998 which was attended by large number of residents and community leaders. The mayor of Richmond Hill, Bill Bell and Councillor, Vitto Spotafora attended the function and addressed the residents, congratulating them for their orderly and peaceful living. The children of the complex had a great time with a specially hired clown to entertain them while painting of their faces was done by volunteers. The surrounding of the playground was decorated with colourful posters and balloons. Freshly roasted barbeque, fresh salads and soft drinks were served.

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JIBA ONTARIO holds successful golf tournament

The fifth annual JIBA golf tournament was held on Sunday, July 26 this year at the Shawneke Golf Club. As usual, this proved to be the most popular golf tournament in the Toronto Ithna-Asheri community with a record turnout of 56 players. Also, as every year, there were players ranging from 12 year old Mustafa Kamani to some quite dexterous senior golfers. The weather was perfect and that contributed to the overall enjoyment of the day.

In what has become synonymous with the annual JIBA golf tourney, this year's event was sponsored by West Star Printing and Star-Web. JIBA appreciates the backing of this event by the Jaffer family and hope to count on their support in future years. Those 'cool' West star golf t-shirts which have become keepsake for the past several years and the Titanium golf balls were very much appreciated by all!

There were all kinds of stories of "you should have seen this" and "the ball that got away" to seasoned players with double par on 5 par holes. And of course there were those whose balls were always attracted to the water (names withheld to protect the clumsy!!).

All in all, an excellent time was had by all. The JIBA committee was represented at the tournament by Vice Chair Hassan Jaffer - had to abandon the game after first 9 holes to attend to his "Caribana" responsibilities, Secretary Nazmul Damji who also presided over the award ceremonies at the dinner and Committee Member Shabbir Mohamed who managed to come away with one of the trophies.

At the scrumptious and generous dinner, Nazmul Damji thanked the sponsors - West Star Printing and Star-Web - and the organizers who primarily were Shafiq Ebrahim, who initiated the arrangements but could not participate since he was out of town along with veteran golf organizer, Hussein

Federation Samachar

Protests planned for film which portrays US Muslims as threat to Americans

Muslims living in the United States have expressed grave concern over the movie, *The Siege*, produced by Twentieth Century Fox, which portrays US Muslims as a threat to Americans.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) are scheduled to hold protest demonstrations at the Fox studios in Los Angeles and in New York and other US cities when the movie opens in theatres nationwide.

In the backdrop of the recent bombings of two US embassies in Africa and the subsequent American missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan, the council believes that the movie would incite hatred against the Muslims among the Americans who are already in a state of paranoia since the bombings.

The movie is scheduled for release on 6 November, 1998. The story involves a bombing campaign starting in Brooklyn and designed to provoke the President to declare martial law. At one point in the movie, the military rounds up Arab-Americans and Muslims of a certain age in Brooklyn and detains them, echoing the internment of Japanese-Americans during the World War II.

What sparked CAIR's concern, a spokesman for the council said, were complaints from Arab-Americans and Muslims who are upset by the current theatrical trailer for the film-especially a scene showing Muslims praying in a New York mosque juxtaposed with bombings and acts of violence.

"We fear the consequences of such negative images for the Arab-American and Muslim communities," said Hala Maksud, President of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

The Council spokesman, Ibrahim Hooper said there could not be "a worse possible time for this movie, particularly with nerves raw all around the world... We don't think they realize the level of prejudice that exists."

Far from being anti-Muslim, says Fox, the film is designed to show how America can be quick to rush to judgment on other nationalities and religious sects. "The point of this movie is to take a hard look at this country, our country, its prejudices, its stereotyping and oppression," director Edward Zwick said.

"I didn't make the world, and the events of the last couple of weeks are as sad and frightening as they can be. But not talking about these things is the worst thing we can do -to deny the function of art to be provocative is just as oppressive and wrong," he said.

In earlier talks with Fox, the council listed 20 "gratuitously offensive" lines in the script, and eight points where characters are portrayed as "lecherous, threatening, misogynistic, fanatic, exotic, foreign infiltrators who lust after 'Baywatch' and 'American' liberties."

However in April this year, the producer of the movie, Lynda Obst told the council that some of the offending dialogue in the movie had been removed.

Chagani, who has introduced the game to so many in the community.

2 Azim Chagani - 2nd Low Gross
3 Shiraz Rustam - 3rd Low Gross

Fayaz Jaffer, a member of the sponsors family, was awarded a plaque in appreciation of their support and he gave away the trophies to the winners who were as follows:

CLOSEST TO THE PIN:

1 Shabbir Mohamed (Front Nine)
2 Gulamali Remtulla (Back Nine)

LONGEST DRIVE:

1 Bob Mollu - Front Nine
2 Imtiaz Kara - Back Nine

LOW GROSS SCORES:

1 Bob Mollu - Lowest



Muharram in Auckland, New Zealand

by Hasnain Walji

Auckland, New Zealand no longer seems so far away after Muharram 1419. A memorable Ashra was held in this serene part of the world. This was a truly cosmopolitan aza-e Husain, with lectures and elegies in Arabic, English Farsi, and Urdu. In the audience were mumineen from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, East Africa, Fiji and even a family of Chinese origin from Singapore. During the gatherings, the unity and brotherly spirit that prevailed in such a multicultural milieu was indeed exemplary.

The community of 350 people, organized under the banner of the Islamic Ahlul-Bait Foundation of New Zealand, vibrated with cries of *Ya Husain* in a rented commercial property. The participation of youths in recitation of Qur'an and speeches on Kerbala is a measure of the parents' foresight and commitment to build on Islamic teachings to the generations to come. Several parents even indicated their eagerness to have their sons trained as muballighs to serve the community.

The community is comprised of the highest percentage of professionals (mostly migrant engineers, doctors and other professionals from Iraq) in any Shia community I have visited.. The resident Alim, Syed Majid from Iran is an *akhund* with a difference. He is a black belt in karate and the madressa, which has some 50 children, have karate and swimming lessons every weekend in addition to Qur'an, fiqh, tareekh and akhlaaq.

The origins of Shia settlement dates back to the early seventies when Br Iqbal Somani ended up in New Zealand after the expulsion of Asians from Uganda. Subsequently Br Muhammad Reza Rashid (originally from Kera) arrived from Calcutta, after a short period. Slowly, mumineen from Iran, Pakistan and India started arriving in small numbers. Another latent talent, Khalil Valji from Zanzibar, who had been in Auckland since the early seventies, was only 'discovered' in 1994, when the delegation from New Zealand

at the World Federation Conference was spotted by his relatives (Marhum Munawwar Valji and Nazir Valji) in England who gave them Khalil's contact.

For the past three years, there has been an exponential growth after professionals from Iraq began to seek settlement to escape the brutal regime in Iraq. More are expected to arrive in the near future. Today, they make up the largest Shia group in Auckland. Two of our brothers from Iraq, Aalaa Shakir and Emad al-Zubaidi, are actively involved in running weekend Arabic schools and are planning to embark on a fully fledged Islamic School in the area.

During my stay in Auckland, I met with an Iraqi surgeon, Dr Adnaan, who gave me an insight into what it was really like to have to practice plastic surgery during the war. His account was all the more fascinating because he is also an accomplished artist who has held several art exhibitions in Iraq as well as New Zealand. One of his many paintings, called 'The Migrant' epitomizes the struggle and pain of one who has been displaced and is eager to return to his homeland. Another enlightening meeting was with a lady architect from Iraq, who has been conducting research on Islamic Architecture and has written an interesting article on the evolution of the design of the minbar through different eras and cultures.

The residential property bought some four years ago to serve as Husainiyyah, is now far too small to accommodate the growing numbers and the community is actively looking for alternative accommodation. The project to build a new Husainiyyah from ground up has been shelved due to technical difficulties and the community has decided to buy a suitable property to cater for their needs.

With the downturn in South East Asian economies, New Zealand is bracing itself for a substantial impact. However, there are still business opportunities and limited openings for professionals in some fields.

FROM THE NAHJUL BALAGHA:

SAYING OF IMAM ALI (A.S.) ON SEEKING TEMPORAL PLEASURES AND SELF-IMPORTANCE

This wonderful sermon of Imam Ali (as) provides a fine guide to us on how to lead a fruitful life.

Somebody requested Imam Ali (a.s.) to advise him on how to lead a useful and sober life. Imam Ali (a.s.) thereupon advised him thus: "Do not be among those people who want to gain good returns without working hard, who have long hopes and keep on postponing repentance and penance, who talk like pious persons but run after vicious pleasures.

Do not be among those who are not satisfied if they get more in life and are not content if their lot in life's pleasures is less (they are never satisfied); who never thank Allah (s.w.t.) for what they get and keep on constantly demanding more of what is left with them; who advise others to such good deeds that they themselves refrain from; who appreciate good people but do not follow their ways of life; who hate bad and vicious people but follow their ways of life; who, on account of their excessive sins hate death but do not give up the sinful ways of life; who, if fallen ill, repent their ways of life and on regaining their health fearlessly readopt the same frivolous ways; who get despondent and lose all hopes, but on gaining health, become arrogant and careless; who, if faced with misfortunes, dangers or afflictions, turn to Allah (s.w.t.) and keep on beseeching Him for relief and when relieved or favoured with comfort and ease are deceived by the comfortable conditions they find themselves in and forget Allah (s.w.t.) and forsake prayers; whose minds are allured by day dreams and forlorn hopes and who abhor to face realities of life; who fear for others the enormous repercussions of vices

(continued on page 42)

(...from page 41)

and sins but for their own deeds expect very high rewards or very light disciplinary actions.

Riches make such people arrogant, rebellious and wicked, and poverty makes them despondent and lethargic. If they have to work, they work lazily and if they put up a demand they do it stubbornly.

Under the influence of inordinate cravings, they commit sins in quick succession and keep on postponing repentance. Calamities and adversities make them give up the distinguished characteristics of Muslims (patience, hope in future and work for improvement of circumstances). They advise people with narration's of events and facts but do not take any lesson from them. They are good at preachings but bad at practice, therefore they always talk of lofty deeds but their actions belie their words.

They are keen to acquire temporal pleasures but are careless and slow to achieve permanent (Divine) benefits. They think good for themselves the things which are actually injurious to them and regard harmful the things which really benefit them. They are afraid of death but waste their time and do not resort to good deeds before death overtakes them. The vices which they regard as enormous sins for others, they consider as minor shortcomings for themselves. Similarly, they attach great importance to their obedience to the orders of Allah (s.w.t.) and belittle similar actions in others. Therefore, they often criticize others and speak very highly of their own deeds. They are happy to spend their time in society of rich persons, wasting it in luxuries and vices but are averse to employing for useful purposes in company of the poor and pious people: They are quick and free to pass verdicts against others but they never pass a verdict against their own vicious deeds. They force others to obey them but they never obey Allah (s.w.t.). They collect their dues carefully but never pay the dues they owe. They are not afraid of Allah (s.w.t.) but fear powerful men"

Federation Samachar

Wild night as Iranians celebrate win over USA

Iran were eliminated from the World Cup in France after putting in a commendable display that put them on the verge of qualifying for the second round. However for many Iranians the highlight of the World Cup was the team's victory over the USA in the competition.

That night, the Iranians won twice. One, by displaying their good gesture with presentation of flowers to each of the players of the opposite team prior to kick-off and secondly by winning the match 2-1.

When Iran beat the United States, in Teheran it was a moment for celebrations. The police car with four officers, cheered and waved at the crowd. In a communal celebration that froze traffic and cut across lines of class and gender, Iranians poured into the streets the moment the game ended. Amid thousands of fans gathered in Vanak Square in central Teheran, a dozen men danced together, stringing the names of Iran's team into a rhyming chant.

Another man climbed up a lamp post as the crowd cheered and uniformed and plain clothes police officers and army troops looked on. "Good sight," one bewildered officer carrying a walkie-talkie said. Old men strolled the streets in night-shirts. Some women waved flags and pounded on cars, ordering drivers to honk their horns and cheer.

Young people whistled and whooped, honked and hollered to proclaim the victory over their political nemesis. Flags were waved, whistles blown, candies distributed, fireworks were lit.

The only chant that could be heard about the United States was "*Iran hoorah, Amrika sourakh*" - "Iran hurrah, America a hole," referring to the American team's weak defence that led to Iran's 2-1 victory.

President Mohammed Khatami sent a message of congratulations to the Iranian team. Ayatollah Sayed Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, said "Be happy that you have made the Iranian nation happy."

The impromptu celebration was reminiscent of, though much smaller, than the street celebrations marking Iran's draw with Australia late last year, which qualified Iran for the World Cup finals for the first time in 20 years.

This time, Iranian authorities took precautions to prevent any celebrations from turning violent. Restaurants in Tehran were forced to close at nine on the night of the match. Sports centres were ordered to cancel plans to show the game on giant outdoor screens, and army troops and plain clothes policemen were stationed at roadblocks throughout the city.

Throughout the soccer-crazed country, Iranians were riveted to their television screens from kick off. To ensure that the coverage was Islamically correct, the broadcast began seven seconds late, so that Iranian viewers would not be subjected to the sight of fans in summer dress who might be drinking alcoholic beverages.

In the first half, after three American shots had hit the goal post, some fans invoked God's name. "God is definitely with us tonight, man," said one Bobak Pesha, a 30 year-old businessman, watching with his family.

When Hamid Reza Estili known as the James Bond of Iran scored the first goal, Iranians throughout Teheran were thunderstruck. "It is a beautiful goal! What a beautiful goal! said Hamid Salimi, a taxi driver watching the game in a poor neighborhood in southern Tehran. But in good-sport fashion, he added, "The Americans are doing their best."

In weeks prior to the match, as Iran girded itself for this match, Iran's leaders insisted that it was a game which had nothing to do with politics. The USA attitude to the game was similar but both teams had a lot at stake to win this game. Political analysts have envisaged that the game may now help create avenues of reconciliation of differences between the two countries.



DATELINE TORONTO

from Baqir Alloo in Toronto

THE AYYAME MOHARRAM Programs commenced on Tuesday April 28 in all Centres around Toronto. Bayview Centre became live with majalis recited by a well known zakir from Ahmadabad, Maulana Sayid Aftab Hyder of Ahmadabad. He dwelt mainly on the lives of our Ma'sumeen and Islamic history. Marsiya, nauha and matam were recited by the well known reciter, Syed Nadeem Sarwar of Karachi who put the audience in an aesthetic mood. Ladies majalis at Bayview Centre drew a large audience and was ably recited by Zakira Syeda Fatema Baquiri from Karachi. Prof. Abdulaziz Sachedina drew a good crowd at a Brampton hall specially hired by Toronto Jamaat to accommodate the usual large Moharram audience. Dr. Sachedina dwelt on lives of our Ma'sumeen and related them to the problem facing the youths in this part of the world. At the Selbi Centre, Brother Sadik Rahim of London-UK preached to a cosy audience on various subjects ranging from the tragedy of Kərbala, Islamic history and Akhlaqiat. Youths of Toronto flocked at the Thornhill Town Centre to hear Brother Fazle-Abbas Dattoo. His majalis were well received as they were rich in material and presentation. Brother Fazle Abbas was able to answer various questions in a rational and eloquent way. Majalis were also held at Al-Mehdi Centre and at the Islamic Museum where Maulana Sakhawat Hussein preached at different times and dwelt on fazail and history extensively quoting from the Qura'n. Majalis were also held at different centres catering for Urdu, Arabic, Persian and Pushto languages. Maulana Farmanhusein from India preached at a Massasauga hall. Maulana Shafik Huda preached at the Hamilton Imbarara. Majalis were also held at various other centres in Canada and in some small towns, majalis were held at private residences. A solemn Ashura procession of about

JA'FARI ISLAMIC HOUSING CORPORATION held its Annual General Meeting on April 14, 1998 and re-elected Sajjad Ebrahim as President for another year. Other five members of the Board of Directors elected were Ghulamabbas Sajan, Kassim Moledina, Baqir Alloo, Dr. Hyder Fazal and Nazmul Damji. The meeting recognised the efficient way the 170 Unit housing complex is managed and passed a special vote of thanks to the President and Board Members.

NASIMCO TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE was held at the Jaffari Islamic Centre on April 11, 1998 and was attended by delegates from various North American Jamaats. Ghulamabbas Sajan was elected to head Nasimco as its President for the next three years. Other Office Bearers elected were Gulamabbas Khakoo of Los Angeles as Vice President, Asgharali Naqvi as Secretary General and Safdar Nasser as Treasurer. Other Members elected and nominated to serve in the Executive Committee are Javed Qureshi of Montreal, Shabbir Mawani of Ottawa, Khurram Razavi of Washington, Sadique Jaffer of New York, Aly Hemani, Razaali Kaba and Zinat Ladha (Lily) all of Toronto and Nishat Khalfan of New York.

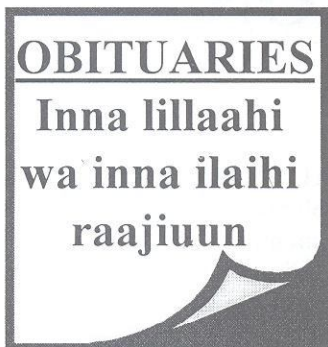
AL-SADIQ SCHOOL commemorated the martyrdom of Sayyaddu-Shohada by taking out a solemn procession outside the school. Dressed in black, the children chanted eulogies in English, Arabic and Urdu. It was an impressive rally which brought tears in the eyes of spectators.

SENIOR CITIZEN GROUP visited the Maple Syrup farms in late April and watched the process of collecting this beneficial sweet liquid which is admired throughout the world.

...AND ASHRA-E-ZAINABIYA: took off at Bayview with the preaching by Brother Hasnain Rajabali who flew from New York. Hasnain is a young gifted orator with an evangelical zeal and style. With his university education in the USA he meets the challenges that this part of the world poses and talks to the young and educated at their own level. Hasanain has become a much sought after preacher in North America drawing a relively large crowd of youths and adults. He keeps busy in his spare time from his business career to share his knowledge and experiences with others. During the Ayyame Moharram he preached at Vancouver and thereafter at Edmonton before coming to Toronto to deliver five lectures at the Bayview Centre. The other five days of the ten days period were devoted to Urdu majalis and Professor Javed Akber from India was at his best in explaining the Islamic system.

500 ladies and gents marched through Bayview Avenues from Thornhill Centre to the Bayview Mosque on Ashura day with alam and taziya. A Blood donation clinic was arranged on this tenth day of Moharram. A total of 124 people turned up to donate 92 units of blood which was enough for

368 patients. Donations of over \$120,000 was received by Toronto Jamaat to meet the \$90,000 estimated cost of the programmes. A huge quantity of non-perishable food was also noted to the Halal Food Bank of Toronto during these ayyam. In all, the sad occasion was marked in a memorable way.



**Marhum
Muhammadali Shariff
Jiwa -- Past Chairman
of the Africa Federation**

Marhum Muhammadali Shariff's sudden demise on 23 July 1998 in Moshi, Tanzania, at age 90, was a great blow to the Khoja community and he will be greatly missed by Moshiite and many Shia globally for he had dedicated his entire life for the betterment of our community.

The late Mohamedalibhai generally led an illustrious life which he devoted for the upliftment of humanity in general and the community in particular. He was born in Mombasa in 1909 and later settled in Moshi in 1931. He was educated at Alidina Visram High School and was among the first who matriculated. After joining his father's business, he became a reputable members of the Indian community in East Africa.

Marhum's public life and community services are commendable. From 1957 to 1958, the late Muhammadalibhai served as Mayor of Moshi town. In 1957 he received an MBE from the Queen for the services rendered to the British Empire when he was also invited to the Buckingham Palace in London. He also served as a Provincial Chairman of the East Africa Muslims Welfare Society during which he provided noteworthy services to the Muslims of the Northern Province of the then Tanganyika.

The Late Mohamedalibhai was an industrialist, educationalist and a social worker who gave his life for the community, particularly in Moshi. He was associated with numerous Boards and Associations either as a Chairman or a member including the Tanzania Sisal Growers Association, Indian Public School, Kibo Match Federation Samachar

**Ayatullah Murtadha
Burujardi is shot dead**

On 21 April, 1998, 23 Dhulhijja 1418, Ayatullah Murtadha Burujardi was shot dead in Najaf. The 70 year old Ayatullah was returning home from evening prayers from the Shrine of Imam Ali (a.s.) with two persons accompanying him when an unknown killer shot him with a pistol and escaped. His two companions were seriously hurt.

Marhum was the Imamul Jama' of the Haram of Imam Ali AS. He was the teacher of 1000 students of theology in Najaf. He was the student of Marhum Ayatullah Sayyid Muhsin Hakim and Marhum Ayatullah Sayyid Abul Qasim Al Khui.

He had as usual lead the Fajr Prayers in the Haram and had delivered his morning address to the congregation. He was walking home when he was shot on the orders of Saddam. This was the third attempt on his life. The Government of Iran protested to the Government of Iraq on the assassination.

Mumineen are requested to pray for the Rooh of the Marhoom, for the safety of our Ulama, for the quick recovery of the wounded and the protection of the sanctity of the Holy Shrines.

Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Mawenzi School, Cotton Marketing Board, Kilimanjaro Coffee Board, East Africa Leather Association and the Red Cross Society.

Marhum was also the head of the East Africa National Investments Limited, a community company. Many other communal projects including the Haji Mohamed Jaffer Boarding House in Dar es Salaam and the beautifully designed Mosque of Moshi are testimony of his services to the community.

Marhum's wisdom led him to be appointed first as Vice Chairman and then the Chairman (following the death of Ebrahimhai Sharif) of the Africa Federation during the 1962-65 term. Until his death he regularly attended meetings of the Africa Federation and provided valuable contributions. May Allah [swt] accept Marhums dedication for our community and give him a place amidst the 14 Masumins [a.s.].

**Grand Ayatullah
Shaykh al-Gharawi**

The murder of another eminent scholar and Shi'a leader less than two months after that of Ayatullah Shaykh Murtada al-Burujirdi has stunned Shi'a communities throughout the world. When any prominent Ayatullah dies it is of course an occasion for much sorrow because one can no longer have direct access to his vast learning and scholarship --- qualities so highly prized by Shi'a Muslims. It can be imagined therefore how great was the blow when it was announced that Ayatullah Mirza Ali al-Gharawi had been killed in Iraq on his return by road from Karbala to his home in the holy city of Najaf on 18 June, 1998. Both Ayatullahs were cut down in their prime. Both were completely apolitical - which adds to the utter meaninglessness of both crimes. There can be little doubt that the Iraqi Mukhabarat (Intelligence Services) were directly involved. The absence of any thorough police investigation, the undue haste in which both burials were carried out, the prohibition of any funeral procession to the cemetery of Wadi al-Salam and, in the case of al-Gharawi, the fact that his body was not even allowed to be taken to a mosque for the funeral prayer to be said over it, all substantiate this conclusion.

Ayatullah al-Gharawi was born as Mirza Ali Tabrizi in the town of Tabriz, Persia, in 1930. His father was a successful merchant well-known in trading circles both in Persian Azerbaijan and Russian Azerbaijan (now the Azerbaijan Republic). His mother was a Sayyida, a direct descendant of the Holy Prophet, and so Ali bore the customary title of Mirza. His father died when Ali was only two which meant that he now had to be looked after exclusively by his mother who, wanting her son to become eventually an 'alim (religious scholar), despatched him at the age of six to school in Tabriz to begin his elementary studies. Having completed these, and also a part of his intermediate education, the young Ali travelled to the holy

(continued on page 45)



OBITUARIES

(continued on page 44)

city of Qum to do his higher intermediate studies at a celebrated religious academy (Hawzah). He was only sixteen when he embarked upon Advanced Studies (al-Baith al-Kharij). Among his teachers was Ayatullah Sayyid Husayn Borujerdi who was to become the main marja' of Shi'a Muslims throughout the world until his death in 1961.

After spending five years at Qum, Mirza Ali decided to travel once again, this time to Najaf in Iraq to complete his advanced education at the Hawzah there, the oldest and most prestigious university in Shia Islam. Here he was taught by the late Ayatullahs Shaykh Husayn al-Huh and Shaykh Mirza Muhammad Baqir al-Zanjani, as well as Ayatullah Sayyid Abu 'l-Qasim al-Khoei. It was probably Sayyid al-Khoei who, of all the Ulema, influenced and inspired him the most as to the direction his life should take. When he was only twenty-eight, the eminent Ayatullah Khoei prayed to God that Mirza Ali should one day become a distinguished marja'.

Al-Khoei's prayer was granted when Mirza Ali was in his early sixties. In 1993, following the demise of Ayatullah Abd al-Ala Sabzevari, he published his own juridical decisions, *Risala 'Amaliyya*, known as *al-Fatawa al-Mustanbata*, which was the first step for any prospective marja'. In the meantime, Mirza Ali became known as al-Gharawi (rather than al-Tabrizi), derived from al-Ghari, the ancient name of Najaf, as often happened with scholars who made Najaf their home and became part of the religious and cultural life of the city.

Al-Gharawi wrote a number of works on Fiqh (jurisprudence), most of which remain in manuscript form. In addition to the taqrizat already referred to, *al-Tanqihfi Sharh al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, of which twelve volumes have been published, he set out in great detail the arguments (or proofs)

on which he based the edicts of his *Risala* in a work which runs to at least eighty volumes, all of which are hand-written, named *Tasnid al-Fatawa al-Mustanbata*. On the death of Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Rohani in July last year, most of his followers changed over to Ayatullah al-Gharawi. At his death, al-Gharawi's followers were to be found in Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, other Gulf States, Turkey and the Lebanon.

Since his late twenties, already recognised as a mujtahid, al-Gharawi began to teach al-Baith al-Kharij in the Hawza while at the same time attending the lectures of his teachers. He remained a teacher right up to his death. His lectures attracted students particularly because of the clarity in which they were delivered, free of unnecessary complications or muddled up arguments. For several years he was also one of the Imams of the congregational prayers at al-Rawda al-Haydariyya which contains the tomb of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib, the First Imam.

Every Thursday it was al-Gharawi's custom to make the fifty-mile journey north to the holy city of Karbala to pray in the Rawdha and visit the tomb of Imam Husayn (a.s.), the grandson of the Holy Prophet.

That Thursday in mid-June - towards the end of Muharram - was, tragically, to be al-Gharawi's last visit. At night, returning home to Najaf by car, he was shot dead in a hail of machine-gun fire along with his son-in-law, the driver and a friend.

Two assassinations within less than two months inevitably lead to concern for the safety of the Ulema who remain in Najaf. In this respect, there must be singled out Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Seestani who is the marja' currently with the greatest following among Shi'a Muslims worldwide; Ayatullah Sayyid Sa'id al-Hakim, who is a marja' and grandson of the late renowned Grand Ayatullah Muhsin al-Hakim; and Shaykh Muhammad Ishaq al-Fayyad, a Pakistani who has lived for the past fifty years in Najaf and is expected by many to seek recognition soon as a marja'.

Marhum Akberali Haji Peermohamed

The Supreme Council noted with regret the death of Akberbhai Haji Peermohamed which occurred on the 6th of July, 1998 in Mombasa at the age of 74. Marhum Akberali, originally from Zanzibar and settled in Mombasa, was a very active and dedicated member of the Community.

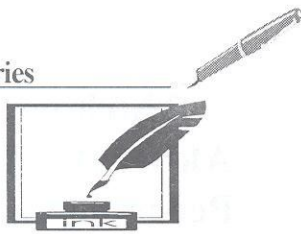
Haji Akberbhai has a glittering record of services to Mombasa Jamat from the late 1950s and had continued to serve in various capacities the Mombasa Jamat and nearly all its subsidiary organisations.

Haji Akberbhai was a self made man, who took keen interest and had deep sympathy for our community. He was an ardent councillor of the Africa Federation who regularly attended Supreme Council meetings.

He was the Chairman of the Bustani Jamaat at the time of the unification of the two Jamaats in 1966. He was also a Vice-Chairman of the unified Jamaat and subsequently became the Chairman in 1983.

Marhum was a very active member of the Ithnasheri Young Men's Union and Faize Hussein in the past. Marhum once also served in the Matrimonial Committee and undertook many other positions in different capacities. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Managing Committee and MRC.

Besides his services to the Community at Committee levels and as Chairman, he loved poetry especially Persian, and also regularly recited Duas, Marshias, and Majlises. May Allah (s.w.t) grant him Magferat and rest his soul in the proximity of Chaharda Masumins (a.s). Amen. Marhum leaves behind a son, two daughters, and four grandchildren.



Death Jottings

inna lillaahi wa inna
ilaihi raajiuun

The following deaths have been reported since the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* which carried death announcements up to 29 January, 1998.

Marhum Munsir Anverali Jafferli Dhanji, London, on 23 August 1998, 30 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Aziz Anverali Rajabali Dattoo, Nairobi, on 22 August 1998, 29 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Abbas Mohamed Raza S Bhimji, London, on 21 August 1998, 28 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhuma Shamira Askari Taki, London.

Marhum Asgher Yusuf Kara (Atta), Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania, on 18 August 1998, 25 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhuma Gulshanbai Dalal, London, on 13 August 1998, 20 Rabiul Akhar 1419.

Marhuma Noorbano Rehmatullah, Karachi, on 29 July 1998, 5 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Nisar Musa Dhala Baaloo, London (England), on 28 July 1998, 4 Rabi' al Thaani 1419.

Marhum Akber Jaffer Hirji, Birmingham (England), on 18 July 1998, 23 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Habib Hussein Snerrif Dewji, Daressalaam, on 17 July 1998, 22 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhuma Zainab-bai Sultanali Yusufali, Dubai, on 13 July 1998, 18 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Husein Bandali Kanji, Mombasa, on 12 July 1998, 17 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Mohammedhussein Ahmed Peera Hirji, Daressalaam, on 8 July 1998, 13 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Haji Akberali Haji PeerMohamed, Mombasa, Tuesday 7

July 1998, 12 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Mohammedhassan Mohammedali Rhemtulla (Babu Raama), Mumbai, on 27 June 1998, 2 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Pyarali Abdulrasul Bhaloo, Malindi, on 26 June 1998, 1 Rabi al Awwal 1419.

Marhum Sajjad Mohamed Jaffer Rajabali Alidina, London (England), on 24 June 1998, 29 Safar 1419.

Marhum MohamedAli Abdulrasool Remtulla Kassam of Daressalaam, on 23 June 1998, 28 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Rehmatbai Gulamali Pirbhai Visram of Mombasa, on 22 June 1998, 27 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Zainabbai Habib Amersi Alibhai, Milton Keynes(England), on 16 June 1998, 21 Safar 1419.

Marhum Husein Hassanali Rehemtulla, London, on 14 June 1998, 19 Safar 1419.

Abdulsattar Giga, Dar es Salaam, on 13 June 1998, 18 Safar 1419.

Marhum Bashir Kassamali Habib Chattoo, Daressalaam, on 12 June 1998, 17 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Shirinbai Allarakhia Kermalli Alibhai, Edmonton, Canada, on 8 June 1998, 13 Safar 1419.

Marhum Murtaza Banatwala, Muscat, Oman, on 3 June 1998, 8 Safar 1419.

Marhum Kassamali Noormohamed Soonasra of South London on 2 June 1998, 7 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Sugrabai Pyarali Asaria, London on 1 June 1998, 6 Safar 1419.

Marhum Fateh Ali Jessa, Dar-es-Salaam, on 27 May 1998, 1 Safar 1419.

Marhuma Shirinbai Musa Jaffer Alloo, Mundra, Kutch on 27 May 1998, 1 Safar 1419.

Marhum Gulamabbas Kanji (Mulla Bulbul), Mombasa on 23 May 1998, 26 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Sharif Seper, Zenica (Bosnia) on 20 May 1998, 23 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Abdulla Mohamed Visram, London, on 16 May 1998, 19 Muharram 1419.

Marhuma Sultanabai Mohamedali Dawood Haji Nasser, Karachi on 16 May 1998, 19 Muharram 1419.

Marhum Mohamed Kamalia, London, on 24 April 1998, 26 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Anver Pyarali Mohamedali Merali, Essex, on 23 April 1998, 25 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Marzia, wife of Dr. Sultanali (of Zanzibar) Agha Seyyid Hassan Najafi Al-Marashi, Marina, North California, on 13 April 1998, 15 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Mohammed Hussain Hassanali Juma (Sheni Mayay), Dar-es-Salaam, on 9 April 1998, 11 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhum Mohamedraza A. Manek, Toronto, on 8 April 1998, 10 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Fatmabai Tahera Mussa, Montreal, on 4 April 1998, 6 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Khairunnisa Akbar Jamal, London, on 4 April 1998, 6 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Shirinbai Mewawala, Mumbai on 03 April 1998, 5 Zilhajj 1418

Marhum Nausheer Gulamali Dattoo, Mombasa, on 2 April 1998, 4 Zilhajj 1418.

Marhuma Sugrabai Mohammedali Taki Bandali Kanji, Mombasa on 28 March 1998, 29 Zilkaad 1418.

Marhum Kassamali Dhalla Jaffer, Daressalaam, on 24 March 1998, 25 Zilkad 1418.

Marhuma Aminabai Gulamabbas Moorji, Tanga, on 17 March 1998, 18 Zilkad 1418.

Marhum Firoz Mohamedali Nayani Dharsee, Tanga, on 17 March 1998, 18 Zilkad 1418.

Marhuma Aminabai Amirali Abdalla Fazal, Bukoba on 14 March 1998, 16 Zilkaad 1418

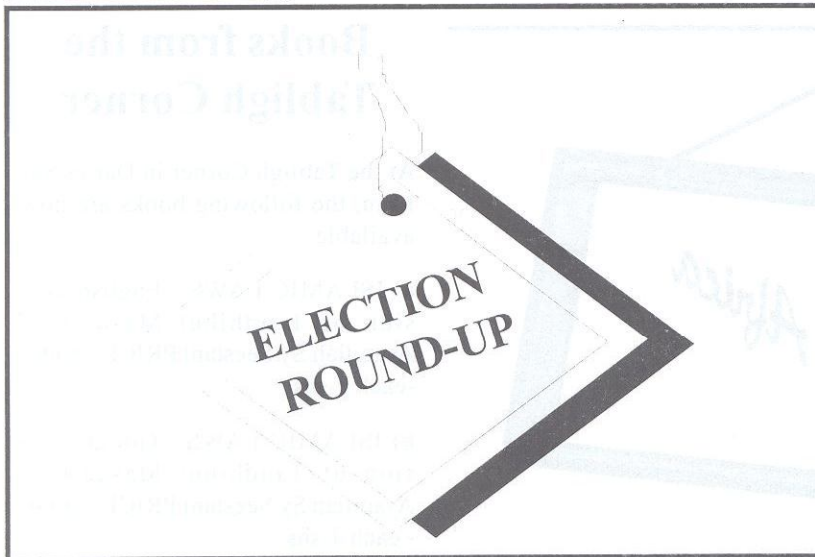
Marhum Munawer Mohamed Husein Valji, Essex, on 10 March 1998, 11 Zilkad 1418.

Marhum Sherali Yusuf Alloo, Mwanza, on 7th March 1998; (8 Zilkaad 1418 A.H.).

Marhuma Sayyida Salim Akhtar, Lahore on 3 March 1998, 5 Zilkaad 1418

Marhum Azad Mohammedhussein M.D. Kermalli, London, on 25th February 1998; (27 Shawwal 1418 A.H.).

Marhum Yousuf Ali Nanjiani, Karachi, on 25th February 1998; (27 Shawwal 1418 A.H.).



**ORGANIZATION OF
NORTH AMERICAN SHIA
ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM
COMMUNITIES
(NASIMCO)**

At the NASIMCO Conference held in Toronto, Canada on April 11, 1998, the following were elected/nominated for the years 1998/2001:

- President
Ghulam Abbas Sajjan, Toronto
- Vice-President
Gulam Abbas Khaku, Los Angeles
- Secretary-General
S. M. Asghar Naqvi, Toronto
- Treasurer
Safar Nasser, Toronto
- Councillors
Ali Hemani, Toronto, Sadiq Jaffer, New York, Razaali Kaba, Toronto, Sr. Nishat Khalfan, New York, Sr. Zeenat (Lily) Ladha, Toronto, Shabbir Mawani, Ottawa, Javaid Qureshi, Montreal, Khurram Rizvi, Washington D.C.

The offices are located at 9000 Bathurst Street, as a courtesy from Toronto Jamaat.

ZANZIBAR KSI KUWWATUL ISLAM JAMAT

On 15 April, 1998 (18 Zulhaji 1418), the following office bearers were elected into the Management Committee of the KSI Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat of Zanzibar for a period of two years:

- MohamedRaza H. Dharamsi - President
Amin Sivji Haji - Secretary General
Haji Husein Dattoo - Treasurer
Hasnen Mohamed Husein Dharmasi - Mukki
Abdul H. Panju - Kamrio

MAURITIUS

A new Management Committee has been elected in Mauritius. The committee comprises of the following members:

- Haydarally Pirbhai President
Assenje E. Moosajee Vice President
Dr. Amirali Asser Secretary
Mohamed Iqbal Assistant Secretary
Kassamally Esmael Treasurer
Inayatali H. Pirbhai Asst. Treasurer
Mohsinali H. Pirbhai Member
Noormohamed K. Esmael Member

BIRMINGHAM

The newly elected Executive Committee of the KSI Muslim Community of Birmingham for the years 1998/99 follows:

- Mohamed Bharwani President
Mohamed Fazal Vice President
Hassan Naqvi Hon. Secretary
Gulamabbas Kassam Asst. Secretary
M. A. Bhimani Hon. Treasurer
Azad Jivraj Asst. Treasurer

Committee members: Azad Jivraj (Mukhi), Nazir Rumani, S. Ibrahim, Pyarali Khimji, Raza Abedi and H. Kanani.

Kitchener, Ontario

The Islamic Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaat of Kitchener, Waterloo held its Annual General Meeting on March 8, 98. The following members were elected into office:

- Sultan Hudda - President
Bashir Sachoo - Secretary
Ali Abbas Tharia - Treasurer
Sarfaraz Jamal - Committee member
Enayat Ladha - Committee Member

IHS, Canada

At the biennial election of the Islamic Humanitarian Services, the following were elected to head the organization for the term 1998-2000:

- Shafiq Hudda Religious Director
Moiz Karimjee Administrator
Hussein Remtulla Finance Officer

Morogoro, Tanzania

At an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting held on 6 June, 1998 the Managing Committee was dissolved following the resignation of four members. A new ad-hoc committee with the following members was then formed:

- Riyaz Kanji - Chairman
Akber Ismail - Secretary
Mohamedraza Ahmed - Treasurer
Abdulrazak Kermali - Member
Aliabbas Fazel - Member
Aliraza Rashid - Member

Trustees:

- Riyaz Kanji
Mohamedraza Ahmed
Gulamali Rashid.

TANGA

At the special General Meeting held on Saturday 5 April, 1998, the following members were elected into the Managing Committee of Tanga Jamaat:

- Mahmood Y.J. Dhirani Chairman
Mohamed R.M. Walli Vice Chairman
Anver A. Fazel Hon. Secretary
Mohsin G. Meghji Hon. Jnt Secretary
Mohamed A. Manekia Hon. Treasurer
Murtaza A. Bhaloo Hon. Jnt Treasurer
Hasnain A. Hassanali Member
Shabbir M. Sachoo Member



Books from the Tabligh Corner

At the Tabligh Corner in Dar es Salaam, the following books are now available:

a) ISLAMIC LAWS - English Version of Taudhihul Masae'l of Ayatullah Sy Seestani PRICE : 5000/- each T.shs

b) ISLAMIC LAWS - Gujrati Version of Taudhihul Masae'l of Ayatullah Sy Seestani PRICE : 5000/- each T.shs

c) MARRIAGE - A step towards fulfilment in Life - A World Federation Production PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

d) POEMS FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN - A World Federation Production PRICE : 900/- each T.shs

e) FIQH & FUQAHA - An introduction to Fiqh. Containing 44 life sketches of the great past Masters - World Federation Production PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

f) PEARLS OF WISDOM - A string of incidents in the history of Islam - World Fede PRICE : 1800/- each T.shs

g) THE PRINCIPLE OF EDUCATION - UP BRINGING - Production of Zahra Academy PRICE : 2000/- each T.shs

h) CURRENT LEGAL ISSUES - English version of al-Mustahdhat Minal Masae'l ash-Sharia - According to edicts of Ayatullah as- Sayyid Ali Al-Husayni As - Seestani - Production of Imam Ali Foundation - Uk PRICE : 2000/- each T.shs

i) A RESTATEMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS - By Sayyid Ali Asghar Razvy - The production of World Federation - UK PRICE : 8000/- each T.shs

A fair selection of other books are also available here and the Tabligh Section plans to update new releases through its Webpage <http://tabligh.raha.com>, where details of all books available can be perused.

Dar Jamaat procures strategic Ex-Korean Complex in Dar es Salaam

The Dar es Salaam Jamaat has procured the ex-Korean Complex lying adjacent to the community's boarding house and Al-Muntazir School. The new complex comprises of 3 built up blocks.

One block consists of an elegant 3 storeyed building which includes a theatre and two reasonably sized halls. This building has about 22 rooms with two washrooms on each floor. The second block contains two 4-bedroom flats while the third block has 17, 2-bedroom flats and two halls. In addition to this there is also a badminton court and a large adjacent garden behind the first Block. There is also a tarmaced driveway to facilitate easy car movement.

This new procurement of the Jamaat has a tremendous potential for future development primarily because of its location to the Jamaat's other structures. Taking into consideration the fact that education is of utmost importance for our youths along with the fact that sporting and recreation facilities for our members have to be enhanced, the Jamaat has a master development plan in the pipeline, the details of which will soon be made public.

In his keynote address at the last Supreme Council Conference in Dar es Salaam, the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani congratulated Dar es Salaam Jamaat for purchasing the plot and asked the Jamaat to ensure that the new property is effectively developed for the benefit of community members.

New committee members of Arusha Jamaat



Seated from left to right: Raza Suleman (Hon. Secretary), Habib M. Yusufali (President) and Tahsil M. Sherif (Vice President).

Standing from left to right: Shabbir M. Surati (Hon. Treasurer), Rizwan Peera, Hassan Fazal and Sadiq Chagani (committee members).



Africa Federation denounces Dar and Nairobi bomb blasts

The Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community in Africa and worldwide was greatly shocked and distressed by the two terrorist bomb blasts that rocked the US Embassy premises in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam almost simultaneously on Friday 7 August, 1998. Islam, being a peaceful religion, condemns such acts of terrorism involving the wanton destruction, injury and loss of life and property.

It was gratifying to note that members of the community displayed their sense of grief and anger at the calamity by cancelling all festivity programmes. Moreover it was a fine gesture by community members and organisations in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi to donate blood and medicines to hospitals to alleviate the plight of those who were suffering.

The Africa Federation has expressed its unreserved condemnation of the senseless acts of destruction of innocent lives and property. At the same time, the Federation has offered a helping hand to victims with a request to all members to be conscious of the extent of human suffering caused as a result of this tragic calamity. It has also requested community members in Tanzania and Kenya not to hesitate to come forward to render a helping hand to fellow human beings who have been

affected by the blasts.

A young member of our Community in Dar es Salaam was injured in the blast. His injury was however not serious and he is recovering satisfactorily.

The Federation has expressed its deep sympathy to all those who have been affected in one way or another, especially to the bereaved families who have lost their loved ones. The Federation has also written letters of sympathy to the Governments of Tanzania and Kenya as well as to the USA Embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi.

May Allah (s.w.t) in His mercy grant them patience and courage to sustain the loss and may He in His mercy safeguard and protect the nations of Tanzania and Kenya.

The Nairobi Jamaat held prayers for the victims at the Jaffery Islamic Centre in Lavington on 10 August, 1998 following which a group went out to distribute medicines, food, mattresses and blankets at the Kenyatta National Hospital.

On the previous day about twenty youths of the community distributed similar items at the hospital and 50 pints of blood were also pledged as and when required --the blood banks at the hospital were found to be full.



At Kenyatta Hospital.....handing over supplies to the Duty Officer for victims of the bomb blast. This was done under the convenership of Zulfikar Khimji, Past President of Nairobi Jamaat.

Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania appoints new Office bearers

The following have been appointed to run the Bilal Muslim Mission in Dar es Salaam for the 1998-2001 term:

Chief Missionary

Allamah Seyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

Chairman

Pyarali M. Shivji

Hon. Secretary

Inayat H. Alidina

Hon. Treasurer

Ayaz R. Teja

Committee Members

Fidahuseein Hameer

Mushtaq Fazal

Jaffer R. Jaffer

Iqbal Somji

Murtaza R. Jivraj

Mohamedtaki Rajwani

Husein Dattoo

Mubarak Ladha

Mohamed Pirbhai - Vice Chairman of Africa Federation - ex officio.

The Postal address of the BMM is P.O. Box 20033, Tel: 120111, 112419/20, Dar es Salaam. The telephone contact of the Chairman, Alhaj Pyarali Shivji is 1144113.

Federation Samachar announces new team

The following have been appointed to the Editorial Board of the *Federation Samachar* for a three year period from 1998-2001:

Editor

Munir Daya

Advertising

Amir Lakha

Distribution (Dar es Salaam)

Fazleabbas Dhirani

Distribution (International)

Mrs. Fatim Haji

Miss Fatima Patel

Photographs

Murtaza Jivraj

Internet Edition designer

Fatema Alloo



MUHARRAM 1419 A.H. --- A report from the Bilal Secretariat in Mombasa

The Annual programme of Majalis in Kiswahili were held from April 26th to May 5th 1998 at the Bilal Hall from 8:00 p.m. The programmes commenced with recitation of verses from the holy Qur'an and Utenzi (marthiya in Kiswahili). The majalis were recited by the following respected scholars:-

Majlis 1-2: Shariff Ahmad Badawy
Majlis 3 -5: Ustadh Muhammad A. Dumila
Majlis 6-10: Sheikh Abdulmajid Nasoro from Dar-es-salaam.

The attendance was very encouraging despite the heavy rains, with numbers reaching up to 130 people, including ladies. The majority of the audience were non-Shia brethren. A group of 14 students from Al Mahad Ai Islami (college sponsored by Islamic Foundation) were also in regular attendance.

On the last two nights during recitation of Maqal by Sheikh Abdulmajid Nasoro the audience were moved to tears. Some commented that they were not aware of such tortures done by Yazid forces who even recited salawat in tashahud whilst offering prayers. All the majalis have been recorded on videos which are in circulation. These videos are expected to have a greater effect on the public who were unable to attend the majalis.

RURAL CENTRES: A similar programme of majalis were held from April 27th - May 7th 1998 in rural areas. The majalis were recited by the Masjid Imams or Madrasah teachers at the centres. Students recited Utenzi and Matam in Kiswahili. On the day of Ashura, a procession was organised in five centres. Niyaz was served in eleven centres.

Federation Samachar

Taki Kanji is second for the second time

In April, 1998 the Tanzania Golf Union Northern Province Golf Championship was held at the Moshi Club golf course being sponsored by KLM.

Taki Kanji of Moshi emerged runner up in the 36 hole stroke play event. Taki Kanji was also runner up in the golf tournament in the last Supreme Council games held in Dar es Salaam.

Taki Kanji plays with a handicap of 14 at the Moshi Club. The Arusha KSI Jamaat Chairman, Habib Yusufali also participated in the Moshi event.

Message of Kerbala spreads to Zambia and South Africa

For the first time ever, majlises of Sayyeda Shuhada Hazrat Imam Husein (a.s.) were held in Johannesburg during Muharram 1419 A.H.

Khoja brothers rented a hall where the majalises were recited. The Supreme Council at the request of Manzoor Kanani of Nairobi and Yunus Merali of Johannesburg organised for Sheikh Durul Hassan to travel to Johannesburg. This enabled our Shia brothers and sisters and their families to benefit from this azadari for the first time.

Arrangements were also made for Muharram Azadari in Lusaka, Zambia where Sayyid Shaukat Hussein Rizvi recited majlises.

Educational Insurance schemes offered

Educational costs are going up by leaps and bounds. To help families educate their children up to University level, the Supreme Council, since the previous term, has entered into an agreement with Messrs. Meghraj Insurance Company Limited of UK which can assist to alleviate this burden. Various insurance schemes are available to suit individual needs.

AF Internet team appointed

The following have been appointed to run the Internet Web Site of the Africa Federation for a three year period from 1998-2001:

Web Manager
Munir Daya

Web Designer
Fatema Alloo

News input
Mrs. Fatim Haji
Miss Fatima Patel

The Internet site will soon be given final touches in order to make all areas under construction accessible. Surfers can get to the site on <http://www.africafederation.org>

Morogoro's Dar Ul Muslimeen Orphanage vies to suport destitutes

The Dar Ul Muslimeen Orphanage and Rehabilitation Centre was officially registered in October, 1995 after it began its philanthropic work in June, 1995 by adopting 8 needy orphans of African origin.

All the orphaned children are provided with basic necessities such as food, medicines, clothing and schooling while a reliable and trustworthy woman looks after their daily requirements. The total cost to maintain a child is T.Shs. 15,000/- per month which includes school fees.

The Dar Ul Muslimeen currently rents a residence at Shs. 10,000/- per month but plans to take over the building which is currently being offered for Shs. 2.5 million. The Organisation's coordinator, Akber Ismail says that buying the property would be an asset for the Organisation because this would enable them to build a proper home for more children along with providing facilities for the needy.

The Organisation welcomes one and all to visit their Centre. Their contact details are:

Dar Ul Muslimeen
Orphanage and Rehabilitation Centre
P.O. Box 1909, Telephone: 3151
Morogoro, Tanzania.



Lindi Jamaat's Education programme-- an inspiration to other small Jamaats

The major causes of migration of our community members from remote regions of Tanzania have been lack of medical and educational facilities. Migration has caused inconvenience and extra costs for many families. The affected places are Bukoba, Mwanza, Morogoro, Zanzibar, Kigoma, Mtwara, Lindi and Songea.

The Supreme Council, with due consideration of the plight of our members residing in remote regions, issued a circular some two years ago encouraging affected Jamaats to initiate Day Care Centres. The Council then envisaged that the establishment of such Centres would be a move in the right direction.

In March, 1997 Lindi Jamaat under the committed leadership of Murabbi Gulambhai Manji along with full support of young members in the Jamaat renovated one old room adjacent to the Mosque open compound and commenced a Day Care Centre with nine children. The room has a small open courtyard for the children to play and the reasonable entrance and monthly fees has been willingly paid by parents.

Within one year the Centre has twice as many students with children of other communities also being sent here. The school generates enough finance to meet its recurrent expenses. Regional authorities have been impressed by the initiation of this educational facility by our community and officials regularly visit the Centre.

Kampala Jamat offers Flat for students

The Kampala Jamat has allocated a two-bedroom flat in the Jamat's building to accommodate female students pursuing higher education. The Jamat had made a commitment to this effect during the 1997 Supreme Council Meeting held there.

Following the Resolution passed during the last Africa Federation Conference in April, 1998, top priorities for scholarships are now given to applicants wishing to pursue higher education in local colleges or universities. At present five students with scholarships have been accepted by the Makerere University.

Great results from Mombasa Jaffery Academy

The Mombasa Jaffery Academy's O & A level London G.C.E. results are everything to write about. The school's first batch of A' level students sat for

The number of members in Lindi Jamaat is gradually increasing and the Jamaat is also considering to launch a primary school which will be needed in the year 2001 to accommodate the present growing number of students in the Day Care Centre.

The young and old parents are relieved with the Day Care Centre and keen to have the primary school project implemented soon. This would ensure that their young ones would obtain fine religious and secular education at least up to the seventh grade.

The move by Lindi Jamaat is commendable and the Jamaat should surely be an inspiration to other smaller Jamaats to take heed.

SETWEL Board appointments made

The following appointments of the Setwel Board, for a three year term to 2001, have been made:

Roshan A. Fazal – Dar-es-Salaam – Chairman
 Ramzanali M. Nanji – Nairobi – Vice Chairman
 Mehboob F. Fazal – Dar-es-Salaam – Hon Secretary
 Zakir A. Pirbhai – Arusha – Member
 Fidahusseini Ebrahim – Mombasa – Member
 Murtaza G. Habib – Hon Asst Treasurer – Ex-officio – Member

Education Board gets new Chairman

A new Chairman, Asgher Manji has been appointed to lead the Education Board of the Africa Federation for the term 1998-2001. The full team is made up of the following members:

Asgher Habib K. Manji	Chairman
Raza Chandoo	Vice Chairman
Mohammed F. Sumar	Hon. Secretary
Murtaza Bashirali Nasser	Member
Mazaher Jaffer Dhirani	Member
Sister Latifa M. Hassam	Member
Sister Zinat Shiraz A. Fazal	Member
Sister Hamida Asgher Manji	Member
Murtaza G. Habib	Ex-Officio

CHB announces new team

The new Central Health Board (CHB) team of the Africa Federation has been appointed for the current term that will run from 1998 - 2001. The team is made up of the following members:

Aunali K. Khalfan	Chairman
Inayat Alidina	Hon Secretary
Dr. Mahmood Hameer	Special Project Development
Fazleabbas Dhirani	Special Project Development
Jamil Merali	Medical Advisor/Ladies Liaison Officer
Dr. Dilawer Padhani	Medical Advisor/Health Education
Mohamed Mulla	Physical Fitness Activities cum Conventions
Shakil Dharamsi	Health Screening/Blood Grouping
Hassan Raza	Medical Library/Health Screening
Razahusseini Manji	Medical Bulletin/Publications
Mohamed Pirbhai	ex-officio (Vice Chairman of AF)

The Postal address of the Board is P.O. Box 6710, Dar-es-Salaam. The telephone contacts of the Chairman, Aunali Khalfan are: Tel: (O) 255-51 117004 Mobile: 255-812 782 519 Fax: 255-51 112726/7.

Tahera Sunderji	A, A, B
Gulamraza A. Dattoo	A, A, D

The highlight of the O'levels were Ali M. Nasser and Zahid M. Jagani. Both excelled with Eight A's.



DAR hosts 20th Africa Federation Triennial Conference

The 20th Triennial Conference of the Africa Federation was held at the Dar-es-Salaam Imambara from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th April, 1998 (the Session actually extended to about 3.00 a.m. on Monday 13th April, 1998). The Session was a success with deliberations covering a wide range of communal issues including the discussion of various proposed resolutions. Most of the sessions were conducted with packed attendances.

The visitors from outside Tanzania who attended included: Chairman of Conseil Regional Des Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaats de L'Ocean Indien at Antananarivo, Moajiz Khamis, Stanmore Jamaat Chairman, Dr. Amir Lakha, Aden Jamaat Chairman, Ramzan Jaffer, Kenya National Assembly Member, Hon. Sajjad Rashid of Mombasa, Ahmed Daya and Kassim Manji, UK, Fidahusseini Gulamhussein, Toronto, Riyazhussein Gulamhussein of Maputo, Mohamedraza Hassan Dharamsi, Zanzibar, Azad Dhalla and Gulamhussein S. Ahmed of Saudi Arabia and Ansar Hemraj of Dubai. Other guests included Professor Kamoopuri and Anver Rajpar, Chairman of Zainabia Trust who currently resides in Dar-es-Salaam.

The Session commenced with recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an by Aliasgher Kermalli which was translated into English by Sameer Bharmal. This was followed by Dua-e-Wahdat which was led by Mehboob Somji, the Tabligh Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamat. The Chairman of the Organising Committee, Aunali Khalfan then officially welcomed all to the Conference and after introducing his team members who were ready to assist at all times, he read out various messages gracing the Conference which were received from overseas.

The Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamat, Asgher Bharwani then delivered his welcome address assuring one and all that volunteers were available for assistance to handle individual requirements. In his address he accentuated on

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the important role of the Africa Federation of keeping Africa Jamats together and to solve common problems and achieve common objectives.

CITATIONS: After the welcome address, Citations were read out by the Vice Chairman of the Supreme Council, Mohamed Pirbhai to Ramzanhussein Mulla Nanji and to the Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Habib Jafferli Mulji.

The citation to Ramzanali M. Nanji was for the Hussein Medal conferred to him for the philanthropic services rendered by him to individual members, Jamaats and the Africa Federation. Ramzanbhai is currently the Chairman of Nairobi Jaffery Academy and is also the Vice Chairman of the Setwel Board along with being a Trustee of the Africa Federation. The Hussein Medal was presented to him by the Chairman of Aden Jamaat, Ramzan Jaffer. The full text of this citation is outlined on page 58 of this issue.

A dilatory Citation was then read out to the Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Habib Mulji for the Haideri Medal awarded to him in 1995 at the end of his 12 years at the helm during which he served six years as the Vice Chairman and six years as the Chairman. The Current Chairman Mohamed Dhirani explained to the congregation that the Citation was not ready at the time the medal was awarded because of his sudden appointment. Copy of the Citation was presented to Habibbhai by the Chairman of Stanmore Jamaat, Dr. Amir Lakha. The full text of this citation is outlined on page 58 of this issue.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH:

After the presentations, the Africa Federation Chairman Mohamed Dhirani then delivered his key-note address in Gujarati. After welcoming all guests and thanking the host Jamaat, which he said has traditionally been hosting the Conference every three years, he revisited the deaths of prominent

community personalities who passed away last year following which he began his key-note address.

JAMAAT'S PROJECTS: The Chairman expressed satisfaction that some important projects were completed during the last year. He said that in Nakuru, the Imambara, Mosque and residential flats were officially completed. He said the residential flats are expected to raise revenue by way of rental income thereby helping to finance the Nakuru Jamaat's costs. He then referred to the new Jaffery Islamic Centre in Nairobi which was officially opened on 8 March, 1998. He said this Complex, lying adjacent to the plush Nairobi Jaffery Sports Club, is a proud achievement for Nairobi Jamaat and includes a Mosque, Haydari Madrassah, the Nairobi Jaffery Academy and an Imambara for ladies and gents. He said plans are also underway for the construction of a Musafarkhana, Girls College and Students' Quarters. In Tulear, Madagascar he said that a Musafarkhana and Madrassah were completed while in Majunga, a widow's home was completed. Outlining the projects, that are in the pipeline for completion, Mohamedbhai said that these include a Madrasah and Widows home in Mwanza, an Imambada, Madrasah, Musafarkhana and Alim's flat in the main port city of Tamatavovo, Madagascar and a Dispensary and renovation to the Imambada in Majunga, Madagascar. He said that in Reunion, plans to build a *Bait ul Salaat* are ready for implementation but the Jamaat there was awaiting approval from the City's Planning Commission.

ECONOMIC SITUATION: The Chairman then spoke on the difficult economic times facing the Community and stressed on the need for members to avoid lavishness. He said that the difficult times had a direct bearing on income from khums and donations to the Supreme Council which have dropped, thereby restraining the general performance of the Council by way of

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providing business loans and other welfare and housing assistance.

He said that the Supreme Council has one building in Dar-es-Salaam and three buildings in Mombasa which fetch rental revenues to the tune of \$ 70,000 per year. He said this income would be supplemented with additional income due from a building in Kampala which was recently reclaimed by the Supreme Council. The Kampala Ebrahimhai Memorial Building is expected to fetch an income of \$ 70,000 per year after its current face-lift while in Mombasa at the Unity House building, he said an extra floor would be added when the present tenants vacate the flats which would then be rented out to bring in an additional \$ 60,000 to \$ 70,000 per annum. He said these additional finances plus the income from the Foundation Fund are expected to ease the financial constraints of the Africa Federation in the years to come. Until then, he said the Federation would have to exercise restraint in its expenses.

EDUCATION: On education, the Chairman expressed satisfaction that the Community now generally understands the importance and need of higher education for our children. He said a number of students were provided funds for further education through pledges availed in 1995 which were for a three-year period expiring this year. He said that beginning from next year fresh loans would have to be secured and to this effect he said that the time is now ripe for Jamaats to also share the cost of education for their students.

He said involving Jamaats in financing part of the educational costs would be a pragmatic way of ensuring that educational loans are repaid because individual Jamaats can be more aggressive on its own members and their families when it comes to obtaining repayments. He furthermore said that one possible way of obtaining revenue to finance further education is for Jamaats, which have schools, to increase school fees by a certain percentage and to allocate this percentage towards a fund for higher education.

He decried the attitude of many educa-

tional loan beneficiaries who are not repaying the money advanced to them. He said last year only \$30,000 was collected from five students while seventeen did not pay their dues. He said lack of repayments was depriving other potential beneficiaries from taking advantage of similar loans.

HIGHER EDUCATION - OVERSEAS: On overseas education, Mohamedbhai said that higher education costs are prohibitive in Europe and America. He said that for many courses similar professional training is now available in East Africa and India. He said students should be encouraged to study in Africa and to this effect he said the Supreme Council would give priority to students seeking educational training here.

He praised the outgoing Education Board Chairman, Hussein Rashid and his team for the excellent work done during their term. He said the Education Board has established good contacts with various colleges and universities and raised awareness of the importance of education to our community thereby facilitating community youths to take advantage of the facilities available by the Federation and individual Jamaats.

HIGHER EDUCATION - EXPANSION OF OUR SCHOOLS TO COLLEGES: On schools, he said the Community now has four schools in East Africa rendering education upto Form six level plus four schools in Madagascar while a number of other Jamaats have primary schools or are planning to establish new schools. He said that in Dar-es-Salaam, where the Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary accommodates 2200 students, the demand for student places is high and he praised the decision by the Jamaat to procure the 3-storey high Korean Complex Centre at a cost of U.S.\$ 1.6m which would help extend the Al-Muntazir School, which lies adjacent to it.

He also said that time is now ripe for the Community to think of universities and colleges. He said in Nairobi the building of a Girls College is seriously being looked into with a provision to provide accountancy, secretarial and management studies among other

courses. In Dar-es-Salaam, he suggested commencement of a girl's college in the new Complex. He also emphasised on the need for the Community to produce its own teachers so that our youths are not unduly exposed to other teachers who lack religious or good educational backgrounds. He suggested that establishments be incorporated in Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi that provide teacher training degree/diploma courses.

The Chairman also suggested that with the Community having so many schools in Africa, a time has come whereby the schools need to get together and discuss their problems and progress. He suggested that a Central Board of Schools be set up which could then get the schools to co-ordinate.

Mohamedbhai then referred to the regions in Tanzania which do not have good facilities for education. He said in such regions, families have had to wind up their business and move to Dar-es-Salaam in order to secure better education for their children. He suggested that to enable upcountry Community businessmen to continue with their business operations undeterred, the Dar-es-Salaam Boarding House be revived into its old purpose - that of providing boarding facilities to upcountry students.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN MADRESSAS: The Chairman commended the madrasahs in the Community for doing a good job by providing our children with religious education. He said that women have also been actively involved in madrasahs and suggested that a super or adult education class be introduced for adults and youths wishing to learn religious education. He also stressed on the importance of Gujarati which, he said, should be taught in madrasahs so that our youths are able to read and write the language.

NEEDS FOR MOLVIS: On molvis, he said the Community lacks its own molvis and regretted that "Mehrab" and "mimbar" were still largely dependent on foreign molvis whose deliverances are not always to the required quality as a result of which youths are losing interest and staying away from majlis.

(continued on page 54)

He offered the Community's youths who have studied up to Form 4 or Form 6, a free scholarship to Qum to study religious education for a 4-5 years course in any recognised Hawza. He said priority for educational loans would be given to students seeking to pursue further careers in Islamic education in any recognised university.

SPORTS FESTIVAL: The Chairman then revisited the Sports Festival held in Dar-es-Salaam and said the next Festival will inshallah be held in the year 2001 because for the next two years Christmas will coincide with the holy month of Ramadhan. He said the offer by Dubai Jamaat to host the next Festival is being seriously considered.

SECRETARIAT: The Chairman then talked about the increasing responsibilities of the Africa Federation, with some Community members now residing in new towns and countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia. He said to effectively perform duties and to handle the scope of work involved, the Chairman needs to have assistants and advisors to help and guide him.

VOTE OF THANKS: The Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to all Council officials and other individuals for their whole-hearted assistance, co-operation and devotion which contributed so much to make his term of office a great success. He also expressed his deep appreciation for the dedication and selfless services rendered by all in their respective fields of tabligh, health, education and welfare and prayed to Allah (s.w.t.) to reward them handsomely in this and the next world.

The list, he said, was long. However, he stated that his office-bearers, trustees, Secretariat staff and Jamaat's Presidents deserved special mention.

He also thanked the Jamaats which he visited for their support, hospitality, encouragement and respect given to him during his visits.

OTHER SPEECHES: After the Chairman's address, the Chairman of the Conseil Regional Des K.S.I. Jamates de L'Ocean Indien, Moajiz



All smiles by the Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani as he and the host Jamaat Chairman, Asgher Bharwani are welcomed to initiate proceedings by the Chairman of the Organising Committee, Aunali Khalfan.

Khamis, Stanmore Jamaat President, Dr. Amir Lakha, Aden Jamaat Chairman, Ramzan Jaffer and Gulamhussein S. Ahmed from Saudi Arabia addressed the gathering outlining the situation at their end.

NEW OFFICE BEARERS: The following morning after the confirmation of the minutes of the 19th Constitutional Conference held in Dar-es-Salaam, the following office bearers were elected.

Chairman: Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
Vice Chairman: Mohamed H. Pirbhai
Hon Treasurer: Ahmed H. Alloo
Trustees: Gulamabbas M. Janmohamed (Dar-es-Salaam)
Habib P. Virani (Dar-es-Salaam)
Ramzanali M. Nanji (Nairobi)
Yusuf G. Dato (Mombasa)
Dr. Asgher G. Moledina (Kampala)
Ebrahim Kassam (Kampala)

The following appointments were made by the Chairman by virtue of the power granted to him under Article 16(a) and (b) of the Constitution.

Hon Secretary: Asgherali J. Dhanji
Hon Asst Secretary: Mazaher J. Dhirani
Hon Asst Treasurer: Murtaza G. Habib

The Chairman under the power granted to him vide Article 27 (c) and as announced in the Conference co-opted the following:

Mohamed A. Hassam
Mohamed Y. Somji
Naushad H. Dhanji

CENTRAL HEALTH BOARD: The Chairman of Central Health Board, Aunali Khalfan briefed the Conference on the statistics of various diseases

notably Heart, Cancer and AIDS which are now on the increase in the Community. He praised the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) of UK and the Imaan Foundation of Mumbai for their excellent co-operation and support.

Central Health Board had also invited Dr. Anil Mehta, Dr. S. Bhattacharya, World-renowned Heart Surgeon, and Dr. K. Kothari an Eye Specialist all from India who gave very good presentations on Heart Bypass and Eye Operations.

SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR: Among the candidates from Nairobi, Mombasa, Arusha and Dar-es-Salaam, Noor-el-Ain Shariff of Dar-es-Salaam was declared the winner. He received his trophy from the Chairman of Regional Conseil de Madagascar, Moajiz Khamis. Despite his physical disability, Ain is the top-most table tennis player in the country.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

The following Resolutions were adopted by the Conference

1. Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina: Not to grant Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina any forum for propagation of his thoughts, ideas or philosophy under any Jamaat in Africa. The debate on this Resolution lasted nearly six hours when finally the Chairman declared voting by secret ballots whereby 110 councillors and delegates voted. The results reads 33 No's (NAYS), 73 Yes (AYES), 3 Abstentions, 1 Spoilt vote.

(continued on page 55)



(.....from page 54)

The Resolution which was amended as proposed by Mombasa Jamaat and approved by Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat is as follows:

"This Conference notes with concern aspects of writings by Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina in "Islamic Messianism" and in "Encyclopedia of Bio-ethics" which run contrary to the accepted Shia Ithna-Asheri beliefs."

"In order not to give credence to those aspects of writings which run contrary to our beliefs and be recognised as "accepted shia beliefs", emanating from an author recognised by the Shia Community, this Conference places on record its condemnation of all such writings that run contrary to Shia Ithna-Asheri beliefs. As a mark of our protest against such writings and in taking a moral/religious stand on principle affecting our faith and in order to ensure that our progeny is not unduly misled as a result of such writings, this Conference hereby collectively resolves to call upon the Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats in Africa not to grant Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina any forum for propagation or dissemination of his thoughts, ideas or philosophy until such time as he rescinds and abrogates in writing his objectionable written views which are not according to the tenets of the Shia Ithna-Asheri faith".

2. Trustees: The following Resolution proposed by the Secretariat to amend the Constitution was adopted at the Conference.

Article 35(a) of the Constitution of the Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa was replaced with the new article with the same number and was unanimously approved in the Triennial Conference.

TRUSTEES: (Effective date of the amendment 11th April, 1998)

"The properties and other assets of the Federation shall be vested in eight trustees of whom the Chairman and the Honorary treasurer shall be ex-officio Trustees. The other six trustees shall be elected at each Ordinary Conference, of whom two each shall be from Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, all six to be

citizens of any member country of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa and/or bonafide resident for five years or more in that Country and/or to have immovable property. The Supreme Council shall cause a Deed of Trust to be prepared in accordance with the Law. The Trustees shall abide by the provisions of such deed and the law".

The old article 35(a) which has been replaced read as follows:

TRUSTEES: (Replaced and absolute from 11th April, 1998)

"The properties and other assets of the Federation shall be vested in six trustees of whom the Chairman and the Honorary treasurer shall be ex-officio Trustees. The other four trustees shall be elected at each Ordinary Conference, of whom two shall be from Tanzania and the other two from Kenya, all four being citizens of any member country of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of the respective countries. The Supreme Council shall cause a Deed of Trust to be prepared in accordance with the Law. The Trustees shall abide by the provisions of such deed and the law".

3. Tanganyika Education Council: The Conference unanimously approved that all assets, liabilities, commitments and other affairs of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council – which is being wound up would be taken over and managed by the Africa Federation.

The resolution read: "In terms of Article 34 of the Constitution, at the request of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council, all assets, liabilities, commitments and other affairs of the said Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council, which is being wound up, be taken over in trust and managed by the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa on the terms and conditions to be agreed upon, and in accordance with the same aims and objects and for the same categories of beneficiaries as was provided for in the Constitution of the said Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Tanganyika Education Council.

The handing and taking over will be finalised when Tanganyika Education

Council will complete the handing over notes, documents, files and most importantly the accounts."

4. Education Loans: Among other conditions, approved by the Conference, henceforth the local Jamaats under the establishment of Central school boards which the applicant's originates shall in principle raise 50% of the amount of Education Loan approved by Education Board.

The resolution read: "The Supreme Council shall grant Higher Education Loans upon the following principles and conditions:

1. All eligible candidates, male or females, shall be entitled to an education loan upon the terms and conditions set by the Education Board

2. The local Jamaat from which the applicant originates shall in principle raise 50% of the amount of Education loan approved by the Education Board

3. Notwithstanding clause 2 above, the Education Board will, with advise of the local Jamaat, consider all exceptional cases.

4. The Education Board with the local Jamaats shall set up modalities and arrangements for the financial sustainability of the Education Board Loan Scheme.

5. The Education Board will in addition to its current application procedures, develop suitable procedures for:-

a. Ensuring implementation of this resolution

b. Modalities of repayments

c. Guardianship of female students

d. Actions to be taken against defaulters of agreed repayments and rejection of applications by their siblings.

e. Prioritisation of educational institutions and advisory services to the applicants, and their member Jamaats.

f. Any other matter considered necessary to give full effect to this resolution and mandate of the Education Board.

5. AIDS: It was resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah for any member of a Jamaat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus.

(continued on page 56)



(.....from page 55)

The resolution read: "Resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah of any member of Jamaat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus. Each Jamaat shall establish, the necessary modalities, with the advice of Central Health Board, on blood testing, pre and post testing counseling of the parties, confidentiality of information and other necessary support services. Consent for the Nikah shall be sought after all such independent information as is necessary has been obtained from parties to give informed consent to the proposed marriage."

The modalities of this Resolution are being worked by the Central Health Board and inshallah before the engagement and nikah season starts in Rabi-ul-Awwal these will be ready for implementation by the Jamaats.

6. Restructure of Africa Federation: It was resolved that office bearers will appoint a committee to look into the current structure of Supreme Council and to make recommendations, within an agreed time frame for necessary structural reorganisation.

The Resolution, submitted by Mombasa Jamaat, was unanimously adopted. It read:-

"In order to fulfil the aspirations of the Community and face up the challenges ahead as we approach the next millenium, it is only appropriate that the Supreme Council undergoes a major structural change and at the same time, strategies are laid out that would bequeath to the new generation of leadership that will emerge after the expiry of the current three term, with an organization that is vibrant and with appropriate relevant outlook and approach.

To this end, this Conference resolves to direct the office-bearers to appoint a Commission to look into the ideals and aspiration of the Community and the current structure of the Supreme Council and to make recommendations, within an agreed time frame, for necessary structural re-organization.

Members of the Commission may be drawn from among experienced social
Federation Samachar

workers, professionals, educationists, economics /industrialists with corporate experience and individuals with appropriate religious background.

Recommendations of the proposed Commission be tabled before the next Council Meeting in 1999, and if need be, a special conference convened at the same time to consider any constitutional changes required as a result."

Nairobi Jamaat through its Councillor Alhaj Murtaza Jaffer stated that at the time of doing the restructure of the Africa Federation, it was also necessary to look into the restructure of individual Jamaats. This was agreed upon and the following Resolution was accordingly approved.

"The Federation on its own is not a separate entity. The collection of member Jamaats joining together make up the Federation. In reviewing the restructuring of the Federation, the role, function, and structure of Jamaat organizations also need to be looked into, which should assist in the restructuring of the Federation in the interest of the Constituent Jamaats."

"It was also resolved that the restructure will be done by the Mombasa Jamaat which will appoint a special committee for this purpose." (*more details on page 62*).

7. Reconciliation with the World Federation: "Considering the need for reconciliation between the Africa Federation and the World Federation and recognizing the fact that the existing solu-

tion is injurious to the interest of the Community, this Conference resolves to rescind item No. 13 of the Agenda and urges the Africa Federation to amicably resolve any difference of opinion or dispute it might have with the World Federation in a much more magnanimous manner and in the long term interest and unity of the Community.

After this resolution was introduced the Chairman stated that in terms of Clause 36d of the Constitution this resolution was Ultra Vires. The Conference on the proposal of Mombasa Jamaat gave the Chairman full power to deal with this issue in the interest of Africa Federation.

Much time was spent on the above resolutions, particularly on the one pertaining to Abdulaziz Sachedina. Thereafter presentations were made by the Chairmen of the various Boards under the Supreme Council, the reports of which were then deliberated upon.

VOTE OF THANKS: Masum Meghji, a delegate of Mombasa Jamaat, thanked all councillors, delegates, invitees, various Chairmen of Jamaats, Boards, all visitors and also offered special thanks to the organising committee Chairman, Aunali Khalfan and his team, volunteers and scouts for their excellent service during the Conference. With this note, he moved to offer the hosting of the next Supreme Council meeting earmarked for April, 1999 in Mombasa.

The Conference ended at around 3.00 a.m. on 13th April, 1998.



The Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani and the Chairman of the Central Health Board (CHB), Aunali Khalfan with visiting doctors from India who addressed the congregation on important health issues.

For dedicated service...Citations in Gujarati

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

૧૨ ઝિલ્હાજ, ૧૪૧૮
૧૦ એપ્રિલ, ૧૯૯૮

અલ્લાહ રમઝાન મહમદુસેન મુલ્લા નાનહ,
નૈરોબી.

ધાર્મિક લાગણી અને સામાજિક સેવાની દાજ જે કુટુંબમા ચાલી આવે છે એ કુટુંબના નબીસ ભાઈ રમઝાન મહમદુસેન મુલ્લા નાનહની અપાર ગુમનામ સેવાઓની ક્ષરપે આ માનપત રજૂ કરતા મને આનંદ થાય છે.

સમસ્ત પૂર્વ આફ્રિકામા નૈરોબી શહેર સબક્સ, વેપાર, તબીબી સાસ્વાર તેમજ દેશાવર આવવા બવાનું એક મથક છે. એવા અતી ઝબી શહેરમા પોતાના કમકમમા બહુજ ગુંથવાયલા બોવા છતા ક્ષેઈપક ક્ષેમી બિરહરને વેપાર-સબંધી, તબીબી સાસ્વાર મોઢે અથવા કબ-કબચારતની સ્કર મોઢે બતી વેબાએ એકએક ક્ષેઈ સબાય કે મદદની જરત બબાય તો ભાઈ રમઝાન નાનહનું નામ મોખરે આવે છે બીલકુલ ઢસતા મોઢે સેવા આપવી એ ભાઈ રમઝાનની ખાસિયત છે.

ધાર્મિક ક્ષેત્રે બિલાલ મુસલીમ મીશનની પ્રગતીમા તેમજ મુસ્તતુલ રસ્તુલુલ-અકરમમા તેમનો અને તેમના કુટુંબીઓનો કબનો નોધપાત છે. ઢલમાઓના રવાગત અને મહેમાન-નવાઝીમા પક તેઓ આગબપતા છે

નૈરોબીમા કબચાબાની જર બજાતા છ મહીનામા તે શાબા તૈયાર કરી દેવામા ભાઈ રમઝાનની ક્ષેઈશી અને સબાય ખાસ નોધપાત છે. ખૂલુસથી એક ક્ષર્યને ગતી આપતા બીજ બિરહરો પક ખુલ્લા દીલથી સાથ આપે છે. એનો આ કબનો દાખલો છે.

સોમાલીઆના કબજત પ્રકરમા તેમજ તે પછી સોમાલીઆથી આવેલ ભાઈઓના પુનર-વસવાઢ મોઢે તથા સેટવેલ બોઈના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખ તરીકે ભાઈ રમઝાનની સેવાઓ નોધપાત છે. ભાઈ રમઝાન હેરેશનના ૨૨રી તરીકે પક સેવા આપતા આવ્યા છે. રમઝાનશાઈની વષોની સેવાઓની ક્ષર કરતા તેમના કકમા કુઆ છે કે અલ્લાહપાક ચક્રાઢા માઅસુમીન અં. ના વસીલાથી તેમને નેક તવકીફત, સેકત, આફીયતની સાથે લાંબુ આયુષ્ય અતા કરે અને એમની દીની અને ક્ષેમી સેવાભાવનામા વધારો કરે આમીન.

આ કલ્લી લાગકીઓ અને નેક કુઆઓ સાથે ભાઈ રમઝાનને "પુસૈની" ચંકક ઈનાયત કરતા મને બેક ખુશી ઢપને છે. વરસલામ,

લી: કુઆગીર સેવક,
મહમદ ગુલામહુસયન ધીસમી.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

૧૨ ઝિલ્હાજ, ૧૪૧૮
૧૦ એપ્રિલ, ૧૯૯૮

મુસ્લબી અલ્લાહ ઢબીબભાઈ બકર મુલહ,
દોરસલામ.

સેવાભાવી માનવીઓની ક્ષર કરવી એ પક એક ઈનસાની કસ્ છે. આ તકે અલ્લાહ ઢબીબભાઈ બકર મુલહની સેવાઓની ક્ષરહાની ઢપે આ માનપત પેશ કરતા મને ખુશી ઢપને છે.

મુસ્લબી અલ્લાહ ઢબીબભાઈ સાથે ક્ષેમને લગતી સેવાના ક્ષેત્રમા ઢબી મબીને કમ કરવાનો જે મને મોક્ષે મવેલ તેને લકમા ક્ષેતા તેમની સેવાભાવની લાગણી, બિખાલસતા, ધીરજ, લગાતાર તનતોઢ મહેનત અને અંગત કુસ્માની ક્ષરને લાયક છે.

૧૯૭ૢમા ઢબીબભાઈએ દોરસલામ ખમાતના માનક મંચી તરીકેની બવાબદારી સ્વીકરતા ક્ષેમી સેવાના ક્ષેત્રમા પ્રથમવાર પ્રવેશ કરેલ. ત્યાર બાદ ૧૯૮૩ સુધી દોરસલામ ખમાતની ક્ષર્યવાઢી સમીતીના સભ્ય તરીકે અને મહેસા તથા તાહીજ હીલાગમા નોધપાત કમગીરી બબવી.

૧૯૮૩ થી ૧૯૯૯ સુધી હેરેશનના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખનું સ્થાન સંભાળ્યું અને ત્યાર બાદ છ વર્ષ સુધી આ સેવાઓની પરંપરા ચાલુ રખતા ૧૯૯૯ થી ૧૯૯૫ સુધી હેરેશનના પ્રમૂખ રહીને ક્ષેમને કમકા માગકશન આપ્યું.

હેરેશનના તેમના પ્રમૂખપદ દરયાન ૧૯૯૨મા સોમાલીઆના એ કુખક પ્રકર સમયે ક્ષેમના ઈતિહાસમા સોનેરી અક્ષરે લખાયેલ "સી-ઓન ઈવિક્યુએશન" ની સુંદર કમગીરી અને ક્ષેમી બિરહરોની ભાઈચારા અને સેવાભાવી લાગણીઓના કબ્ય ઢલકસ્તો ઢમેશા ચાકગાર સેથે. ત્યાર બાદ સોમાલીઆથી કબજત કરી આવેલ બિરહરોની પુનર-વસાઢત મોઢે યઝનીઆ તેમજ અન્વ રથબોએ વસવાઢ મોઢે ક્ષેમે જે નોધપાત સાથ આપેલ તે ક્ષરહીનો ઢલેખ ઢબીબભાઈના નામ સાથે સંકબાયેલો સેથે.

બિલાલમુસલીમ મીશનના એક ઢર્મના સભ્ય તરીકે, ગોલન કેરંઢ ઝૂપના એક ઢર્મના ગવરનર તરીકે, તેમજ દોરસલામ ખમાતની છ વર્ષની કમગીરી દરયાન તથા હેરેશનના ઢપ-પ્રમૂખ તરીકે ઢબીબભાઈએ જે સાથ અને સક્રમ આપી ક્ષેમી સેવામા મને મદદરપ બનેલ તેની ક્ષર કરતા મને ખુશી ઢપને છે.

અલ્લાહ સુબઢનહુ વ તઆલાની ખારગાઢમા કુઆ છે કે ચક્રાઢા માઅસુમીન અં. ના વસીલાથી ઢબીબભાઈને તંદુરસ્તી લખું લાંબુ આયુષ્ય બકે અને એમની ક્ષેમી સેવાઓનો લાલ ક્ષેમને સઢાયે મબતો રહે. આ કુઆઓની મકબુલીવતની આશા સાથે ઢબીબભાઈને હેરેશન તરફથી "કચદરી" ચંકક અપક કરતા મને આનંદ ખુશી ઢપને છે.

વરસલામ,
લી: કુઆગીર સેવક,
મહમદ ગુલામહુસયન ધીસમી.

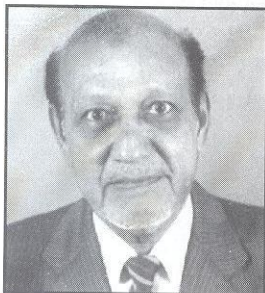


For dedicated service.....

.....a Husseini Medal and a dilatory Citation are presented

At the 20th Triennial Conference, the following Citations were read out by the Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Pirbhai. Pertinent details can be read in the Conference report carried on page 52.

**Murrabi Alhaj Habib Jafferli
Mulji of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**



"To recognise and appreciate dedicated social workers is a moral obligation. In this spirit I have pleasure in presenting this citation and Haideri Medal to Alhaj Habib Jafferli Mulji.

I have had the privilege of working with Alhaj Habib Jafferli Mulji in Community service and from what I have known of him, I have been highly impressed with his sincerity, dedication, patience, sense of personal sacrifice and relentless dedication to the task at hand.

Alhaj Habib made his entry into Community affairs as an active social worker in 1960. He was elected Honorary Secretary of Dar es Salaam Jamaat in 1978. He served as a Committee member of Dar es Salaam Jamaat until 1983 and played an active part in Madressa and Tabligh related activities.

Alhaj Habib also served as a Committee member of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania for seven years and as a Governor of the Golden Crescent Group for one term.

From 1983 to 1989 he served as Vice Chairman of the Federation of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa and from 1989 to 1995 he rendered noteworthy services as Chairman of the Africa Federation.

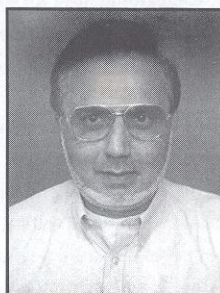
Federation Samachar

During his term in office as Chairman of the Federation, the Community underwent the agony of the Somali crisis and witnessed the historic "sea-borne evacuation" from Somalia in 1992. This historic event in which the Community members performed noteworthy feats, will ever remain enshrined in our history. The greatest endeavours made by the dedicated members of the Community in organising the "sea borne evacuation" of over a thousand souls from Mogadishu and the support received from the cross-section of the Community members in these endeavours and in the subsequent rehabilitation and resettlement of the evacuees in Tanzania and elsewhere are a matter of great pride and satisfaction. The name of Alhaj Habib Mulji will always remain linked with those historic developments.

In recognition of his selfless services and with prayers for his longevity, good health and success in all walks of life I have pleasure in awarding the "Hyderi Medal" to Alhaj Habib Jafferli Mulji.

**Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
Chairman
Africa Federation**

**Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein
Mulla Nanji of Nairobi, Kenya.**



"Love of religion and service to the Community has for decades been the tradition of the Mulla Nanji Family. Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein Nanji has lived up to those precepts and in recognition of his numerous silent services, I have pleasure in presenting this citation and Husseini Medal.

In Eastern Africa, the city of Nairobi

has acquired a unique status for political, economic and medical referral activities. As a resident of this hectic city, despite his considerable preoccupations, Alhaj Ramzan is known to be ever receptive to all Community members who seek him out for advice and assistance in matters related to trade or medical treatment. Travellers stopping over in Nairobi enroute to and from Hajj and Ziyarat can also rely upon Alhaj Ramzan to come to their assistance.

In the field of religious activities, active contributions by him and members of his family in the management of the Bilal Muslim Mission, Nairobi and the Madressa Rasul ul Akram are noteworthy. For Ulema and Zakereen passing through Nairobi, Alhaj Ramzan and his family have been ever willing hosts.

When the Nairobi Jamaat felt the need for setting up a Girls Secondary School, Alhaj Ramzan played a leading role with noteworthy contributions from himself and his family and with the active involvement and contribution from other Community members also, the school project was accomplished within a record period of only six months.

During the Somalia crisis and the evacuation of the Community members from Mogadishu, Alhaj Ramzan played an active part. In the subsequent rehabilitation and resettlement of the evacuees, Alhaj Ramzan has also been at the forefront as an active Vice Chairman of the Resettlement Board. Alhaj Ramzan is also a Trustee of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa.

In recognition of his numerous silent services in the cause of Religion and the Community and with prayers for his longevity, good health and prosperity, I have pleasure in awarding the "Husseini Medal" to Alhaj Ramzan Mohamedhussein Mulla Nanji.

**Mohamed G.M. Dhirani
Chairman
Africa Federation**



CHB outlines its objectives for the new term

The Central Health Board (CHB) of the Supreme Council has outlined its objectives and targets for the period from 1998-2001.

The targets take into consideration the fact that over the years there have been numerous improvements in health awareness in our community with members becoming increasingly conscious of the needs for healthcare in their day to day lives. However new challenges are emerging which require our commitment and action, for example the increasing number of HIV/AIDS cases, Heart diseases etc. in our community world-wide.

The Central Health Board has certain obligations towards the community's well being and therefore has deemed it necessary to have a clear direction and objectives for implementation during the term of office. The targets outlined are as follows:-

1. Improvements and expansion to existing facilities provided by the CHB to the patients in India for treatment in terms of accommodation facilities, general welfare, medical and financial assistance when deemed necessary. Embark on feasibility study immediately.
2. More frequent, regular and closer follow up of health screening sessions. To re-introduce the health screening Projects for Jamats who require our assistance i.e. Tanga, Morogoro, Dodoma, Zanzibar and others. Find ways to improve communication and participation by the CHB Zonal Representatives in the constituent Jamats and vice versa.
3. Better propagation of health education in areas live HIV & AIDS. Heart diseases, Thalassaemia, etc. Prepare a 3 year programme for the youths, ladies and gents population of our community.
4. Assist Jamats that require

guidance and support to set up Dispensaries and Clinics in their respective towns/cities.

5. Appoint expert individual and group counselling in health and Sex Education for all age levels and groups of youths and school children of both sexes.
6. Encourage the constituent Jamats that do not have sports and recreation amenities to provide Sports and Recreation facilities for of all age levels for ladies and gents members of the community.
7. Accelerate, enhance and promote further closer working relationships with MAB of the World Federation and the Imaan Foundation in India for the mutual benefit of our organisations and community members.
8. Establish Medical Library for the medical professionals and students. First consignment of journals, literature etc. supplied by MAB should be put into use immediately.
9. Encourage and assist medical professionals and students for field trips, training attachments, placements etc. by liaising closely with organisations like jamats, MAB, WHO, NGO's etc.
10. Continue to publish the quarterly CHB Medical Bulletin for our community members.
11. Establish database of the health status of our community typical cause of deaths, common diseases established through health screening programmes etc. and advise corrective and remedial action.
12. Organise Medical Convention involving health car professionals, heads of our community, social workers etc. once every two years to discuss pertinent health matters and agree on action programmes and their implementation.

News in brief ...

Education Board...

The Education Board has moved to Dar es Salaam under new Chairman, Asgher Habib K. Manji who takes over from Husein Rashid who did a commendable job during the 1995-98 term when they awarded 21 educational loans to the tune of US \$ 300,020 on yearly basis until the students complete their education.

It is however sad to note that US \$ 448,768 remain outstanding by students who are now well settled but yet are hesitant to settle their dues. The delay in effecting repayments has limited the capability of the Council to provide fresh loans.

Bilal Muslim Mission.....

The Supreme Council has appointed a new 'blood' team of 12 members to head the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

With the courtesy of overseas organisations, two experienced teachers have been recruited for the Hawza at Temeke. A dispensary and Primary School are also being run by the Mission at the same Centre.

Nakuru Jamaat

Construction of the new Mosque and Imambara has been completed. To complete the final phase of flats and two floors, a sum of US \$ 25,000 is required. The Supreme Council initially paid \$ 23,000 for land and has loaned K.Shs. 1 million for the work to continue. Community members are called upon to assist towards this project with a worthy cause.

Mwanza Jamaat

In Mwanza, work has commenced for the construction of two floors for a Madressa and widows home. The Jamaat faces a constraint of funds and donors are invited to assist.

Nairobi Jaffery Academy

The Nairobi Jaffery Academy operates a girls school at the Lavington Complex. The Academy is facing acute transportation problems for students and to alleviate their plight, a mo'amin from Dar es salaam has donated to the partial cost of the purchase of two buses which will also be used to ferry Jamaat members from the Old Park Road Centre to the new Complex.



Africa Federation opts for compulsory HIV/AIDS testing prior to registration of engagements and recitation of *Nikah*

It was resolved in the last Tri-ennial Conference of the Africa Federation that all male and female community members wishing to have their engagements registered or requiring their nikahs to be performed by the Jamaats will require to have blood tests to verify that they are not carriers of HIV/AIDS.

The detailed procedure (*Modus Operandi*) has been forwarded to all Jamaats which have been called upon to implement this system henceforth.

PREAMBLE

There is a general consensus and confidence that socially and religiously no party would be irresponsible enough to get married if one of them is or becomes aware that he or she carries the HIV virus because this would leave the spouse and subsequently even the children vulnerable to the devastating and fatal disease of AIDS.

The responsible trend would be for the parties to undergo the test on their own will before committing to matrimony even if there was no such requirement as is provided in the new resolution adopted by the Conference in Dar es Salaam.

However it is no secret that barely anyone opted to undergo the AIDS test prior to marriage while a few cases have also emerged where known carriers have wilfully decided to get married to innocent spouses who after marriage are highly vulnerable.

The new resolution aims to catalyse the trend whereby parties are compelled to undergo a test privately, the results of which would tell if one is socially and medically eligible for marriage. If yes, they can then proceed to comply with the requirements of the new Resolution.

This Resolution was primarily adopted to encourage members to follow an Islamic way of life that guides one's sex life by strict moral guidelines. Ultimately the aim is to protect each and

every daughter and son in the community against the virus.

The number of reported AIDS cases in our community from throughout the world has now reached the three figure mark. In East Africa, a number of cases have been reported some of which have however been diagnosed only after marriage when the spouse and sometimes even the children have also been infected.

The aim of the new resolution is to ensure that non infected people of our community are not unnecessarily infected. A private test done by both prospective partners in a marriage can prevent at least some cases of AIDS. At the same time however there is a need to prevent exposing affected individuals who instead of being ridiculed require counselling and guidance.

THE NEW RESOLUTION

At the 20th Triennial Conference of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa held in Dar es Salaam in April, 1998 the following resolution was adopted.

"Resolved that prior to recitation of Nikah of any member of Jamat, the proposed groom and bride shall produce satisfactory evidence of each of them being free of HIV/AIDS virus. Each Jamat shall establish, the necessary modalities, with the advice of Central Health Board, on blood testing, pre and post testing counseling of the parties, confidentiality of information and other necessary support services. Consent for the Nikah shall be sought after all such independent information as is necessary has been obtained from parties to give informed consent to the proposed marriage."

Following the adoption of this resolution, it therefore becomes incumbent upon both parties to do the test and obtain the certificates of proof of negative status at the time the Jamat intends to

endorse the engagement (*nondh*). This is to also prevent the stigma of broken engagements, should the test be found to be positive later on. It is required that the test be repeated at the time of marriage if the period between *nondh* and marriage is over four weeks.

Additionally, where facilities exist, parties have been advised to also undergo a Thalassaemia test too when having an HIV test. This would reduce the prevalence of the inherited dangerous disease of Thalassaemia Major.

During the early days of this Resolution should any Jamat come across any special circumstances which require guidance or assistance, they should revert to the Secretariat/Central Health Board without any hesitation. The objective is to streamline procedures for convenience.

The proposed *Modus Operandi* for the tests prior to registration of engagement and the performance of *Nikah* is:

1. *All prospective bride and groom (candidates) will have to undergo HIV/AIDS test to prove their negative status with respect to HIV within four weeks prior to the registration of engagement and again, within four weeks prior to the performance of Nikah.*

2. *Each Constituent Jamat in Africa should appoint reliable and responsible doctors belonging to our community or otherwise, (preferably not more than three doctors) who can be relied upon to give correct interpretation of a test at the same time retaining the secrecy of the affected individuals. Prior to conducting a test, prospective candidates should be required to produce evidence of identity e.g. I.D. Card, Passport, or Driving Licence.*

3. *The prospective candidates*

(continued on page 61)



Its of no use to close the gate after the horses have fled!

(...from page 60)

and their families should be fully briefed about the legal and medical implications. The medical sub-committee and the Jamat should work closely but it is the families who should initiate the step. The appointed doctors should also provide pre and post test counselling to those who undertake the test.

4. *Prospective candidates should approach one of the appointed doctors directly/privately for the HIV/AIDS test. The original test certificate will be handed over to the individual personally to maintain confidentiality. A confidential record should be maintained by the appointed doctors. Relevant charges for blood testing should be settled directly by the individual.*

5. *HIV/AIDS test certificate should be handed over by prospective candidates to the Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Jamat who may if he so wishes check with the doctor who issued the report. Upon satisfaction, the Secretary would endorse the relevant certificate and give clearance to the Secretariat for registration of the engagement and for the performance of Nikah, as applicable.*

6. *Candidates who reside outside Africa and wish to perform their Nikah in one of the constituent Jamats in Africa should follow the above procedure and obtain the certificate of the HIV blood test from one of the doctors appointed by the Jamaat in the country where the registration of Nikah will take place.*

Constituent Jamats have been requested to get actively involved to ensure the entire process is made smooth and efficient in order to encourage candidates to willingly abide by the above procedures.

After the resolution was adopted, the *Samachar* sought the opinion of some community members. Many of those who we talked to were of the opinion that the new resolution is fine but some, particularly youths felt it was an infringement by the Federation into their

personal lives.

Some wondered if compulsory testing was legally allowed while others felt that one test rather than two should be called for. Others felt that it was not pragmatic to demand that overseas members be tested by local doctors and felt that there should be liberty as to who undertake the tests.

A few opined that compulsory testing would discourage overseas members from marrying girls in Africa while some felt that every person has a right to privacy and that revealing one's positive status to the maulana is unethical. They claimed that only a doctor has a right to his patient's disease-related secrets and no one else.

Some analysts claim that Pre-marital HIV tests contradicts the Tanzania Law of Marriage Act, 1971 which provides that each person has a right to marry and start a family. This Act has no exceptions to cover HIV testing and it is argued that unless the Act is replaced, any impediment to marriages, be they for a good or bad cause, is illegal by law.

However pre-marital testing has been imposed on couples intending to get married in some parts of Tanzania but there have not been any objections by the Government to this effect.

According to a recent statement issued by the United Nations Programme giving priority backing action against AIDS (UNAIDS), of the 30 million people with HIV infection in the world, at least one-third are young people aged 10-24. The report indicates that every day, 7000 young people around the world become infected which translates into around 2.6 million new infections a year.

The intention and purpose of the new resolution by the Africa Federation is to avoid the wilful or careless spread of this virus in our community. The reported cases of community members who have contracted the virus is alarming and radical measures were called for. With our youths, particularly females, being so vulnerable it surely would be of no use to close the gate after the horses have fled!

NEWS TITBITS

Durban, South Africa

In Durban, South Africa the first new Shia Centre has been acquired for US\$ 20,000. The Centre, after renovations will serve our community and promote religious activities.

Harare, Zimbabwe

In Harare, Zimbabwe three young doctors from Dar es Salaam, Dr. Rizwan Hameer, Dr. Kazim Dhalla and Dr. Safdar Shivji Haji who are pursuing post-graduate degrees have simultaneously undertaken the responsibility of propagating of the Ahlul Bait (a.s.) school of thought there.

They have invited a Sheikh from the Sheikh Abdillah Academy in Mombasa to run a crash course for local Muslims.

Thank you Bwana Dhalla....

The Africa Federation has expressed its sincere thanks to Gulamabbas Dhalla of Los Angeles who sent in a CD ROM for Gujarati.

With the help of this CD the Council can now issue circulars in Gujarati for the benefit of members who cannot understand English.

Madagascar and Re-Union

After successfully conducting a Madressa Crash Course in Majunga in July and August, 1997, the Regional Consiel de Madagascar again arranged for a similar Course at Tulear from 25 July to 24 August, 1998 for young boys and girls.

To make this possible the Supreme Council sent Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, Sister Masuma Habib of Nairobi and Sister Masuma Somji of Mombasa who undertook the sessions well.

The Re-Union Jamat has also mounted a Madressa Crash Course programme for its students. Meanwhile a contingent of twenty members from this Jamat visited Majunga for the opening ceremony of the Jamaat's dispensary. During their visit they also played the hosts in a friendly football game.

Dar's Tabligh Section receives new books from overseas

The Tabligh Section of Dar es Salaam Jamaat has received religious books from Pakistan and the UK. The books are available from the Tabligh Corner in Dar es Salaam while those outside Tanzania can order them through e-mail tabligh@raha.com. The books include:

- A Restatement of history of Islam - T.shs 8000/- each
- Current Legal Issues - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 2000/- each
- Islamic Laws (Gujrati) - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 5000/- each
- Islamic Laws (English) - Ayatullah Seestani - T.shs 5000/- each
- Islamic Wills - T.shs 3600/- each
- Unto Thee I grant - T.shs 1500/- each
- Marriage - T.shs 1500/- each
- Islamic Beliefs and Practice I - T.shs 6000/- each
- Islamic Beliefs and Practice II - T.shs 8000/- each
- Poems for Muslim Children - T.shs 1000/- each
- The Shiites under attack - T.shs 3000/- each
- The faith of Shiite Islam - T.shs 2500/- each
- A Shiite Anthology - T.shs 2500/- each
- Peshawar Nights - T.shs 8000/- each
- An Introduction to Quran -- T.shs 3000/- each
- Story of Ka'aba - T.shs - 5000/- each
- Occultation of the 12th Imam a.s. - T.shs 3000/- each
- Imam Ali a.s. - T.shs 3000/- each
- Rising of al-Husayn - T.shs 3000/- each
- Martyrs of Mankind - T.shs 3000/- each
- Islamuna - T.shs 3000/- each
- Tohfatul Awam - T.shs 2000/- each
- The Major Sins - T.shs 1000/- each
- Journey to the unseen world - T.shs 1200/- each
- Ideal Women - T.shs - 2500/- each
- Nahjul Balagha (Gujrati) - 1500/- each
- CD's of Matam of Nadeem 97 & 98 - T.shs 6000/- each
- Teach Yourself Qur'an - T.shs 2500/- each
- Selected Ayats - T.shs 3000/- each
- Dua vol one - T.shs 2500/- each
- Dua vol two - T.shs 3000/- each
- Ta'aqibat - T.shs 2000/- each
- Almanac - T.shs 15000/- each
- Dua vol 3 - Part One - T.shs 3000/- each
- Dua vol 3 - part Two - T.shs 3500/- each
- Dua vol 2 - T.shs - 3000/- each

Federation Samachar

Noor is Sportsman of the Year



Noorelain Shariff has been adjudged as the Sportsman of the Year for 1997. An adhoc committee nominated by the Chairman during the April, 1998 Triennial Conference held in Dar-es-Salaam awarded Br. Noor-El-Ain Shariff of Dar-es-Salaam the award out of four recommendations received from various Jamaats. He was handed over the Abul Fazal Cup floated by the Late Alhaj Kassamali Nazarali Alibhai Panju.

The adhoc committee comprised of:

1. Shiraz Pyarali Walji - Kampala
2. Hussein Peera - Dar-es-Salaam

3. Muslim Remtulla - Arusha
4. Mohamed Nathoo - Sports Council

Noorelain Shariff, despite his physical disability, is the top most table tennis player in the Country. He was the first Tanzanian to represent the country in the 1992 Para Olympics for the Disabled held in Barcelona, Spain and also travelled to Chiba, Japan in 1991 to participate in the 41st World Cup Table Tennis Championship. In 1995, he travelled to Tianjin, China for the 43rd Table Tennis Championship for disabled persons.

In addition to table-tennis, Noorelain Shariff also participates in volleyball, swimming, football and gymnastics. He is also actively involved in the gymnasium of the Union Sports Club in Dar es Salaam. He was bestowed the 'Best Volleyball' player title in 1982 in Tanga and was adjudged the best swimmer in 1991 during a 10km. swim in Dar es salaam. He has also been the coach for the Tanzania national team since 1990.

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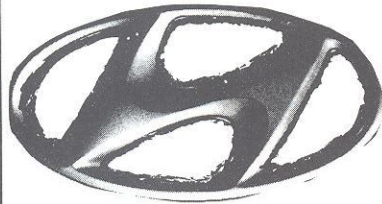
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In Acclamation of the Africa Federation.....

અય ફેડરેશને અફરીકી, તુજહે મીલી બે કૌમી કામરાનો
 યે દીની ઇત્તેફાકકક હય સમર ગયર ફાની
 યે ફેડરેશને શીઆકી ખૂલંદ જબ ખુદાને શાનકી
 બલાએ દુરકી ઓર મુશકીલાત ભી આસાન કી
 પંજતને પાકસે મીલી "અકબર" હમે અકસર નેઅમતે
 એહસાં યે રબકા હુવા હાંસીલ હુઈ બે અઝમતે
 લાખો સલામ હો મુસતફા (સ૦) ઓર ઉસકી મા'સુમ આલ પર
 જરને યે કશતી પારકી, જબ આતી થી મજધાર પર
 મયદાંમે ડટ કર રહો, તાલીમ હય કુરઆનો~અલીકી
 વો વરફ કીસ તરહ બયાં અલ્લાહકે એહસાં કી
 ખુદાને અપને કરમસે યે દીન હમે દીખલાયા હય
 યે ઉન મુખલીસો કે હી ઇખલાસકા ઝરરીન સાયા હય
 યે હરતીયાં હય, અહદુલહુસયને નુરમહમદ, વ ઇબ્રાહીમ શરીફ ઓર મહમદે શરીફ
 હો ખીદમત કયસે બયાં, મહમદે મેઘજ, અરગરે મુલ્લા, ધીરાની વ હબીબ
 ઇહતીદામે અહદેનાસર*, બાદમે પીસરે ** લાખાને કદર શનાસ જગા સંભાલી હય
 ફીરભી ઇબ્રાહીમ શરીફકી ઇખલાસો ઉલ્કત કી વોહ જગા સબસે નીરાલી હય.
 યે સારે સદર~નશીનોકી બડી શાનો શૌકત હય,
 કે હસકી કુરબાનીઓસે કૌમો~મીલલત નાઝં હય.
 યેહી તો બાત હય "અકબર" ફૂએમે સમંદર સમાનેકી
 બહરે વૂસુકસે કી ખિદમતે, બેવા~યતીમો~મૂહાજર~મરીઝેકી
 મરહબા અય દારસલામ, મમ્બાસા, નઈરોબી વ અશ્શા
 પેશકી સબહી મેમ્બર~જમાતોને વોહ ખીદમાત હય ઝીશાં
 અય કોમીઓ, ઇત્તેફાકસે તુમ એક બને ઓર નેક ભી
 યેહી તો જઝબએ ઇમાં હય, મરજએ તકલીદમે રહે એક ભી
 બેશક માનાકે પંજ~સાલકી યે ફેડરેશન સબમે પૂરાની હય
 લયકીન, રગોમે ઉસકી આજભી તવાની, બેશો~જવાની હય
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AFED Restructuring Committee issues preliminary findings

.....invites suggestions and ideas

The Restructuring Committee has issued a preliminary statement cum appeal to community members drawing attention to data, meeting, facts and figures pertaining to the Africa Federation. The data has been obtained with the intention of initiating changes in the mode of operations of the Africa Federation so as to enable it to operate and serve members more effectively.

The AFED Restructuring Committee operates with a slogan, "**Survival is not compulsory. Change is, if we are to survive in a competitive world.**" The Committee consists of the following members:

- Alhaj Hassan Jaffer (CONVENOR)
- Alhaj Akberali Karim
- Alhaj Asaf M. Gulamhussein
- Alhaj Masumali Meghji
- Alhaj Murtaza Jaffer

The initial statement from the Restructuring Committee says: ".....

Mombasa Jamaat was entrusted with the responsibility of forming a Committee to initiate the restructuring exercise

In response to our query about the current structure of the Federation and the decision making process, Council Secretariat has responded with the following comments:-

1. Current Structural Organization is as follows:

a. The Conference is the supreme and final authority and shall have power by resolution passed by a majority of at least 60% of delegates present at the Conference.

b. The Supreme Council (SC) - the Federation affairs are managed by the SC and comprises of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, Hon Asst. Secretary, Hon Asst. Treasurer and six Trustees, Chairman of the constituent Jamaats as ex-officio Councillors, elected Councillors and Councillors nominated by the Chairman.

c. Office Bearers (OBs) comprises Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon Asst. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Asst. Treasurer and three advisors appointed by the Chairman to assist the office bearers.

2. Decision Making:- This is done on day-to-day basis by all OBs in a consensus manner. However, the chairman can exercise his powers as a final authority. Once a week, a meeting is held at the Secretariat for routine works and other decisions relating to the running of the SC.

The Chairman also invites the trustees from time to time whenever the discussion warrants their presence.

Furthermore, the Chairman also invites various learned personalities, ex Chairmen and OBs of SC, professionals, businessman and elders to a specially convened meeting when important subject matter requires the presence of such dignitaries.

3. Committee:- Regular and specialized works require the formation of various committees. SC facilitates such routine and specialized work to particular Committees who carry out the work under the framework laid down in the

constitution and under the guidance of the Supreme Council. If need arises, the committees refer the subject matter to OBs of SC for verification/ratification if they feel it is out of their bounds and requires higher authority to deal with.

The various committees are:-

- * Central Health Board.
- * Censta
- * Education Board.
- * Sports Council
- * Setwel Board (Settlement & Rehabilitation Board).
- * Editorial Board - Federation Samachar.
- * Tabligh Committee - Gents and Ladies.
- * Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania and Kenya.

What is the breakdown of the community population in Africa today? Fifty years ago when the Federation of K.S.I.J. of Africa was formed, the total community population in Africa was estimated at around 20,000. Today, fifty year later, despite a natural growth of 100% the community population in Africa hovers around the magical figure of 20,000 as the following countrywide estimates illustrate.

(continued on page 66)

COUNTRY	ESTIMATED TTL POPULATION	NO. OF JAMAATS		REMARKS
		ACTIVE	DORMANT	
Kenya	3,080	3	1	MSA 1900, NBI 1100, NKU 80, Lamu NIL
Tanzania (Mainland)	11,000	12	5	
Tanzania ZNZ/Pemba	250	2	1	
Uganda	300	1	?	
Somalia	-	-	2	
Ethiopia	-	-	-	
Rwanda	10	1	-	
Burundi	300	1	-	
Mozambique	300	1	1	
Malawi	20	-	-	
Zambia	20	-	-	
Zimbabwe	10	-	-	
South Africa	20	-	-	
Comores	30	1	-	
Madagascar	5,000	15	-	
Mauritius	300	1	-	
Re-Union	1,500	1	-	
Congo	500	2	-	

(.....from page 65)

To analyse the state of the community today and identify trends, issues and priorities, we need to ask a few questions?

1. Define the vision for the type of community we aspire to evolve for our progeny.
2. Why, where and when did we come into existence as a community known as the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community
3. Fifty years hence can we survive as a Community as we know of today?
4. Why do we have to survive as such as a Community? What if we do not? What are the current trends?
5. Fifty years ago we formed the Federation of the K.S.I. Jamaats, initially, of East Africa, later to be renamed, for Africa.

Today, fifty years later, as we look ahead, we need to ask:

- * How relevant and effective is the organization today?
- * What shortcomings or inadequacies can we identify?
- * What do we expect from the Federation and the Supreme Council?
- * What role can we define for the constituent Jamaats or the individual members of the Jamaats?

....from the Restructuring Committee

- * What are the financial resources and the funding sources of the Federation.
- * Does the constitution of the Federation require any review? Suggest avenues.
- * Evaluate the tri-annual Conference and the annual Supreme Council meetings.
- * Evaluate the role and effectiveness of the Councillors.
- * Evaluate the function of the Office Bearers and the Secretariat.
- * Evaluate the role and effectiveness of the various standing Committees.
- * Evaluate the role of the constituent Jamaats/visavis the Federation/SC.
- * Identify issues confronting the Community in Africa today and set them out in the order of priorities.
- * Can we visualise establishment of an NGO.

To evaluate these and related issues and come up with suggestions, we would urge all Jamaats to form a small sub-committee to seek out views and opinion of members and revert with their input and proposals which should be forwarded to the above Committee by 15th September, 1998.

The scope and extent of review is wide open. Questions posed above are only indicative avenues worth looking into.


Members of the Committee appointed by Mombasa Jamaat to initiate the exercise on behalf of the Federation are:-

	Fax	Tel (off)	(Res)
Akberali Karim	314856	312960	224579
Hassan Jaffer	311404	492087	316617
Asaf G'mhusein	221036/7	220563	312816
Masumali Meghji	316681	473001	315184

Kindly advice names and contact address of local liaison person appointed by your Jamaat for this purpose for needful co-ordination.

Individual Community members are also at liberty to contact us directly with any ideas or suggestions.


H.A.M. Jaffer,
Convenor,
AFED RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE.



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No, I am not under duress with the hijab

by Sultana Yusufali, 17, a Toronto high school student.

I probably do not fit into the preconceived notion of a "rebel". I have no visible tattoos and minimal piercing. I do not possess a leather jacket. In fact, when most people look at me, their first thought usually is something along the lines of "oppressed female."

The brave individuals who have mustered the courage to ask me about the way I dress usually have questions like: "Do your parents make you wear that?" or "Don't you find that really unfair?"

A while back, a couple of girls in Montreal were kicked out of school for dressing like I do. It seems strange that a little piece of cloth would make for such controversy. Perhaps the fear is that I am harbouring an Uzi underneath it. You never can tell with those Muslim fundamentalists.

Of course, the issue at hand is more than a mere piece of cloth. I am a Muslim woman who, like millions of other Muslim women across the globe, chooses to wear the hijab. There are many different ways to wear it, but in essence, what we do is cover our entire bodies except for our hands and faces.

If you're the kind of person who has watched a lot of popular movies, you'd probably think of harem girls and belly-dancers, women who are kept in seclusion except for the private pleasure of their male masters. In the true Islamic faith, nothing could be further from the truth. And the concept of the hijab, contrary to popular opinion, is actually one of the most fundamental aspects of female empowerment.

When I cover myself, I make it virtually impossible for people to judge me according to the way I look. I cannot be categorised because of my attractiveness or lack thereof. Compare this to life in today's society: We are constantly sizing one another up on the basis of our clothing, jewellery, hair and

makeup. What kind of depth can there be in a world like this?

Yes, I have a body, a physical manifestation upon this Earth. But it is the vessel of an intelligent mind and a strong spirit. It is not for the beholder to leer at or to use in advertisements to sell everything from beer to cars. Because of the superficiality of the world in which we live, external appearances are so stressed that the value of the individual counts for almost nothing.

It is a myth that women in today's society are liberated. What kind of freedom can there be when a woman cannot walk down the street without every aspect of her physical self being "checked out"?

When I wear the hijab I feel safe from all of this. I can rest assured that no one is looking at me and making assumptions about my character from the length of my skirt. There is a barrier between me and those who would exploit me. I am first and foremost a human being, equal to any man, and not vulnerable because of my sexuality.

One of the saddest truths of our time is the question of the beauty myth and female self-image. Reading popular teenage magazines, you can instantly find out what kind of body image is "in" or "out." And if you have the "wrong" body type, well, then, you're just going to have to change it, aren't you? After all, there is no way that you can be overweight and still be beautiful.

Look at any advertisement. Is a woman being used to sell the product? How old is she? How attractive is she? What is she wearing? More often than not, that woman will be no older than her early 20s, taller, slimmer and more attractive than average, dressed in skimpy clothing.

Why do we allow ourselves to be manipulated like this? Whether the '90s

woman wishes to believe it or not, she is being forced into a mould. She is being coerced into selling herself, into compromising herself. This is why we have 13-year-old girls sticking their fingers down their throats and overweight adolescents hanging themselves.

When people ask me if I feel oppressed, I can honestly say no. I made this decision out of my own free will. I like the fact that I am taking control of the way other people perceive me. I enjoy the fact that I don't give anyone anything to look at and that I have released myself from the bondage of the swinging pendulum of the fashion industry and other institutions that exploit females.

My body is my own business. Nobody can tell me how I should look or whether or not I am beautiful. I know that there is more to me than that. I am also able to say no comfortably when people ask me if I feel as though my sexuality is being repressed. I have taken control of my sexuality.

I am thankful I will never have to suffer the fate of trying to lose/gain weight or trying to find the exact lipstick shade that will go with my skin colour. I have made choices about what my priorities are and these are not among them.

So next time you see me, don't look at me sympathetically. I am not under duress or a male-worshipping female captive from those barbarous Arabic deserts. I've been liberated.

Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (saw)

Charity

A man giving in alms one piece of silver in his lifetime is better for him than giving one hundred when about to die.

Pride

No one who keeps his mind focussed entirely upon himself, can grow large, strong and beautiful in character.



Ruling on wealth after divorce

Murrabi Alhaj Ahmedbhai Issa Hasham of Dar es Salaam recently sent this question pertaining to divorce to our Marja, Ayatullah Al-Ozema Alhaj Agha Seyyid Ali Husseini Seestani. The reply is appended hereunder.

"Ayatillah Al-Uzma Al-Haj Agha Seyyid Ali Husseini Sistani

Assalamu Alykum Warah Matullahi Wabarakah

I hope that you are well and may you always be under the protection of the Almighty. Ameen.

Please let us have your ruling on the following question:

In European countries and in America, the laws of the country stipulate that when a husband divorces his wife, he has to pay 50% of his wealth to her; and if the husband refuses to pay, the wife can obtain her rights through court. Is this action in conformity to sherial? What about the wealth obtained in this way, is it halal?"

Answer

"At the time of nikah for example, if a husband had given an undertaking that in case of divorce he will pay 50% of his wealth to his wife, he must act according to his undertaking. In this case the obtained property would be halal for the wife. But if the wife did not have any condition with ther husband then she cannot compel her husband to pay 50% of his property to her. Such wealth would be haraam for her."

Seyyid Ali Hassan Shestani
29th Safar 1419
Federation Samachar

WOMEN OF THE WEST Vs WOMEN OF ISLAM

"Do the women of the West have more rights than the women of Islam? Who has always had rights? Who believes in "Equality" and who believes in "Uniformity"?"

First of all we need to establish when the issues of human rights were raised in Western society. Britain which is considered to be the oldest democratic country, only recognised equal rights for men and women at the beginning of this century (20th). The West see these rights as a novelty in their lives. However, the equality of rights between men and women have been anticipated 14 centuries ago in Islam.

Is there a difference? Yes! Islam says a woman and a man are not identical in many respects, and the world is not exactly alike for both of them, and their natures and dispersions are not intended to be the same. This requires that in many duties, rights and punishments they should not have an identical placing. Unfortunately, this is not the case in the Western culture that surrounds us. The Western world is trying to create uniformity and identicalness in Laws, regulations, rights functions between men and women. As they do this they are ignoring the innate and natural differences.

Islam strongly approves and encourages equality, but does not agree with identical, uniform and exact similarity. The sadness in all this is that the many rights that have been given to women by Islam have in practise been ignored and should be restored. Some Muslim women blindly follow and imitate the ways of the West. Famous movie stars, singers and MPs etc are seen as role models encouraging dress style and life style.

The biggest misfortune for a Muslim woman or for any woman attempting to acquire identical rights as that of a man, in my opinion, lose the right of being who she is -"A Woman" - yet not reaching an equal of a man. She should have faith in the rights suitable for herself and not be encouraged by the West to exceed them.

This way her status may be considered equal or higher than that of a man. She should take as her models Bibi Khadija a.s.(the Prophet's wife), Bibi Fatemah a.s. (daughter of the Prophet and brave life companion of Imam Ali a.s.) and Bibi Zainab a.s.(the woman who contrived the Kerbala battle to the end, and proved that the blood of the martyrs were not shed in vain).

Resources used to write this article: Mahjubah vol. 2 - no. 7 Imam vol. 1 - no. 12.

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“.....okay sisters, you may now take off your scarves”

...a wrong hijab provides the type of protection provided in rain by an umbrella with holes in it.

All outward actions which Islam requires must be done correctly and with the correct intention, ie not for fashion or to fit into a certain group. That is, it must all be solely for the sake of Allah (swt).

It has been my personal observation that some Muslim girls and women do not realize the significance of hijab. Hijab is arabic for protection and cover. Some people put a lot effort into their hijab, yet it serves no purpose. I am referring to the pointless hijab that some girls wear.

The first pointless hijab is referred to as the headband hijab. It is a band of fabric approximately 4 inches wide. It covers the back of the head and allows all the hair to be exposed. It doesn't serve much in terms of modesty, but at least it comes in handy in case of an unexpected tennis match.

The second pointless hijab is the dupetta, also known as the *Saran* wrap hijab. It covers all the hair, but it is totally transparent. Again it doesn't serve much in terms of modesty, but it keeps the hair nice and fresh.

The third type of hijab is known as the Mickey Mouse Hijab. It is when a girl wears a black scarf and tucks it behind her ear, so that her ears stick out.

We can then move to move to the yo-yo hijabs. The first yo-yo hijab, also known as the Benazir

Bhutto hijab, is the scarf that keeps falling down and needs to be constantly pulled back up....up, down, up, down, just like a yo-yo. The second yo-yo hijab is also referred to as the convertible hijab. This type of hijab is predominant at any type of social event, i.e. an Aqeeqah, Bismillah party, Ameen party, wedding, etc. This is when an Imam or Qari comes up to the microphone and starts to recite Qur'an. At this point, all the convertible hijabs come up...until he says "Sadaqallahul atheem".

I'm not sure, but apparently in some cultures that translates to "okay sisters, you may now take off your scarves". I'm sure this may seem odd, but what's even funnier is when people do not anticipate the recitation of Qur'an at a social event, and are forced to be creative by using accessories such as a purse to cover one's hair. I was surprised to see a woman hold her purse over her head as "hijab"...as if the multitudes of men surrounding her are not a good enough reason to wear hijab, but some person reciting du'a compels her to hold a purse over her head.

Her friends were more creative...one friend used her dinner napkin. I also laughed when I saw two or more girls draped under one dinner napkin during the recitation of the holy Qur'an. Her other friend was still more creative. She used her coffee saucer on the back of her head. I wasn't sure if it was a hijab or a

Yamaka. I didn't know if she was a Muslim or a Jew and I felt like going up to her and saying "Shalom alaikum, sister".

We should remember that hijab is not just a protection from guys, but from a girl's nafs (ego) as well. It should prevent girls from having to spend hours in front of the mirror doing her hair. But, unfortunately, you see girls in front of the mirror for hours doing their hijab as they would do their hair, with all sorts of elaborate braids and the like. I wanted to go up to a sister and say "Is your hijab naturally curly?". I also felt compelled to go up to another girl and say "pardon me, but is your hijab naturally that color, or did you dye it?".

Well, the point to remember is that some people make an effort to wear hijab, but it is futile, because it is not fulfilling its purpose. It's like using an umbrella with holes in it. Hijab is used for protection from men as well as from the girl herself, and should not be used as an accessory or for beautifying oneself.

Anyway, that's it. If anyone disagrees with me or is offended, then I believe you are disagreeing with the teachings of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala.

Please let us do without the many hijabs which do not prescribe to religious teachings and let us not remove our hijab when we are required to don them. After all it is for our own protection.



WIFE ABUSE IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

by a North American correspondent

Wife abuse has hurt many Muslim women, destroyed many Muslim families, and weakened the entire Muslim community. How much longer can Muslims afford to look the other way?

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts)..." Qu'ran 30:21.

"I recommend that you treat women with goodness. The best of you are those who treat their wives the best." Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him).

While Muslims loudly protested on the widely-documented Serbian abuse of Muslim women in Bosnia, the abuse of many Muslim women at the hands of their own husbands is hidden and ignored by the community.

In America, domestic violence is the single major cause of injury to women. "Nearly one quarter of women in the United States - more than 12 million - will be abused by a current or former partner some time during their lives," according to the American Medical Association; and, despite Islamic teachings of justice and compassion, many Muslim women in the United States and Canada are no exception.

Based on information from Muslim leaders, social workers, and activists in North America, the North American Council for Muslim Women says that approximately 10 percent of Muslim women are abused emotionally, physically, and sexually by their Muslim husbands. (There are no hard numbers, because community leaders haven't taken the well-known problem seriously enough to research.)

Wife-abuse, which stretches across all ethnic, racial, educational, and socio-economic lines in the Muslim community, results in severe emotional and physical pain for many Muslim women, a stacking up of sins for many Muslim

men, and many weak, unhappy Muslim families that fail to contribute adequately to the development of the Muslim community and the rest of North American society.

Despite the severity of the problem, the Muslim community has largely closed its eyes and devoted very few resources to helping the victims and stopping the abusers.

This is doubly unfortunate because family violence is one of America's most critical health problems (according to the American Medical Association and the U.S. Surgeon General), and Islamic leadership is needed to deal with this crisis; but Muslims are clearly in no moral position to lead society because they tolerate abuse within their own community.

Forms of abuse of Muslim Women

"Domestic violence is an ongoing, debilitating experience of physical, psychological, and/or sexual abuse in the home," says the American Medical Association.

Although Islam promises women protection from such problems, the reality in many Muslim homes is different. The most common form of abuse is emotional and mental abuse. In Muslim homes, this includes verbal threats to divorce the wife, to remarry, or to take the kids away if she does not do exactly as she is told; intimidation and threats of harm; degradation, humiliation, insults, ridicule, name-calling, and criticism; false accusations and blaming her for everything; ignoring, dismissing, or ridiculing her needs; neglect and the silent treatment; spying on her; telling her she is a failure and will go to hell; twisting Islamic teachings to make her feel worthless because she is a woman; restricting her access to transportation, health care, food, clothing, money, friends, or social services; physical and social isolation; extreme jealousy and possessiveness; lying, breaking promises,

destroying trust; etc. Emotional abuse can take place in public or at home.

Although it's completely contrary to the example of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, the Muslim community nonetheless tends to dismiss the seriousness of mental abuse, rationalizing it as a petty argument between husband and wife, and saying it's not serious unless he hits her. In reality, mental abuse does severe psychological harm to many Muslim women. It destroys their self-esteem and makes them question their self-worth; some have mental breakdowns and go insane.

Furthermore, psychological abuse can lead to physical abuse. Physical abuse includes pushing, shoving, choking, slapping, punching, kicking, and beating; assault with a weapon; tying up; refusing to help her when she is sick or injured; physically throwing her out of the house; etc. Physical abuse escalates in frequency and severity.

The third form of abuse is sexual abuse, involving forced, violent sex. For example, a wife may not want to have sex for health reasons, but the husband may force her anyway.

These three forms of abuse are usually related and occur over a long period of time. Muslim men, just like non-Muslims, often start with mental abuse and work their way up. Muslim women need to recognize the signs of escalating abuse.

Why Do Some Muslim Men Abuse Their Wives?

There are a number of factors that make many Muslim men abusive. Abusers are often part of a cycle, picking up the habit after watching their own fathers abuse their mothers in North America or in Muslim countries. And their own children learn this abusive behavior and abuse their wives. (This is an important point because the longer the Muslim community tolerates abuse, the

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longer it will be passed on from father to son, from generation to generation.)

For cultural reasons, some Muslim men accept the idea that it's normal for a man to hit his wife and that she is no more than a piece of his property. Others abuse their wives as a result of frustration resulting from economic hardship, political oppression, problems with the children, or an inferiority complex. Some abuse their wives because they want them to be more "modern" and less Islamic by removing their hijab (Islamic dress), while others are abusive because they want the opposite.

Some Muslims with superficial ties to Islam don't know that abuse is unacceptable due to their weak faith, poor Islamic knowledge, and lack of interaction with the Muslim community.

Tragically, some Muslim men actually use Islam to "justify" their abusive behavior. Focusing on rituals, considering themselves to be Islamically knowledgeable, and disregarding the spirit of Islam, they wrongly use the Qur'anic verse that says men are the protectors and maintainers of women to go on to demand total obedience and to order their wives around. They also disregard the Islamic requirement for the head of the household to consult with other members of the family when making decisions.

Then, if their wives dare to speak up or question their orders, these men misinterpret a Qur'anic verse that talks about how to treat a disobedient wife and use it as a license for abuse.

In reality, the Qur'an and Sunnah provide clear instructions on what procedures a husband must use in conflict situations where the husband is innocent and the wife is rebellious and at fault. The first step is a peaceful discussion between the two about their problem and likely solutions. This is intended to soften hearts and eliminate misunderstandings.

If this doesn't work, the next step is for the husband to tell his wife his expectations in a firm, decisive manner.

If the rebelliousness and disobedience continues, the husband is supposed to leave the bed, which is really a punish-

ment for both of them for not being able to resolve their differences. If that fails to solve the problem, representatives of both sides should meet to try and arbitrate. As a last resort, if he thinks it will prevent divorce by letting the wife know how serious he is, the husband can use a light slap on the hand or shoulder but not on any other part of the body, and it shouldn't leave a mark or scar. Anything beyond this is Islamically prohibited.

This procedure is to be followed only when the wife is the cause of a serious problem and the husband is innocent, compassionate, and well-behaved. If the husband is the cause of the problem, he has no right to do any of this.

Unfortunately, Muslim wives often accept un-Islamic treatment from their husbands because they don't know their Islamic rights, and they don't realize their husbands are crossing the Islamic line.

Abusive men completely disregard the Islamic teachings of kindness, mercy, gentleness, and forgiveness, just as they disregard the example of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, who never hit a woman and was extremely gentle and compassionate with his family.

Why is help so scarce?

One problem is that many Muslims don't want to get involved in the "private" family affairs of other Muslims. Rather than enjoining good and forbidding evil, rather than trying to stop abuse in a friend's or neighbor's family by offering to mediate between the husband and wife or by encouraging them to speak to Muslim counsellors, many Muslims close their eyes and pretend they don't know there's a problem. So the abuse goes on.

Another reason why abuse isn't stopped is that many abused Muslim women simply don't seek out help. They're afraid that if their situation becomes public they will lose their privacy because of gossip and they fear the abusers will become more hostile when the negative publicity gets back to them. Furthermore, many abused Muslim women remain silent because they lack confidence in themselves and believe that they somehow deserve the abuse. Abused Muslim women also keep quiet

out of a feeling of hopelessness and a belief that no one will help them, out of financial dependence on their husbands, out of a desire to keep homes together for the children's sake, or out of love for the abusive husbands. Other Muslim women accept the abuse as a fact of life and learn to live with it.

Of those who reach a breaking point and seek help, many Muslim women turn to *maulanas* but often find them unhelpful. The *maulanas* often tell these women to be patient and pray for the abuse to end. Some make the abused Muslim women feel guilty, telling them they have brought the abuse upon themselves and instructing them to go home and please their husbands. Other imams, who are sincerely but mistakenly misinterpreting Islam by putting the importance of family privacy above any harm that might come to the individual woman, tell the women it is wrong for them to discuss their problems with anyone other than their husbands.

Relatively few *maulanas* have had the wisdom and courage to tackle the problem head-on. As a result of this, many abused women don't bother turning to them for help.

Looking for other sources of help, many abused Muslim women have turned to relatives only to be told to accept the abuse because making a big deal out of it could hurt the relatives' family honor and reputation.

Abused Muslim women then often turn to Muslim female activists and Muslim women's organizations for help. While these activists are often untrained in crisis intervention, some of them get the abused women out of their houses and hide them until Muslim men can be sent to try to reason with their husbands. They often collect money from other women to give to the abused women until it's safe for them to go back home. When continued attempts to salvage the marriages prove futile, these activists counsel the abused women on how to get out of their marriages.

As for national Islamic organizations, most have largely ignored the issue of wife abuse, neglecting to highlight the

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problem and solutions during national conferences or to devote resources to helping abused Muslim women.

Left to suffer, many abused Muslim women turn to shelters run by non-Muslims for help. Going to a non-Muslim shelter can result in social workers taking children away from troubled Muslim homes if they think it is better for them to be in a more stable environment, which often ends up being a non-Muslim home.

Many women go even further, leaving Islam altogether because the Muslim community fails to live up to the Islamic promise of protection, brotherhood, and sisterhood.

The Community's Role

The Muslim community has failed in its obligations to effectively protect many Muslim women and to bring many cruel Muslim men to justice. The community needs to deal much more effectively with wife abuse in order to stop the immediate suffering of people in abusive situations and to help build healthy Muslim families.

First, the community must accept the fact that there is a problem and to analyse ways on how to deal with it. Then a core group of trusted, active Muslim men and women who are committed to ending wife abuse in the Muslim community and to strengthening Muslim families, must become knowledgeable about Islamic guidelines on the family and be trained in crisis intervention and counseling. (Unfortunately, some community leaders will be too ignorant or arrogant to seek such training; but they must not be allowed to get in the way.)

In North America, since there aren't yet many Muslims qualified to teach crisis intervention and counseling, several Muslim women have started learning these techniques from non-Muslim social service agencies (listed in the phone book under wife abuse, domestic violence, or crisis intervention). Other Muslim women and men need to follow suit. Whatever they learn from these agencies should be cast in the light of their Islamic knowledge of properly functioning Muslim families.

Once they know what they're doing, members of core groups across the continent should recruit and train others in their communities in crisis intervention and the Islamic perspective on the family. In this way a network of counselors can be established in major cities.

A list of trained Muslims and their phone numbers (or one Muslim hotline number) should be circulated throughout the community in each city so that abused women know whom they can turn to for meaningful help. (Most of the women likely to approach the network will initially be physically abused Muslims. Victims of mental abuse are less likely to reach out at first because many have become accustomed to the abuse and accept it as a way of life. But educational programs at community gatherings — explaining what Islamic family life should be like and explaining that there is help available for abused women — will let emotionally abused Muslim women know they have a way to stop the pain.)

These trained Muslims should give abused women shelter (at people's homes or at community facilities, such as a rented apartment) for periods ranging from several days to several months depending on the extent of the abuse, while counseling them. At all times a high level of confidentiality should prevail as the last thing an aggrieved woman would want is publicity of her plight.

Taking into account the fact that many Muslim women turn to non-Muslim shelters because they don't want to deal with the Muslim community or because the community program is not big enough to help them, the Muslim community should sensitize people running non-Muslim shelters to the particular needs of Muslim women; and trained Muslims should visit the shelters regularly and constantly remind shelter operators that they are available to help whenever a Muslim woman comes in.

While caring for abused women, trained Muslims should counsel abusers separately, making them aware of the reasons they abuse, of the fact that their actions harm their wives, that such behavior is completely un-Islamic, and that God will hold them accountable.

After separate counselling, the next step would be joint counselling for the couple or the entire family. The objective should be to heal the family, but divorce may be necessary.

Another option, that some Muslims in New York have tried, is to punish Muslim men for their abusive actions. A "security force" warns, and then beats up, if necessary, Muslim men who continue beating their wives. Usually the abusers get the message; this is the only language many of them understand. Some men have to be beaten before they wake up and are ready to listen to rational, Islamic arguments.

Police and psychiatrists may have to be involved in severe cases of chronic abuse. Community education on happy family life is an indispensable aspect of Islam and community leaders and other concerned Muslims have a responsibility to educate people — about the problem and about efforts to help victims and prevent future abuse — through Friday khutbahs (sermons), educational seminars and workshops. These educational programs can themselves reduce abuse by letting people know the community isn't going to tolerate wife abuse anymore.

Furthermore, the community needs to establish classes to teach Muslims, young and old, how to be proper husbands and fathers and to teach Muslim women, young and old, how to be proper wives and mothers.

Many Muslims don't know their rights and obligations in these roles. In addition, in order to prevent future family problems, parents and community leaders must teach children and young adults to be compassionate, to value the family, and to resolve problems in an Islamic, non-violent manner. It's also important for Muslims to study fields like psychiatry, women's issues law, social work and counselling.

The Muslim community has tolerated abuse for a long time. How much longer will Muslim families be weakened by abuse? How much longer will abusers be allowed to run free and unpunished in the community? How much more abuse will Muslim women have to endure? Certainly enough is enough!



HIV and AIDS make their presence felt in the community

As far back as early 1990, the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) of the World Federation had brought up the subject of HIV & AIDS in our community for discussion in one of the Executive Council meetings held in Peterborough. It drew peoples' attention to the fact that if no urgent action is taken, this deadly infection will affect our whole community. The audience were shocked to hear this and some found it difficult to believe that such a disease can penetrate our community. Some even accused the MAB of spreading panic in our community.

Alas, HIV & AIDS has penetrated our community. So far the MAB has received 110 cases (see table below) of whom most have died. This however is a tiny fraction of what the real figures are. MAB estimates that over a thousand people in our Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Community world-wide are affected by HIV & AIDS at the moment. This is a conservative figure. Other doctors working closely with our community put prevalence to 3%.

Now, marriages are ending up in divorce and engagements are being broken because one of the partners is HIV positive.

Now in our communities:-

-AIDS is being passed on to children from their mother.

- Aids is being passed on to the offspring.

- Marriages are ending in divorce and engagements are being broken because one of the partner is HIV Positive.

Some of the facts about HIV & AIDS:

1. The first fact about AIDS is that AIDS is now a fact of life. Too many people still think of it as a disease which "other" people contract.

2. Society's reaction to AIDS have varied from shock and fear to complacency. As we are a close knit community, HIV and AIDS is a particularly important issue. No doubt, strict adherence to Islamic teachings will save us from this dangerous disease.

3. As yet there is no cure for HIV (which leads to AIDS) so there is only one way to combat the disease. That is to prevent it from spreading. AIDS kills. Once infected, always infected.

4. AIDS is a world-wide problem amongst people of all ages. Early cases were found in drug abusers, blood transfusion patients and people who practised high risk sexual activities such as homosexuals and prostitutes. But now HIV is being spread through conventional sex - between men and women.

5. HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the name of a virus that can damage the body's immune system. The immune system fights off illness, and if the body's defences are severely weakened this can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). AIDS is the name for a collection of different diseases which can cause serious illness or death in both adults and children.

6. In adults, a test for HIV antibodies will not produce a positive result until at least 3 months after infection and this is called the "window" period. It is important to remember that even though a test result may be 'negative' during the "window" period, a person can be infectious at this stage, if they have HIV. People who develop AIDS become ill from a variety of problems which they cannot fight off and from which they eventually die. Two illnesses which commonly affect AIDS patients are a type of pneumonia called *Pneumocystis Carinii*, and a form of cancer which attacks the skin called *Kaposi's Sarcoma*. DEATH OCCURS WITHIN 3 YEARS OF GETTING AIDS.

How is HIV Transmitted

+ through unprotected vaginal or anal intercourse with an infected man or woman;

+ by infected blood entering the blood stream through sharing injection needles, transfusion of infected blood or blood products, intravenous drug users (those who take injections regularly for pleasure), needle injuries, etc. Check if blood or blood products are screened in your country.

+ from a woman with HIV to her baby either during pregnancy, or during delivery.

WHO IS AT RISK?

People who:-

- a) Have sexual intercourse with an infected man or woman.
- b) Use intravenous drugs.
- c) Share injection needles.

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YEAR NUMBER OF PATIENTS PER YEAR CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED

YEAR	NUMBER OF PATIENTS PER YEAR	CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED
1991	2	2
1992	6	8
1993	8	16
1994	13	29
1995	17	46
1996	19	65
1997	21	86
1998	24 (UP TO APRIL, 1998)	110

- d) Have a transfusion with infected blood or blood products.
- e) Have frequent sexual intercourse with many partners.
- f) Have sexual intercourse with prostitutes.
- g) Indulge in prohibited sexual behaviour e.g. homosexual intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, etc.
- h) Are born to infected mothers.

PREVENTION

1. The Islamic life style - chastity before and fidelity within a marriage - is a safeguard against acquiring this disease. Live within the bounds of The Islamic Shariah and adhere to the injunctions prohibiting homosexuality and extramarital sexual relations. Despite the alarming aspects of this illness it is reassuring to know that we have the ability to choose to avoid AIDS and the answer lies in 'living within the precincts of the moral code' as prescribed by Islam and upholding the values of chastity and morality. Being faithful to ones wife or husband is the best way of prevention.

2. If you use a condom use it correctly. Use water based lubricant gel with the condom. Oil based gel can weaken the rubber.

3. Remember - many signs and symptoms of AIDS coincide with wide variety of illness and therefore early medical help should be sought where suspicion arises.

4. Have screened blood transfusion. Except in life threatening conditions, a blood transfusion for any purpose should be refused unless it has been guaranteed to have been screened for HIV. Where in doubt, it is always advisable to arrange donors within family or community whose health status is known.

5. Don't use intravenous drugs. Do not share your needles, syringes, mixing bowls etc., if you happen to use intravenous drugs.

6. Do not share razors, toothbrushes and towels.

7. Do not share Zanjeers or go too close to the user.

How to quit smoking

THE following are the different ways smokers have actually used in restraining themselves to live without cigarettes. Any one or several of these methods in combination might be helpful to you.

1. Before you quit smoking, try wrapping your cigarettes with a sheet of paper. Every time you want a cigarette, unwrap the pack and write down what you are doing, how you feel and how important this cigarette is to you. Do this for a couple of weeks and you'll have cut down as well as developed new insights into your smoking.
2. If cigarettes give you an energy boost, try gum, modest exercise, a brisk walk or a new hobby. Avoid eating new foods that are high in calories.
3. If cigarettes help you relax, try eating, drinking new beverages, or social activities within reasonable bounds.
4. When you crave cigarettes, you must quit suddenly. Try choosing an opportune time to quit, such as when you are ill with a cold or influenza, and have lost your taste for cigarettes.
5. Never smoke after you crave for a cigarette until three minutes have passed since you got the urge. During that three minutes change your thinking or activity.
6. Plan a memorable date for stopping. You might choose your vacation, New Year's Day, your birthday, a holiday, the birthday of your child, your anniversary. But don't make the date so distant that you lose momentum.
7. If you smoke under stress at work, pick a date for stopping when you will be away from your work.
8. Don't store up cigarettes. Never buy by the carton. Wait until one pack is finished before you buy another.
9. Never carry cigarettes about with you at home or work. Keep your cigarettes as far from you as possible.
10. Never carry matches or a lighter with you.
11. Change your brand of cigarettes weekly so you are always smoking a brand of lower tar and nicotine content than the week before.
12. Never say, 'I quit smoking' because your resolution is broken if you have a cigarette. Better to say, 'I don't want to smoke now'. This way you maintain your resolution even if you 'accidentally' have a cigarette.
13. Each day try to put off lighting your first cigarette.
14. Only smoke half a cigarette — throw the other half away.
15. After you have quit, never face the confusion of 'craving a cigarette' alone. Find someone you can call or visit at this critical time.

Telephone, a source of infection

Making a call from a public booth of a hospital ward can prove to be dangerous as the mouthpiece of a telephone is a potential vector for transmission of diseases, a study warns. "Telephone infection" is rampant in hospital wards, states the study published in a Journal of Association of Physicians of India (JAPI) by a team of doctors led by Dr. V. Singh and Dr. S.P. Garg at the Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital, Jaipur.

According to the study, the telephone can be a source of respiratory infections like bronchitis or pneumonia, oral cavity infections and dental problems. A bacterial culture from the telephone mouthpiece installed in the wards of the SMS Hospital has shown that 20 out of 43 telephone equipment carried pathogenic bacteria.

Although most bacteria are killed within hours due to drying, bacteria like *staphylococci* were found to be resistant to heat and remained viable for weeks. Saliva sprayed into the mouthpiece by betel chewing patients is the most likely source of infection. The researchers said that saliva mixed with dust and betelnut pieces provide an ideal medium for the bacteria to grow and multiply. Earlier, studies by the researchers had shown bacterial contamination on hospital instruments like stethoscope and ultra-sonography devices but this is the first time that telephones are being suspected for the same. To prevent "Telephone Infection" they suggest that a thin polythene plastic cover may be fixed over the mouthpiece and cleaned with disinfectant swabs after each use.



Felled by an *Istakhaaro!*

by Ali Yusufali, Dubai

We sit at the dinner table, my brother, sister, her family and Mummy. It is an occasion that almost always brings up the subject of my marital status. I try and maintain a passive face on these occasions, indifferent, as the moment usually passes after a while and talk turns to other (mundane) topics. Mummy is emotional, like she always is when it is discussed. At forty-one and divorced for five years, she and the rest of my immediate family are very eager, nay, desperate to have me remarried. I wonder what drives their relentless urging for me to take a wife; my advancing age, my sharpening eccentricity, the increasingly scantiness of my scalp, maybe all of the above? And so invariably, the subject crops up and predictably Mummy ends the discussion with the words, "You await my death before you will marry again, I know it, you want me to be out of the picture before you bring a *bahu* home!" Sniffle.

I sigh, but make a mental note of doing something about the situation. I really must marry again, this *mutah* business is getting to be pretty expensive anyway. Even the heavens say so. I was at Mahshad visiting the Imam (as) recently and an *aalim* nearly scared me out of my skin when he abruptly proclaimed I would never be happy or contented at heart until I tie the knot again. The scary part was that he did not know me or that I was single! How did he know? Maybe saw it in my eyes? I have a much greater respect of these *ulemas* now, and try to cast my eyes down when I (occasionally) converse with them. What if they come up with more hidden secrets that even I do not know? Scary!

I am really not against the institution of marriage, really. I mean it would be great to have someone to share your life with, the joys and sorrows, you know what I mean, yes? And cheaper too, compared to *mutah*, I mean. Some men would argue the point... Anyway, I would be married today if I found the right person, and yes, I am choosy. I have the right to be. I have been bitten hard and I will be thrice shy. Of the

women I have met since my divorce, none have really clicked; not a *momeena* anyway.

So on a business trip recently, I make it a point to look up an old contact in Bombay. This lady had invited me to meet her divorced daughter when I was last in India a year ago, but she had called me on my last day there, and I had promised to look her up on my next trip. Well, I call her and yes of course she remembers me, she is so, so happy to hear from me, yes her daughter is still unmarried and yes she will definitely meet me. Well and good, we make it a point to meet the next day. Incidentally, the company I am involved in on a business proposal employs this person I am to meet. Is this a coincidence or is it a coincidence?

Well, the three of us meet and guess what? As it happens once in maybe a million tries, it is a perfect match! She is pretty, (*masha'Allah*), intelligent and educated, (*masha'Allah*) and most important off all, a true *momeena*, (*masha'Allah*). I like her instantly and guess what again? The feeling is mutual, the girl actually likes me. I am on top of the world, I am ecstatic, and I am overwhelmed, I move around Bombay with a silly grin on my face and a spring on my feet. The rickshaw drivers, taxi drivers and other Bombaites write me off as another nut among the many they encounter daily. Suddenly, the heat and humidity is not *so* bad, the streets are not *so* filthy, the smells not *as* bad as I had first imagined... I am *really* happy after a long, long time.

As her father and brothers are in the Middle East and their approval is mandatory for the union to happen, the mother says we cannot meet until then but conversation on the telephone is permitted. So we talk on the phone for hours, bonding and building a relationship. We plan a future together and she demands a dowry of a trip to *Hajj* and *Ziyarat*, reinforcing my belief about her *imaan*. We exchange gifts and I receive a large bouquet of red roses, hmmm.

The future seems set until a certain Mr. *Istakhaaro* makes an unexpected appearance...

I return to Dubai happy and contented, sure that my life will finally settle to a more predictable pattern. Mummy, *Bhaya* and the maid give me odd looks at my apparent transformation. I am taking a nap after a fine lunch next day when the maid, announcing a telephone call from a neighboring country, wakes me up. I instinctively know who it is; Mr. Brother wanting to come and check me out. I clear my throat and say "salaam alaikum" in my best possible voice. The tone of reply is not at par and I immediately realize something is very wrong. He is truly apologetic and remorseful. He has discussed my marriage proposal with an *aalim* and the verdict of an ensuing *istakhaaro* is bad. Real bad. So sorry, he says, so very, very sorry!

I am drenched in sweat and my heart is thumping as I replace the receiver. I am sure a slap on my face would not have been more hurtful. My obvious fist reaction is of anger and hurt at the rejection. Then I cool down a bit and think about the situation. There has to be a way out, I tell myself, there must. I have waited long and hard for this person, I can't give up without a fight.

That same day, after *magribain* prayers, I seek out an *aalim* (with eyes downcast, of course) and request an *istakhaaro* for *nikah*. There is a moment of silence. Maybe he is not convinced I am still of marriageable age? *Tsk*, he clicks his tongue. It is better not to do *istakhaaro* in case of *nikah*, do *tawakal'Allah*, says he. There is amusement in his voice, but I am still reluctant to look into his eyes. No, I insist, please do an *istakhaaro*. Very well, says he, make a *niyat*. I make one and wait, heart in my mouth. Seconds later, he gives the verdict, it's great, very good, go ahead, *mubaarak*. I break into a grin and want to give him a bear hug (eyes downcast, for sure) but race home instead to call Bombay to give the lady

(continued on page 77)

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the good news.

Not so fast buster, says she, why did Allah (swa) say no to me and yes to you? He loves me more, I attempt at humor? She is not amused. No, no, says she, there is divine message here, a warning maybe? Yes, I agree there is a message all right, and He says yes, go ahead, no warnings. *Aacha*, we will talk to Mr. Brother again, she says. Okay, I agree, and I will write an email to him too. Yes, yes please, do that, and Yusuf, please, please impress him and pray for us and give *sadeqa* and keep *haajaat* and pray extra *namaaz*... I quickly agree to all her demands.

And so I write an impassioned plea to Mr. Brother, requesting him to ignore his *istakhaaro* result and accept mine instead. He writes back. Sorry, can't do that but give me a week to think over the issue and I'll get back to you. I accept reluctantly, as if I have a choice. I do not have to wait long. Mr. Brother asks Mr. *Istakhaaro* once again the following day and their interpretation of his ruling still refuses me a bride, my mother a *bahu* and my siblings a *bhabhi*. So what shall we do now, I ask my lady. What can I do, she weeps in anguish, I can't displease Allah (swa). But He gave a resounding yes to me, I wail in pain and despair. Well, He said no to me and I can't go against my family wishes...our hearts weep.

I think I will stick to *mutah*, it's virtually painless at the heart although it does hurt the pocketbook now and then. But then there are no known remedies for broken hearts, are they? Oh yes, and keep my eyes downcast in the company of those who know.

Note: Although this article is written at an attempt at humor, the underlying message cannot be ignored. There are so little known facts about Istakhaaro and the apparent misuse of it continues unabated. I personally tried to do some research on it after the above incident but surprisingly, there is very scant, if any written works in English on the subject. What are its origin, when to use it, do we have to follow the verdict, is it recommended, did the Imams (as) prescribe it...?

Once in a blue moon....

Do you ever take a busman's holiday or strike while the iron is hot? Here's a few sampling of such common phrases and the intriguing, uncommon stories behind them.

SAVED BY THE BELL: It means to be spared from a difficult situation at the last possible moment. In England, in the late 17th century, a sentry at Windsor castle was accused of being asleep on duty. His defence at the court-martial was that since he had heard the clock of St. Paul's in London, 20 miles away, strike 13 at midnight, he could not have been asleep.

The court ridiculed the idea that the bells of St. Paul's could carry between London and Windsor, and sentenced him to death. It was later verified, however, that the clock of St. Paul's did strike 13 instead of 12 times on that particular night. Saved by the bell, the sentry was released and lived to the ripe old age of 102.

GET UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF BED: This figure of speech refers to anyone who is moody or bad-tempered for the day. It is based on the old superstition that it is unlucky to get out of bed from the left side - left-hand side was associated with the west, where the sun sets, symbolizing death.

KICK THE BUCKET: The bucket in this phrase does not refer to the vessel used for carrying water, but to the bucket beam or wood frame on which pigs were hung after slaughter. Anyone who has 'kicked the bucket' has therefore died.

GONE TO POT: This refers to anything beyond repair or anyone incollapse. The phrase comes from practice of throwing leftover food into a pot for stew or hash.

ONCE IN A BLUE MOON: During the volcanic eruption on the Indonesian island of Krakatoa in 1883, the dust thrown into the atmosphere caused the moon to appear blue for some time. Natural disasters of such magnitude are rare, so the expression means something that seldom happens.



Smile Corner

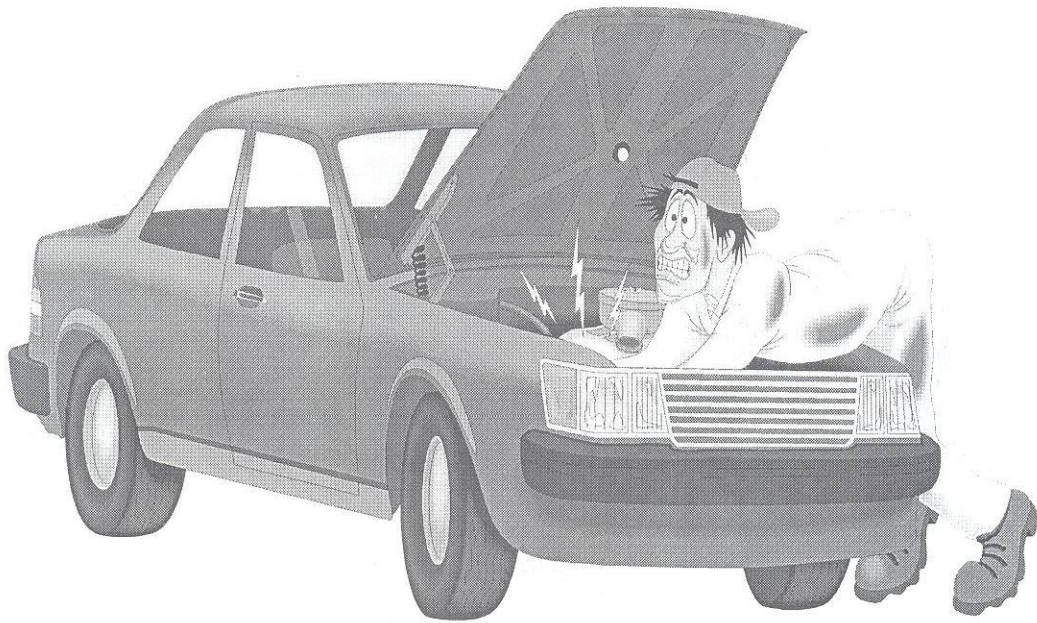
There were two young brothers, 8 and 10 years old, exceedingly mischievous. Whatever went wrong in the neighborhood, it turned out they had a hand in it. Their parents were at their wits end trying to control them. Hearing about a religious teacher nearby who worked with delinquent boys, the mother suggested to her husband that she would ask the teacher to talk with the boys and he agreed. The mother went to the teacher and made her request. He agreed, but said he wanted to see the younger boy first and alone. So the mother sent the younger boy to the teacher.

The teacher sat the boy down across his HUGE, impressive desk. For about five minutes they just sat and stared at each other. Finally, the teacher pointed his forefinger at the boy and asked, "Young man, where is God?"

The boy looked under the desk, in the corners of the room, all around, then said nothing. Again, louder, the teacher pointed at the boy and asked, "Where is God?" Again, the boy looked all around but said nothing.

A third time, in a louder, firmer voice, the teacher leaned far across the desk and put his forefinger almost to the boy's nose, and asked, "Young man, I ask you, where is God?" The boy panicked and ran all the way home. Finding his older brother, he dragged him upstairs to their room and into the closet, where they usually plotted their mischief. He finally said, "We're in Bi-i-i-g trouble." The older boy asked, "What do you mean, 'BIG trouble'?" His brother replied, "I'm tellin' ya, we're in BIG trouble. God is missin' and they think we did it!!"

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In the year 2500.....

by S. Naqi, Karachi

I woke up to the sound of my new alarm clock and heard it say, "Wake up! time for school!" I got out of bed, the date flashed on the electronic calendar which hung on the wall: 2nd January, 2500. I quickly got into my metallic uniform, wore my auto-breaking sneakers and headed for the breakfast machine. I gobbled down some vitamin pills and got into my aircraft. The aircraft were intricately designed and a computer had been fitted in it which controlled all its movement so that there was no need of manual handling. The newly constructed air cushions around motor vehicles prevented collisions and accidents and so students were also allowed to drive on the highways.

I finally reached the school parking lot after covering the distance of 20 miles in a three-minute continuous journey. The parking lot greatly resembled the aerodomes of the twentieth century. After parking the aircraft, I reach the classroom on electronic roller skates. The bell, which sounded more like the police siren of the past, rang as I entered the classroom. The electronic doors of the classroom shut automatically at the sound of the bell. No one now could enter or leave the room. I sat down at my desk and switched on the computer. It gave all the data of what we had to study that day. There were no human teachers but the computers were present for student's guidance. The room was filled with numerous computers and the walls were totally covered with electronic charts showing the functions of the machines.

The computer began chapter 65 of History. We soon learnt how people in the past used to travel in boxes called cars and used simple machines called fax machine, air-conditioners and telephones. The computer gave me some questions to solve, which I answered. When I gave a wrong reply, a dreadful noise emerged from it while the questions continued if the reply was correct.

The day went by slowly with our noses buried in physicos and chemology (previously known as physics and chemistry respectively). We also studied about the nuclear plant which is under construction at Venus.

As the final bell announced the end of the school, I returned home, fresh as ever. I programmed the cook robot to prepare strawberry meringue pie, chow chow mein juice, some protein lemon salad and a generous helping of nom-pi-nom while I returned to my room. I later came downstairs on the chair lift and had the refreshments at the dining table. I then went out to play.

There was a soccer match going on between some robots and some of my friends in a huge soccer field, so I joined the game. The genius and automatic minds of robots were almost impossible to dodge, but it was fun playing with them. After that I and my friends had a little chat about the activists of 'Niscoff' (neighboring planet) who commits suicide for the sake of rewards and honour they are supposed to get in their second life after death in heaven.

I returned home. There was no homework so I started reading the novel 'The Eternal Galaxy.' A brilliant news was waiting for me at the diner table. My father had bought me a ticket to Saturn, where my cousin lived, for the next day. The next week was a holiday. I reached the rocket spot next day with my parents, exchanged good-byes and mounted the rocket. In no time we were flying through space. Finally I landed on Saturn. I got down and found my stimulated cousin waiting eagerly beside her shiny black aircraft she had bought a day before. Talking and laughing we went home. Lunch was ready so I quickly freshened up and sat down at the table. My aunt had prepared tasty vitamin pills of many colours and shapes. I drank delicious home-made H₂O, thinking enviously of the old days

when this precious drink was everywhere in abundance. We then watched a documentary about the village life in the depths of the Pacific. Farmers growing aquatic vegetables, living in their rusty metallic houses, trying to produce the best food we needed.

Later my cousin took me to a fun fair. We enjoyed different hilarious tricks and delightful games. The best thing was the clone machines which could make duplicates of you that were able to survive for 20-25 minutes and they ended up in smoke. We enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. At last we bought a bunch of uranium balloons and some chlorinated protein floss and headed for home. By then I realized that I had spent one diamond that day (I better learn to cut down a little on expenses). My eyes were heavy with sleep so I turned to my sleeping tube, switched on the dream memorizer and drifted into a pleasant slumber thinking what the forth coming days will have in store for me on Saturn.

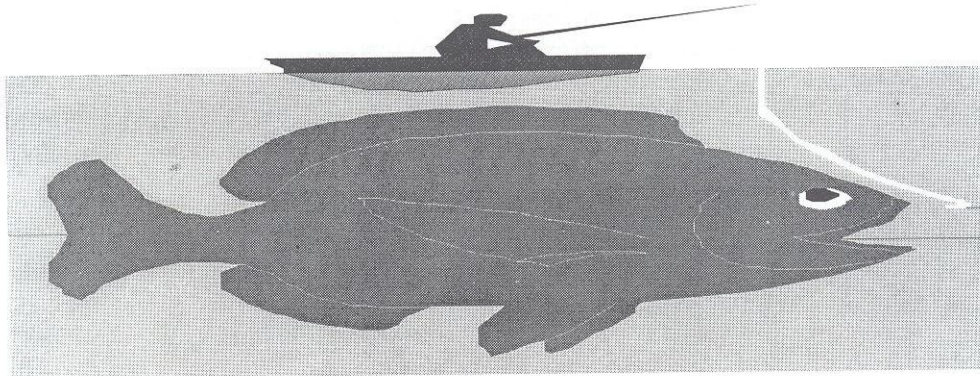
Knowledge and Ignorance Sayings of Imam Ali a.s.

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

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

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

*You don't need to
fish around....*



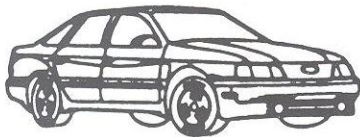
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Halal Slaughter is humane

Halal slaughter is a humane method of providing hygienic meat to a consumer. To this effect the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) has been quoted : "God calls for mercy in everything, so be merciful when you kill and when you slaughter, sharpen your blade to relieve it's pain."

Many allegations have been made that Islamic slaughter is not humane to animals. However, Professor Schultz and his colleague Dr. Hazim of the Hanover University, Germany, have proved through an experiment, using an Electro Encephalograph (EEG) and Electro Cardiogram (ECG) that Islamic slaughter is THE humane method of slaughter while captive bolt stunning, practiced by the western method, causes severe pain to an animal. The results surprised many.

Experimental Details:

1. Several electrodes were surgically implanted at various points of the skull of all animals, touching the surface of the brain.
2. The animals were allowed to recover for several weeks.
3. Some animals were slaughtered by making a swift, deep incision with a sharp knife on the neck cutting the jugular veins and carotid arteries of both sides along with the trachea and oesophagus -- this was the halal method.
4. Some animals were stunned using a captive bolt pistol - this slaughtering by the western method.
5. During the experiment, EEG and ECG were recorded on all animals to record the condition of the brain and heart during the course of slaughter and stunning.

Results and Discussion:

Halal Method

1. The first three seconds from the time of Islamic slaughter as recorded on the EEG did not show any change from the graph before slaughter, thus indicating that the animal did not feel any pain during or immediately after the incision.

2. For the following 3 seconds, the EEG recorded a condition of deep sleep - unconsciousness. This is due to a large quantity of blood gushing out from the body.

3. After the above mentioned 6 seconds, the EEG recorded zero level, showing no feeling of pain at all.

4. As the brain message (EEG) dropped to zero level, the heart was still pounding and the body convulsed vigorously (a reflex action of the spinal cord) driving out maximum blood from the body: thereby resulting in hygienic

meat for the consumer.

Western method by C.B.P. Stunning

1. The animals were apparently unconscious soon after stunning.

2. EEG showed severe pain immediately after stunning.

3. The hearts of the animal stunned by C.B.P. stopped beating earlier as compared to those of the animals slaughtered according to the Halal method resulting in the retention of more blood in the meat. This in turn is unhygienic for the consumer.

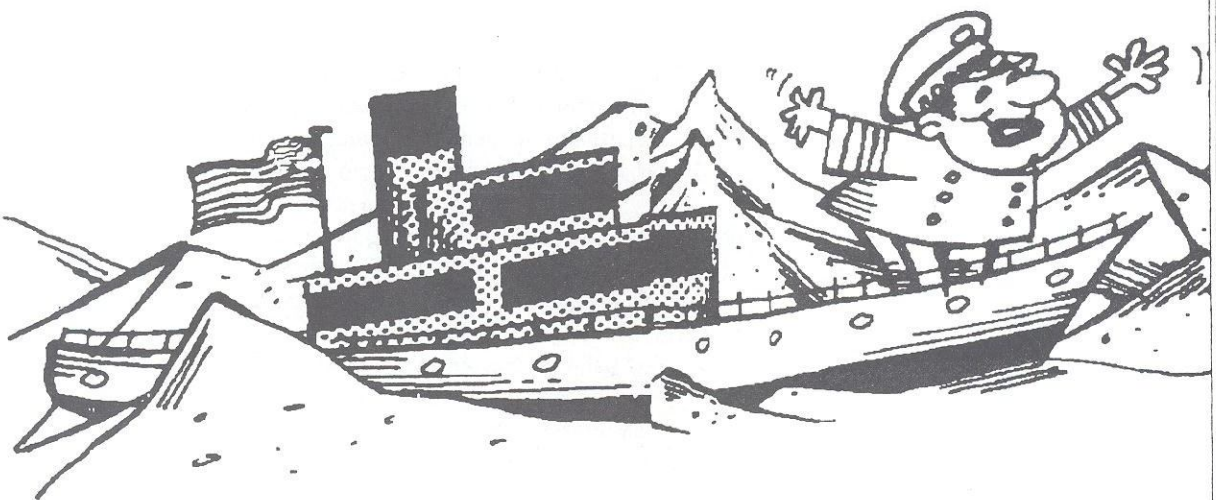
All praises are for you Allah.....

by Syeda, a 17 year old sister.

YA ALLAH

All praises are for you Allah, how I hope that you are there.
 For sinful though I know I am, your displeasure I can not bear.
 Never, till this moment, did I realize how much I've strayed.
 Never, till now, was I more conscious of all those times when I should have prayed.
 For sins are like heavy baggage, that one carries through Life, the airport.
 Why didn't I realize sooner, that Earth is but a place of sport ?
 Ya Allah ! Forgive me. Save me from the fire of Hell.
 Forgive me as you did my parents, from Jan'ah though they fell.
 Ya Allah ! Protect me. From myself for my soul is weak.
 Let me not falter ever, for Jan'ah is the abode I seek.
 Ya, Allah! Please help me. For I don't understand and thus, I fear.
 What happened to all those moments when I never doubted that you were near?
 My actions once were guided, by my faith which, once, was strong.
 Ya Allah! please guide me . What happened, what went wrong ?
 Each footstep that I used to take, I took with you ever near my side.
 The Quran was my faithful companion, Rasoolallah my beloved guide.
 How I yearn for those bygone days Allah, for I know that the day comes near
 When we'll each receive our just rewards, and Truth will stand sparkling clear.
 Life is like a spider's web. We get caught in its tricky snare
 So thoroughly are we disillusioned, time for salat we can not spare.
 I sit here and I wonder, Ya Allah! Why did I fall so low ?
 What happened to my faith Allah? Where did my Iman go?
 In this earthly life of ours, so often does sin seem right.
 Falsehood seems to be the truth, as if days are confused with night.
 Man is an imperfect creature. And thus, Man shall always wrong.
 For the road to Jan'ah is rocky, and the journey seems awfully long.
 Ya Allah ! Our creator, we are all just peices of clay.
 Please help us with our steps in life, and let us not lose our way.
 All praises are for you Allah, I know that you are near.
 I know that you have read my heart, and my words I know you hear.

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New Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an -- are our scholars vulnerable?

There has arisen certain groups of Islamic scholars in the West who call for "a return to the Qur'an" the call is directed not at the members of the Muslim Ummah and not for a resurgence in the commitment to the Qur'an either.

Strangely, it is addressed to the Islamic scholars in general across the world to seek out a new interpretation of the Qur'an such as would make Islam, according to the call, relevant to modern times!

The call is extremely disturbing because it implies that Islam, that is, its teachings and their interpretation that have existed and been followed since the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.), can be antiquated

or become irrelevant to Muslims in particular and to mankind in general in course of time.

It is no wonder therefore that the terminology such as "modernity" and "contemporary Islam" have been invented to promote a debate in the context of the call of "return to the Qur'an".

The orientalist, traditionally non Muslims, claiming authority on Islam for the gullible West have already for a century or more confused the non-Muslims by distorting and dis-informing on the teachings of Islam. They have been able, through the support of the media, to provoke and maintain a hostile stand against Islam, Muslims and

Islamic values in the West.

One would wonder whether the call for a new interpretation of the Qur'an is an attempt to compromise the principles of Islam as a means of appeasement and thereby belie all that Islam stands for to the jubilation of the traditional opponents who will always be there — restless and relentless, until, according to the Qur'an, they are able to convert the Muslims to their "millat", their thinking and values. Are not some of our Islamic scholars in the West vulnerable or already submissive, be it for pecuniary or other mundane reasons?.

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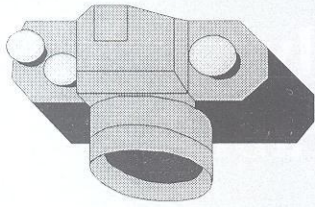
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DOWN MEMORY LANE



1958--
Zawars from East Africa and Pakistan. One question ensues-- do current groups travelling for pilgrimage still take official group photographs prior to departure? If yes, one wonders who maintains such photographs and if no, is it not right to resume this practice for the record? Any positive action in the name of Allah (s.w.t.) should be recorded for the posterity.



Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

So near, yet so far!

The morning newspapers flash world news before us and televisions plus the Internet keep us updated by the minute on what is happening around the world. All the important things in the world pass before our eyes within a span of a few minutes. Modern technology has greatly enhanced communication of news and events and as a result even transmission of news within our community level has greatly improved. Today the World Federation, Africa Federation and JIBA, amongst others have their own Web Sites which transmit news to surfers around the world and a fair number of Islamic magazines, including the *Federation Samachar*, can also be read on the Internet.

However this improved technology consumes a lot of time and it is essential that priorities are made right with regard to the time that one spends on the Internet or for watching TV. The irony of improved Communication technology is that often people spend a lot of time viewing or obtaining information on celebrities or events at the cost of more important things to do at home or at work.

As a result people often know about the doings of many Presidents around the world or of many celebrities, many of whom are arrogant and behave disrespectfully to the public at large. The irony is that while many of us know of the private lives of individuals residing hundreds of miles away and who don't really matter to us, we are in the dark on the needs and activities of those who live with us, our families.

Of course, we want our children to be disciplined, educated, smart and God-fearing citizens of this country so that they can be valuable members of our community who can help to propagate Islam further in the years to come while

at the same also being involved in community work to enhance the welfare, health and general well-being of community members world-wide and to also be involved in the development of the country they reside in. However have we enough time to spare to give elementary lessons of discipline to them or to know how they spend their time or to analyse what grades they achieve in school or the Madressa?

Man has today become busier than the bee, the strains and stresses of life have increased, the cares and worries have multiplied. Political, social and economic activities sap every bit of energy from an individual thereby leaving little time to care or spend with the children and the family. Moreover the pursuit of materialism has become the vocation and avocation of the common man who is enchanted by the glitter of gold but fails to envisage that not all that glitters is gold.

It's not that life should be knitted to a work-family-work approach. What is required from parents is little time to ensure that their offspring are approaching life in a correct manner. This may mean keeping track on their language, their performance in school or madressa, punctuality, homework assistance, performance in sports, religion, eating habits, health, recreation, holiday needs and the like.

All this does not require a lot of time. A few minutes each day is enough and very often one can know more about one's child over dinner discussions, that is if dinner is not taken at the same time as watching television. Understandably, after a hard day's work, parents require to relax but is not conversation or time with one's children or family a form of relaxation? If one needs to watch constructive programmes or sports matches

on television this can be done after the children go to bed or by re-scheduling time accordingly.

The parent-child relationship is a crucial phase of life and the sad thing is that we take our children for granted, berate at them unnecessarily because we know they have no means to retort, that is, until they become teenagers when we suddenly come face to face with a situation where years have elapsed and it is then too late to make amends or to provide them crucial guidance.

It is for this reason that I also have reservations on the five-day week Madressa system. The important and exemplary work conducted by our Madressas is well known but to enable children to spend more time with their families and to ensure they have adequate time to do their school homework, the Madressa syllabus ought to be reduced to span over fewer hours as is done in most Western Country Jamats. This is possible with a more concise and down to earth syllabus which covers essential teaching material. Moreover the madressa syllabus can be spread out and be included in the syllabus of our schools while for non-communal schools, which generally have optional subjects, a request can be made to introduce classes for our youths.

Educational reformers are convinced that students who do more homework perform better in school, even after accounting for differences of ability and background. In life, one cannot exhaust one's energies in one direction and yet reserve them unimpaired for something else. Similarly for our children, burning the candle at both ends will exhaust their energies and hamper their progress while also limiting the time spent with their akin at home.

For the parents, being involved with their children need not stop them from indulging in after-work sporting or other social activities which can be approached with extra confidence when things at home are adequately taken care of. Then, is it not paradoxical that many of us know more about the lives of celebrities like the World Cup footballers or cricketers while we are in the dark about the doings and progress of those near us, our own family who remain *so near but yet are so far*.

Fiqh - Offering Solutions to New Problems*

The fast changing societies all over the world and modern scientific and technological progress has given rise to many questions in the fields of values, rules and regulations and religious laws. Most of these questions are related to *fiqh* and *fiqaha*. As a result, the onus of finding appropriate answers to these questions is on the *faqih*s and *mujtahids*.

Some of these questions are related to personal life of the Muslims, some to social relations and some to the Islamic Governmental System and problems relating to it. The *mujtahids* have to find answers to these questions.

Some of the great *Maraj'e* (Supreme Religious Authorities) have set up Councils consisting of top *mujtahids* who are well aware of today's problems. The main task of these Councils is to find out *fiqhi* solutions to the newly emerged problems affecting Muslims.

One such Council has been established by Ayatullahil Udhma, Syed Ali Khamene'i. The Council mainly handles those problems which have not been discussed by *fiqh* in the past or the issues which are new, the subject matter of which could hence not have been discussed by previous *Ulama*.

Naturally, finding a solution to such problems requires a lot of effort by the *faqih*s. It cannot be compared with discussion of old *fiqhi* issues.

First of all, a topic for discussion is selected. The topic can be suggested by Ayatullahil Udhma himself or referred by other *Ulama* or Governmental Authorities.

Members of the Council select someone from among themselves to carry out the research work necessary on the topic. In carrying out the research, the person selected by the Council consult experts of that particular field and/or invite them to explain details at the

meeting of the Council.

He then submits a draft of his research which is circulated to all members of the Council. The Council members discuss the findings of the research in one or more sessions. If the researcher agrees with the criticisms or proposals of other members, he will make necessary corrections and prepare the final draft.

The research takes considerable time. Sometimes, the researcher comes across new problems. Sometimes, he has to respond to criticisms and evaluate proposals put forward by other members. He may also come across other problems whilst studying an issue. Hence, no time-limit can be fixed for him to submit his proposals.

The Council evaluates his findings on submission. If the researcher defends his findings successfully, it is approved otherwise he has to revise his findings.

Members of the Council understand the *fiqhi* principles involved and are well aware of the problems facing the Muslim society.

Ayatullahid Udhma attends and participates in the meetings of the Council. He, then, gives his *fatwa* on the issue.

Some of the issues researched and discussed by the Council established by Ayatullahi Udhma Syed Ali Khamene'i are:

Slaughtering of Animals by Machine;

Postmortems;

Ghusl of dead body with a machine;

Ghina (profane singing);

Iddah of a woman without a womb;

Women reciting Qur'an in presence of men;

Treatment of money Notes which lose their value due to inflation;

Indirect losses inflicted upon a victim by hospital charges;

Unemployment during hospitalisation;

Limitations of an Islamic Ruler in pardoning the punishment of a thief;

Owner's use of his own property when it inflicts loss on others;

Jurisdiction of Islamic Government when personal and public affairs overlap;

Amount of *diyah* that a culprit should pay to a victim.

* Adapted from Message of Thaqalayn - Vol.2 Nos.3 & 4 Leader's Council of Ifta: An Interview With Ayatullah Mu'min and Ayatullah Hashemi - published by Ahl al Bayt (A.S.) World Assembly, P.O. Box 15815-3516, Tehran (Iran).

From the Nahjul Balagha

Perform good acts while you are still in the vastness of life: *the books are open (for the recording of actions), repentance is allowed, the runner away (from Allah) is being called and the sinner is given hope (of forgiveness) before the (light of) action is put off, time expires, life ends, the door for repentance is closed and the angels ascend to the sky.*

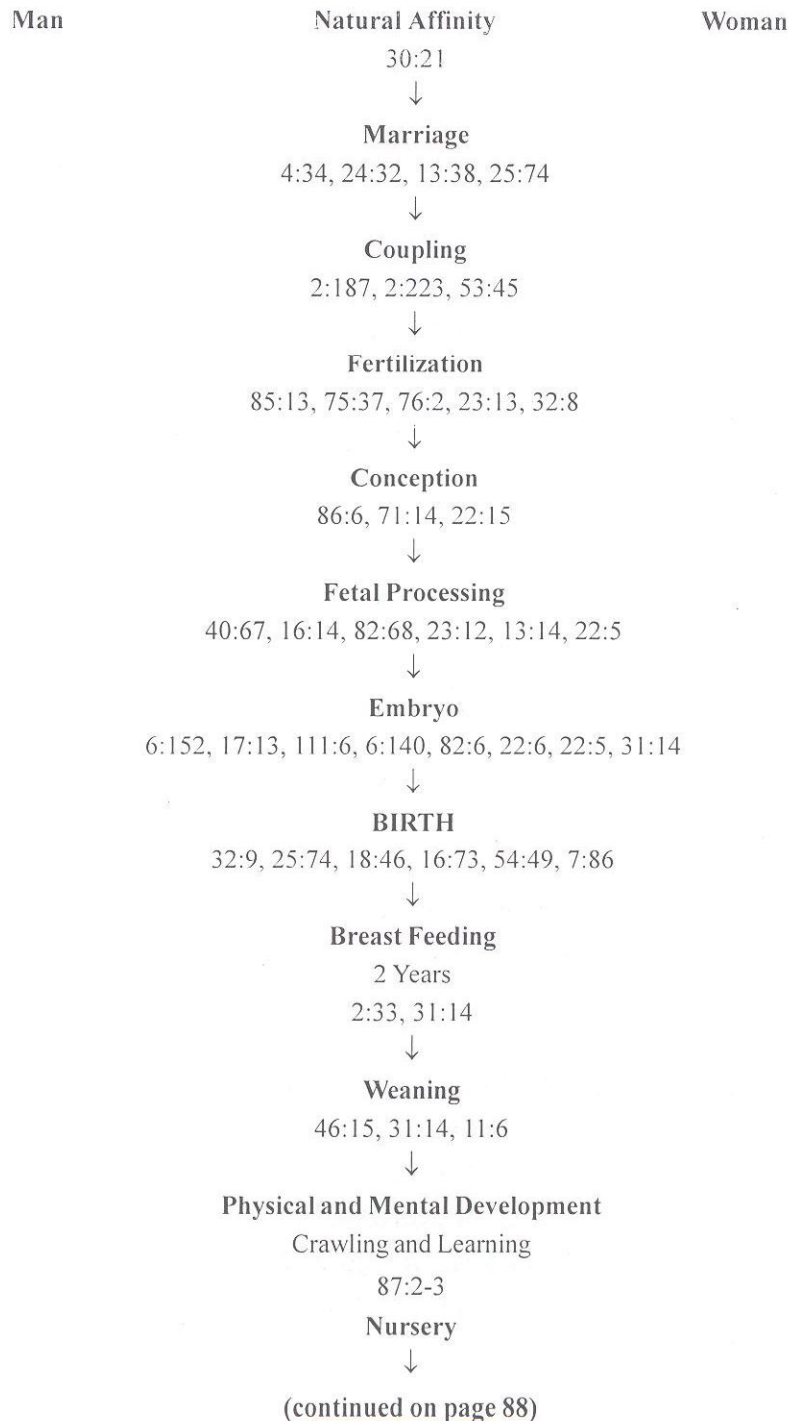
Therefore a man should derive benefit from himself for himself, from the living for the dead, from the mortal to the lasting and from the departed for the stayer.

Imam Ali (A.S), Nahjul Balagha

HUMAN BIOGRAPHY IN THE HOLY QUR'AN --- FROM *WOMB TO TOMB*

by Dr. Sayyed QMM Kamoopoori

Concept maps are common in biology and other branches of sciences. Scientists use concept maps as a study tool to connect large number of facts scattered in different fields of knowledge. I have also prepared the following chart from the Holy Qur'an to show the full spectrum of human existence. This is a precise record of events that occur from womb to tomb and thereafter. The Quran has described these stages in various places which are easily understandable to men of average intellect. I have simply summarized them in a map to show that these facts are in strict accordance with what has been discovered by scientists and what will be discovered much later on. Science progresses by observation, experiments, and exploration. But unfortunately in many cases, these accurate modes of perception are flawed by wrong interpretation. An honest researcher in science can testify these clearly defined stages of human existence.





.....from womb to tomb

(...from page 87)



Anatomical Development

76:28



Primary Education

Development of Habits



Prime Youth Age

22:5, 23:12-14



Secondary Education

Puberty

Development of Skills

YOUTH AGE

40:67

Marriage

25:54, 4:3, 33:28



University Education

Age of Reason

76:2-3

Age of Production

Intellectual Specialization & Reproduction



OLD AGE

36:68

Climacteric-Senile Psychosis

Mental or Organic Disorder

36:68

DEATH

102:2, 3:145, 3:185, 4:78, 4:78, 3:491, 21:35, 14:24-26, 29:57

Purgatory

36:52

DAY OF JUDGMENT

77:38, 6:31, 23:15-16, 24:24

Paradise or Hell

77:38, 6:31, 23:15-16, 24 36:63, 25: 69,41:28 36:55-56, 57, 58

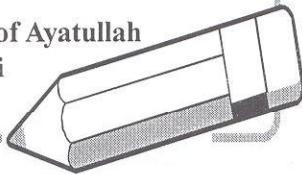
Infinite Life

2:25, 2:39, 2:81-82, 2:217

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



On preference of attending Jum'ah [congregational] prayer, provided that it is held according to the conditions [stipulated in canon law]:

Evidently, performing Jum'ah prayer is obligatory as a matter of choice. This means that, on a Friday, the mukallaf has the option of either performing Jum'ah prayer according to the detail that will follow, or holding Dhuhr prayer. However, performing Jum'ah prayer is preferable. If it was performed according to stipulations, it would make up for Dhuhr prayer". Minhajus Saliheen, p. 307.

"The time for holding Jum'ah prayer is the start of zawaal of a Friday as urf have it. If it is not held during this time, performing Dhuhr prayer becomes a must". Al-Masaa'il, article 193.

"Does Jum'ah Ghusl make up for wudhu?"

"Jum'ah ghusl and similar ones have been proved through reliable sources to be mustahab. It is evident that they make up for wudhu". Al-Masaa'il, p.341.

On performing tamam prayer:

"Distance should be calculated from the point where a person is considered, according to urf, a traveller; it is the end of the bounds of the town, which may be the borough or neighbourhood in some very big cities". Al-Minhaj, p.891.

On sighting of the New Moon:

"Sighting of the new moon is ascertained by knowledge of the actual sighting or through solid news of such sighting, or some other means. Certainty can

also be achieved through common knowledge. Amongst other sources of ascertaining the sighting of the new moon is the lapse of thirty days on Sha'ban's crescent for the start of Ramadhan to be confirmed, or thirty days on the crescent of Ramadhan for the new moon of Shawwal to be confirmed [and so on]. Sighting can also be confirmed by the evidence of two witnesses of impeccable character (adl).

However, sighting of the new moon is not recognised by the evidence of women, or by the evidence of one just witness, even with oath, or by the words of astrologers. Neither by its absence after dawn dusk, so that it could be said that it belongs to a previous night, nor by the evidence of two just witnesses, if the evidence is not confined to their own sighting of the newly born moon. Sighting is not recognised too when it is seen before zawaal so that the day of sighting be from the ensuing month. The impression of a ring it may give, proving that it could belong to a previous night, cannot be accepted as well.

There is *ishkal*, rather objection, in ascertaining the birth of a new moon by a ruling from a judge, whose error cannot be verified, neither the error of his source. Of course, if his ruling or his evidence leads to certainty of sighting in the town and the like, it could be relied on". Al-Minhaj, p.335.

The sighting of the new moon in a town could make up for its sighting in another.

"Should the new moon be sighted in a town, it would suffice the sighting in another town, provided the two fall on the same horizon. That is, if the new moon was sighted in the first town, there would be a distinct possibility of sight

ing it in the second, barring any obstacles, such as clouds and high mountains". Al-Minhaj, article 1044.

On the Islamic dress code:

The permissibility of exposing the face and hands [of a woman] to people, other than her mehaarim (immediate relatives -according to a certain classification detailed in shari'a law)

"It is obligatory on the woman to cover her hair and the rest of her body, apart from the face and hands from people, other than her husband and other mehaarim, among the adults in general. Rather, she should cover herself from those who have not yet attained adulthood, if they were discerning, and their looking at her could result in sexual arousal. As for the face and hands, it is evident that it is permissible to expose them, except for fear of falling into a haraam act, or for the purpose of ensnaring man to look at haraam [objects]. In this case, exposing such parts of the body is haraam, even to mehaarim". Al-Masaa'il article 1021.

At Mecca, is it permissible for a woman to stand ahead of a man during prayer, which is not the case elsewhere?

Yes, it is permissible at times of crowdedness.

If it was known that cheeses imported from non-Muslim countries contain animal rennet (calf or goat) or animal enzyme, is it permissible to consume?

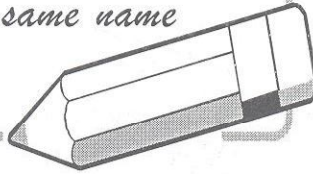
There is no harm in consuming the first two categories; and the third too, unless it is known that it was taken from an unslaughtered animal. Allah is All Knowing.

Is eating carp, prawns, and shell fish permissible?

No marine animal is halal, except fish that has scales, amongst which are prawns. As for other animals, other than fish, like carp as well as other kinds of fish that have no scales, it is not permissible to consume.

Your Questions Answered

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



Q. 1: MORE ABOUT ONENESS OF GOD

Will you throw some more light on the belief in oneness of God?

A. The belief in the Unity of God is the foundation stone of Islam. This belief governs the religious faith, designs the social patterns and gives life to the moral codes.

The first sentence of the Islam *Kalimar*, i.e. "There is no god except Allah", lead a Muslim throughout his life not only in the religious matters but in social behaviors also. "There is no God" shows a Muslim that nothing in the universe is the superior to him. It is observed in the Qur'an that "He it is who has created for you all that is in the earth." So a Muslim knows that nothing in this world is to be worshipped. Neither stones nor trees; neither animals nor human-beings; neither the Sun nor the Moon nor the Stars can be worshipped; because everything is created, and created for his benefit. When a Muslim, thus, has rejected every falsehood and every idea of nature-worship, idol-worship or human-worship, he is ready to believe in the positive truth of the Unity of God. Believing in a supreme being gives an aim to our life and provide a purpose for our actions. Had a man been left with the wrong impression that there was no God at all, his life would be aimless life is dangerous. So it is added that there is no god "except Allah". This sentence has a negative as well as a positive aspect. Both are instrumental in creating the belief that every man is equal to every other person. When nobody is superior, no body is inferior. Thus, the belief is the Unity of God promotes the sense of brotherhood, equality and equity which is another feature of Islam.

Federation Samachar

Q. 2: RESPECT FOR THE NAME OF ALLAH (SWT)

If I have written the Arabic name of God on a piece of paper, can I throw it away? Suppose this is in English, does the same rule apply? What about the names of the Ahlul-Bait?

A. It is *haram* to throw away the names of Allah or Ma'sumeen.

Such writings should either be buried, put in river or ocean or re-cycled. It makes no difference whether it is written in Arabic or in any other script. (Be careful about the stamps of Iran. Some stamps have Qur'anic verses written on them).

Q. 3: SIGNIFICANCE OF 'ADL

What is the significance of 'Adl?

A. 'Adl means that Allah is just; He does not do injustice to any one. He has ordered us to do justice to our fellow creatures-but He Himself treats us not only with justice but with grace. He created us for His worship, in order that we may attain spiritual perfection through it. That spiritual perfection enables us to reach nearer to Allah.

For this purpose, He has given us freedom of will and choice. When we choose, by our own free will, the Straight Path (prescribed by Allah) we are assured in the next world of everlasting happiness and glory by Grace Allah.

Q. 4: MAN'S FREE WILL

In the above reply, you say that we, by our own free will, choose the path we proceed upon. But I have been told that Muslims believe in predestination - that our all good and bad actions are predestined by Allah. Please explain the reality to me.

tionation - that our all good and bad actions are predestined by Allah. Please explain the reality to me.

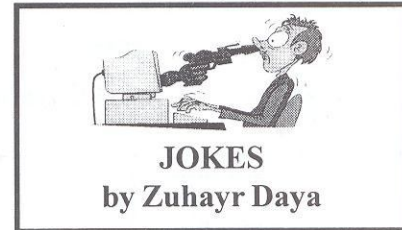
A. We know by our instinct that there are some matters over which we have no authority, concerning which we have no choice, like birth, death, happiness, unhappiness, affluence, poverty: etc. Such matters (which we may call our conditions) are totally in God's hands, although man has to fulfill his duties in that area too, at least in preliminary stages.

Also there are our "actions" which we instinctively known are done with our own will and choice, like speaking truth or lie, helping someone or refusing him help, etc.

Some Muslims think that man has no authority on this matter too. Others believe that man is totally independent in his actions and Allah has nothing to do with it.

But we, the Shi'a Ithna-'ashariyah, believe that man, in his actions, is neither compelled by Allah nor independent of Allah's control; the reality lies in between these two extremes.

To explain this fully, I would like to give you an example written by our late Mujtahid, Ayatullah as-Sayyid Abdul Qasim al-Khoui. Suppose there is a man whose hand is totally paralyzed; he by himself cannot move even a finger. A doctor has fitted a device on his hand which, when activated by a remote-control, restores the hand to normal condition thus allowing the man the use of his hand in whatever way he likes. The doctor has kept the remote-control in his custody. He has switched that control on, and it is the man who decides whether to use his newly-found power and strength for good cause or evil; the doctor does not interfere although if he wanted he could switch it off. Now, the good or bad actions done by that person are not totally independent of the doctor. In the same way, we do whatever we do by our own free will and choice but the power to do so is given to us by Allah who may "switch it off" any time he pleases.



The three Most Important Signs of faith as outlined by Imam Ali (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) said that there are three most important signs of faith. One is to prefer telling the truth to telling a lie, where the truth will be detrimental to you, while the lie will benefit you. Secondly to say no more than you know and finally to fear Allah (s.w.t.) in what you say about others.

The test of faith appears to be easy in the mind and in words; one believes this characteristic of faith in one's inner self. But it is in action where the claim of true faith is to be really tested.

The love of God and true belief in the sacred teachings of Islam is a touchstone of faith. But if we yearn for worldly gains at the cost of our religious values, this means that we have a wavering faith. Hence it is better to tell the truth to telling a lie even if lying would benefit you.

The second sign of true faith is not to say more than we know. This indicates that if we do not speak beyond our knowledge, it adds to our dignity and reputation in society and at the same time saves other from being misguided through wrong information.

The role of true faith in what we say is that the more we come to know God, the more we follow the principles of

religion. When one is in the dark on any subject it is despicable to pretend to know simply because one wishes to impress others. To make a parable of knowledge, especially where this is inappropriate, is despised by Islam.

The third sign of true faith is to avoid an evil tongue. That is, to fear Allah (s.w.t.) and abstain from saying malicious things about others. To slander others is a deadly sin and it also reduces one's reputation in the eyes of people.

One should remember never to be a witness against others or to speak against others if one does not have evidence of what one alleges. This incurs the wrath of God.

Another point to note is that one has to be honest when one quotes others. It is wrong to distort what others have said because misrepresentation or distortion of what others say can easily induce one person against another. This often commonly happens within a household, particularly in large families between brothers, sisters, in-laws and times even the parents. Distortion of what others say is in defiance of strict religious teachings and if the parents insist on this, children learn to follow a similar habit.

Father: My son, do you know that my hair turned white from worries over you?

Son: Now I know why grandfather's hair turned white too.

Abid: Why was six afraid of seven?

Anis: Tell me

Abid: because Seven eight nine!

There were three people named *Trouble*, *Manners* and *Shut Up*. *Trouble* was lost, *Manners* was sitting on the bench and *Shut Up* went to the police where the police asked him his name.

He said, "*Shut Up*".

The police asked him his name again and again he said, "*Shut Up*".

The police asked him, "Where is your manners?"

He said "sitting on the bench"

The police replied, "are you looking for trouble?"

He said: "how did you know?"

The Child

If a child lives with Criticism, he learns to Condemn;
If a child lives with Hostility, he learns to Fight;
If a child lives with Ridicule, he learns to be Shy;
If a child lives with Shame, he learns to feel Guilty;
If a child lives with Tolerance, he learns to be Patient;
If a child lives with Encouragement, he learns Confidence;
If a child lives with Praise, he learns to Appreciate;
If a child lives with Fairness, he learns Justice;
If a child lives with Security, he learns to have Faith;
If a child lives with Approval, he learns to like Himself;
If a child lives with Religion, he learns to appreciate God.

JUNIOR CROSSWORD

by Sarfaraz Daya

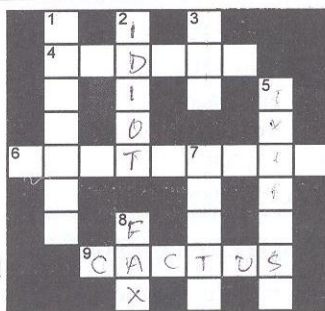
ACROSS:



2. Silly person



5. Not growing old



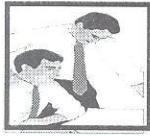
DOWN:

1. Capital of Swaziland Their homes

Solution in next issue



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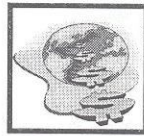
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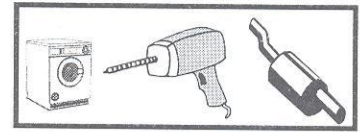
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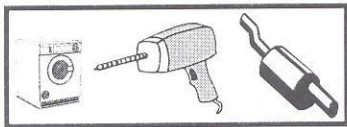
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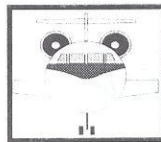


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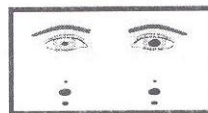
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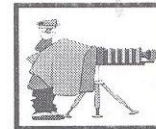
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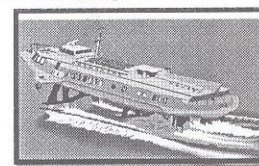
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Conduct in meetings --- a search for the Islamic Approach

Alhamdulillah I have had the privilege of attending various kinds of General Meetings (AGM, EGM, SGM etc.) of various bodies over the past few years at our Centre and elsewhere. By and large the proceedings in the meetings have been somewhat lacking in goodwill amongst the members and/or factions. I am not suggesting for a moment that there was malice amongst the individuals and/or factions. By definition there could not have been any malice among the participants who were all 'MUSLIMS'. Everyone would have attended the meetings as part of his service to Allah (swt) and would therefore have been as positive and as constructive as possible. However, I could not help noticing that instead of showing goodwill to others and being tolerant of their views, some participants did, at times, end up showing the members of our younger generation how NOT to conduct themselves in meetings! Some such proceedings have indeed left me with memories. This is so because I felt that although legally accurate and procedurally correct, the conduct of people and the proceedings of the meetings had decidedly often lacked "Goodwill and Dignity".

The real pity has almost always been the example we set for our younger generation. A fair proportion of the participants in meetings have been the under 18s and some as young as 10 years old! Instead of setting an example of how to conduct oneself in meetings, we ended up teaching them how to go all out to win no matter how one behaved in the process! It is our duty to teach our up and coming generation how to succeed in life. True enough, we have to make them aware of the fact that life is not always a bed of roses; there are some thorns too along the way!

We should conduct ourselves in a manner that allows us to become good Muslims. We should show them examples

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on how to control some of our base emotions such as anger and frustration. You see, IF WE ARE IN THE RIGHT THEN WE CAN AFFORD TO BE POLITE and IF WE ARE IN THE WRONG THEN WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE RUDE! It is as simple as that! Yet over the years, there have been contributions which have singularly lacked in tact and magnanimity! Often these attributes were instead substituted by unnecessary harshness and acrimony! Sometimes it made me wonder if we remembered who we were and why we were there! Mercifully rare in occurrence, but one got the impression that the lunatics had taken charge of the asylum!

The use of "Points of order" is another privilege which has now and again caused some problems. Armed with this stick, the most feeble of characters can halt a mighty Chairman in his tracks! Often the users of this privilege had seemed to be only too aware of this power and had used it effectively to strike at the Chairman and/or indeed at the opposition through the Chairman! Occasionally I have witnessed the most unrestrained use of this privilege. Will it not be constructive in the spirit of Islamic goodwill if all sides understand that the privilege of calling for a "Point of Order" is a good servant but a bad master! At the end of the day, the onus should always be on the leaders of the opposing factions to ensure that they patently discourage the misuse of this privilege and if need be, publicly disown the perpetrators! On the other hand, the Chairman must always acknowledge a call for "Point of Order" and accord the caller the right to be heard.

Once the community has expressed its will and put its trust in an individual or a body of individuals then he/they should be accorded full respect and democracy should be allowed to take its

course with civility.

It has always grieved me to note that general meetings are habitually not attended by many who consider themselves above community politics. This group consists of the educated and the not so very educated, the old and the not so very old, the well to do and the down trodden ones! In other words the apathy is rampant right across the board! They seem to have resigned to the fact that "IT is not for them!" What nonsense! All our brothers should attend ALL such meetings. Their very presence should go a long way towards instilling a sobering effect on the general conduct of meetings. I state with regret that all senior members of our community, who do not attend such meetings, cannot escape the collective responsibility for some of the misdemeanours that ensued.

In a democracy all are equal because every one has the right (within reason) to speak and vote. However, by the grace of Allah (swt), by birth or by conversion, first and foremost we are Muslims and then and only then democrats. Even better, we are Shias and better still we are Shia Ithna-asheri i.e. the followers of the 14 Ma'sumeens! If we endeavour to bear that in mind then all we have to do is to conduct ourselves in the manner which is in conformity with the lesson taught to us by our First Imam Hazrat Ali (AS). As we all know, when he was about to administer the fatal blow to his opponent when locked in combat with an enemy of Allah (swt), the kafir spat on his face. H. Ali (AS) instantaneously released his hold and walked away from the kafir. When asked why he did so, his answer was that the kafir's act (of spitting on his face) made him angry and he did NOT want to perform any act where HIS niyyat (of Kurbatan-Ilallah) was tainted by his emotions!

In a General meeting there are always some participants who are senior in status by virtue of knowledge and/or age. Such people deserve and should be accorded full respect.

I pray to Allah (swt) to give us all *nektaufeek* to behave in all future meetings in a manner that is expected of us as "Muslims".

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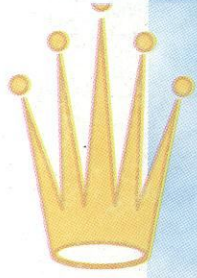


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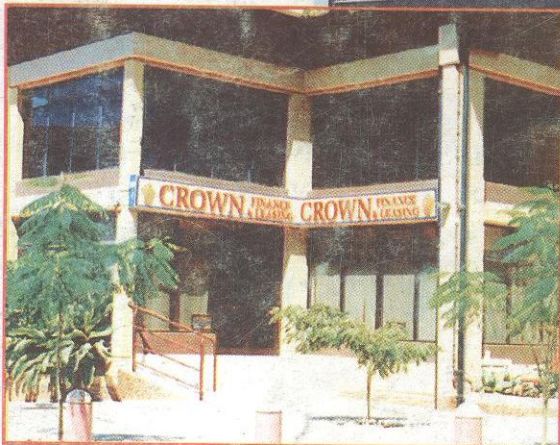
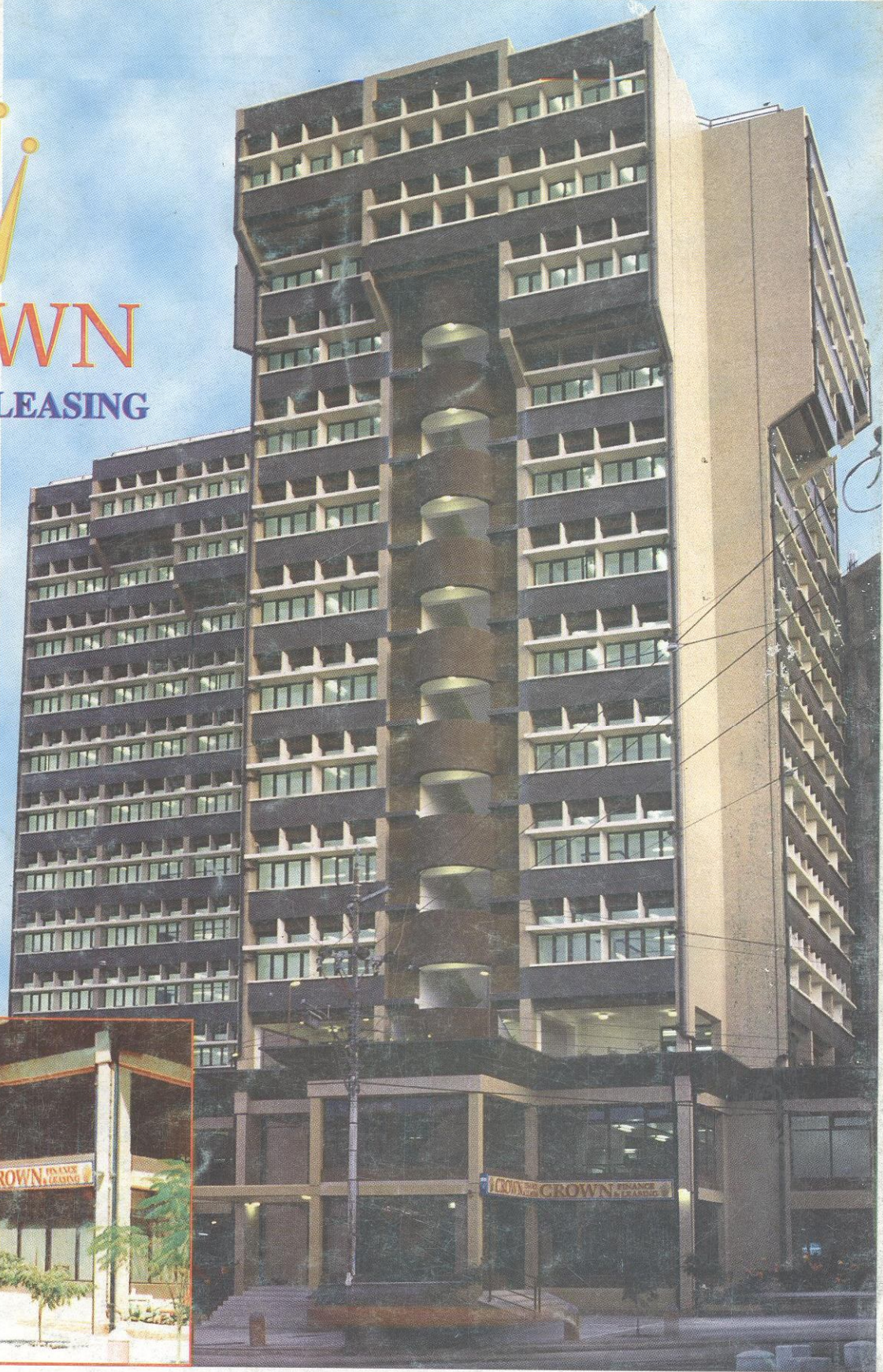
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