

Rajab 1416 A.H./December 1995

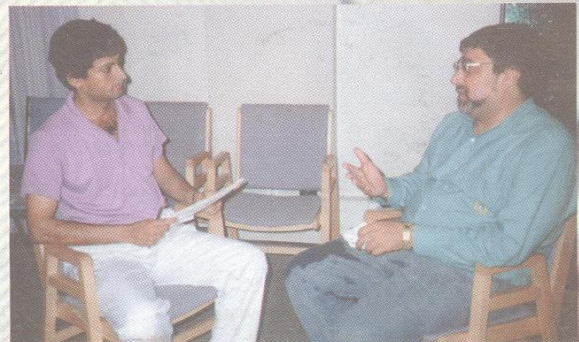
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Interview with Toronto Jamaat President



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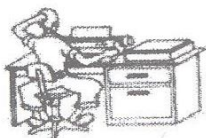
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COVER PICTURE

Commentary on page 17



From the Editor's Desk

We can't burn the candle at both ends

Educational reformers are now convinced that students who do more homework perform better in school, even after accounting for differences of ability and background. Many of the most important determinants of childrens' success in school are difficult to do anything about; their social class, their parents' level of education, the structure of their families and above all their own innate ability and yet in many places, ceaseless tinkering with school curriculums and structures continues and in the process often does more harm than good.

Today a growing body of research shows an unambiguous, if unsurprising, result that homework helps students perform better and is most helpful to children who most need help. It provides practice, teaches discipline and also helps focus family life and parents' attention on education.

In one review of more than a dozen studies, it was observed that on average a student whose performance would be in the middle for his age group if he did no homework could rise almost to the top three of his class if he does an average amount of homework. In Britain, one study found that grammar-school boys who did more than 75 minutes of homework each weekday performed a third better on their exams than boys who hit the books for less than half an hour a day.

Homework has a strong effect on achievement for all levels of ability and its power to influence success ranks second only to ability and even ability can be partially offset with homework. Japan's schools are renowned for taking students of many backgrounds and abilities and for producing graduates with a relatively high level of competence. Homework, of which the Japanese do plenty, is a major reason.

In China, upper school students do twice as much homework as do their counterparts in Japan who in turn do twice as much as American or British children. Yet the Chinese children like homework the most; the Americans like it least. This does not prove that doing homework causes children to like studying (more likely the other way around) but shows that a culture devoted to education need not be one where children find studying bitter or pointless. Previously educationalists regarded homework as unhealthy and bad because it supposedly burdened children and let amateur parents interfere with the work of expert teachers. Now many schools encourage homework and strongly advise parents not to stretch children by involving them in extra afternoon classes of any type.

In Africa and around the world, many of our youths attend Madressas which provide fundamental religious education. The importance of and exemplary work conducted by many of our Madressas is well known but in some places the timings for such Madressas interfere with the students' school homework time. Parents however cannot keep their children away from Madressas because they have a moral obligation to provide religious education to their offspring, even if this is at the cost of their child performing well in school.

With the increased emphasis by academic institutions on homework, can we not reduce our Madressa syllabus to span over fewer hours? 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 whilst for other schools, which generally have optional subjects, a request can be made to introduce religious classes for our youths.

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.

Editor



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Your Letters

Views, opinions or articles should be addressed to:

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

Dear Brother,

Hats off...

Our hats off to the efforts of the Editorial Board for the wonderful standard it has achieved of the *Federation Samachar*. Keep it up.

Meanwhile please arrange to send me copies to my enclosed new address in Canada.

**Ally Hemani,
Exec. Councillor,
World Federation,
Dubai, UAE.**

A copy of the current issue is being mailed to you on your following new address:

44 Penny Cres
Markham
Ontario L3P 4V6
Canada.

Editor.

Dear Brother,

Samachar an antidote to isolation

I have gone through the *Federation Samachar* and have found it very informative.

Since we are a small community in Bujumbura, we are quite isolated from other Jamaats and activities, therefore I would like to be able to receive a copy of the *Federation Samachar* so as to keep in touch with events and happenings elsewhere.

Please let me know of any subscription, donation etc.

**Salma G.,
Bujumbura, Burundi.**

A covering letter explaining subscription details plus a complimentary copy of the current issue are being sent to you.

Editor.

Dear Brother,

TO A LEADER

Everyone has a strong opinion about something. Everyone has personal likes and dislikes, yet, despite this, a leader can not afford to let personal prejudices get in the way of decisions. Members expect - as they should - that leaders decisions are based on merit and are objective in nature. Nothing can poison the community faster than the perception that the leader is not fair.

This is part of the reason why a leader should explain his decisions in detail because he would not want someone to unduly spread malicious rumours because many of such rumours will not cast him in a favourable light.

Providing a clarification is not just meant to reduce rumours but would also enable a leader to be seen to have made every conscious effort to be fair to everyone. Some people may even assume that some sort of prejudice motivated him to make a decision, especially if such a decision does not favour them. To a reasonable extent, a leader has to counter this before it becomes an issue.

Not only must everything be fair but it must appear to be so. And this can only be the case if members are kept informed of details, sometimes more details than they actually need to know from a technical standpoint. A leader must provide this information to accentuate on the integrity of his policies and decisions thereby also absolving him from blame for lack of transparency..

**Huseinali Paryani (Chacha)
Toronto, Canada.**

Dear Brother,

Editorial commended

We here commend you for the principles and sober policy by which you stand, as mentioned loud and clear in you editorial of the July/Safar issue.

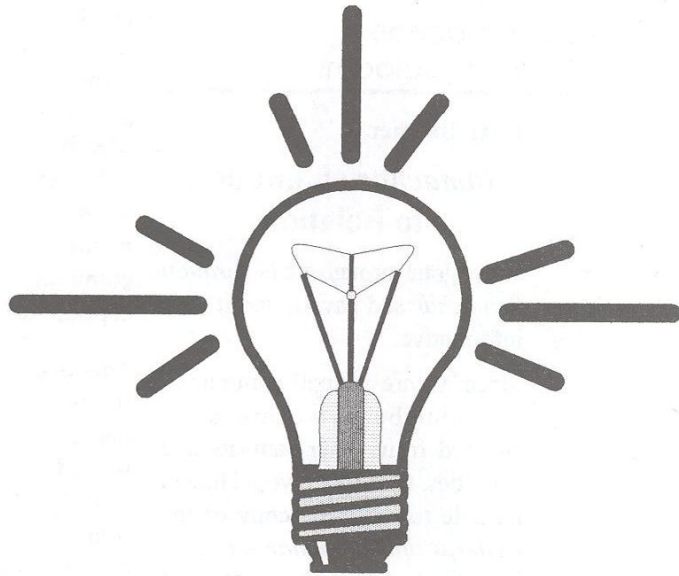
My friends and I agree that you have the duty to search for the truth and to enlighten your readers accordingly. The issues involved are always either religious or communal and therefore, if readers and the community are mis-informed or mis-lead, then there is an accountability before God.

I am not surprised that the *Federation Samachar* has become

popular and a favourite piece of reading material in this part of the world. Copies change hands while a new issue is awaited. Down Memory Lane photographs are also a pleasant surprise to many who see themselves or their relatives in them while very young. They are not even aware that such photographs were taken and still do exist though fifty or so years may have passed. However, the print needs to be improved when the photographs are old.

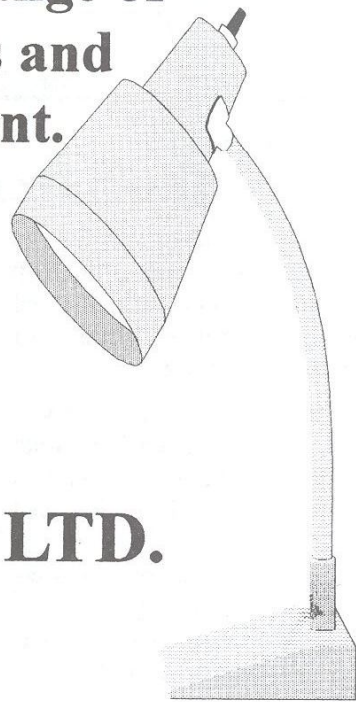
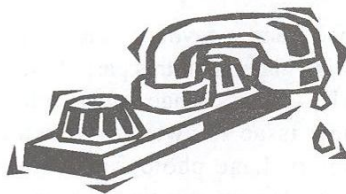
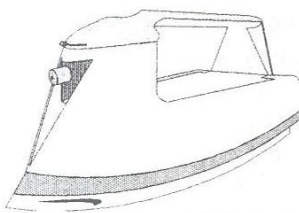
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Your Letters

Dear Brother,

At a loss without...

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the *Federation Samachar* sent to me by my son-in-law from Nairobi. This was the issue of Volume 29, No. 1. Safar 1416 A.H. July 1995.

Unfortunately he is unable to send me copies regularly for which I feel I will be at a loss. I would thus be very grateful if you would be kind enough to send me the forthcoming issues of *Federation Samachar* without delay.

I am unaware of your procedure on the basis of payments and would therefore appreciate if you can send me all the necessary details.

M. Kassam,
London, UK.

A complimentary copy of the present issue with subscription guidelines will be sent to you.

Editor.

Dear Brother,

Africa Federation is mature and well portrayed by the *Samachar*

It was a great pleasure for me to receive a few copies of your *Federation Samachar* from your Past Chairman, Alhaj Habib Bhai Mulji in Bombay during his recent visit. I found the magazine very interesting and thought-provoking especially because it covered very many subjects, viz, Jamaat, social, health, religion, sports etc.

Unfortunately I was not in Bombay when your Past Chairman visited India during December, 1994 and January, 1995 with the official delegation of the Africa Federation. However I learnt about his visit to India and about the Africa Federation through various magazines published in India and Pakistan.

I really admired Habib Bhai's way of steering the Federation

and on his far-sightedness on the subject of Jamaats. Whilst I pray to Allah (s.w.t.) for his health and long life I also believe that with the matured background of the Africa Federation, your current Chairman who is also well experienced will continue steering your Federation to more prominence.

I earnestly feel our leaders of Bombay Jamaat should emulate examples of brotherhood and forget their differences.

May Allah (s.w.t.) give us guidance. Ameen.

H.M. Dharsi,
Bombay, India.

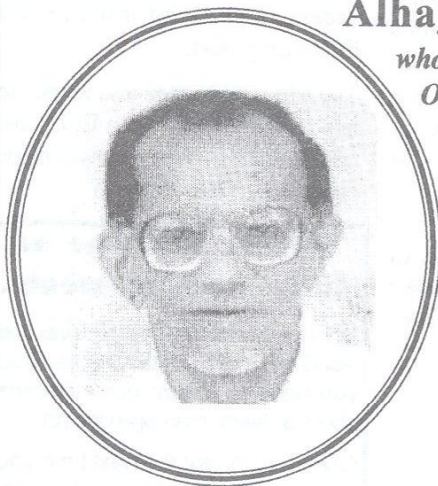
Habibbhai do you feel forgotten?
Going by the contents of this letter
you surely are not.

Editor.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Rajeeon

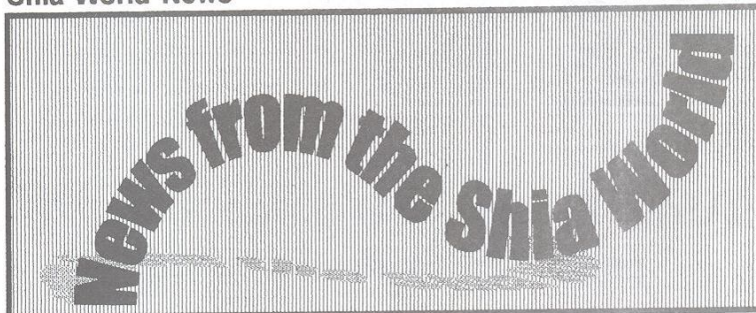
Alhaj Hassanali Suleman Daya Walji

who peacefully passed away in Dar es Salaam on 22
October, 1995 [26 Jamaad-ul-Awwal, 1416 AH].



The path of truth that you have shown us,
The words of wisdom imparted,
The values of honesty stressed,
Will always help us to be simple,
good human beings, like you wished.
The radiance of your treasured voice
and loving smile will be an encouraging
pillar of strength for us to face the
challenges in the few extra days of life
that Allah [s.w.t.] has graced us with.

Dearly missed by your family. May Allah rest your soul in eternal peace in the proximity of our Masoomeen. Surah-e-Fateha is requested for marhum.



New Toronto Condominium Housing Project gets into swing

In June this year a confidential survey was undertaken to determine the need and feasibility of condominium type ownership accommodation among the members of our Toronto community as opposed to renting. The primary intention of such a project would be to maintain it as a Shia Community Project. The response was overwhelming as expected and the project justification was clearly demonstrated.

On October 7, 1995 a meeting was held at the Crescent Village by the organizers of the Condominium Housing Project. Among the discussions were the sites being proposed and the approximate price per unit whilst other pertinent issues were also satisfactorily addressed by the project organizers.

The size of units being contemplated range from 1200 to 1800 square feet. The intended to be managed by a Non-Charitable for at least Average units will 155,000 to \$ 1800 square house de- upon the location (Richmond Hill or Vaughan) and the quality of the building. On an average, the prices are expected to be at least 20% below market rates.



property is be managed profit/organisation 10 years. prices of the range from \$ 190,000 for a foot town pending

The project organisers anticipate this to be a very successful venture and have called upon members to sign up or contact them for any further information they require. For more information please contact:

Nazmul Damji	(905)	881 - 1763
Sultan Davdani	(905)	881 - 5946
Shaukat Karim	(905)	470 - 0486
Hasnain Panju	(905)	508 - 6983
GulamAbbas Sajan	(905)	764 - 9182

Federation Samachar

Mehfil-e-Murtaza releases new directory

The Mehfil-e-Murtaza, Karachi has released its seventh directory to be used by its members and by Jamaats world-wide. The directory has been dedicated to those who were martyred on 25 February, 1995 [24 Ramadhan 1415 A.H.] in an early morning massacre in the Imambargah.

The directory highlights the objectives and achievements of various community service organisations in Karachi and also carries a list of Ulemas, Zakirs and Zakiras in Karachi.

The directory also carries the addresses of all Mehfils and Imambargahs in Karachi and includes a list of all Jamaats, Mehfils and Institutions affiliated to the World Federation and to the Africa Federation.

W.F. now more accessible

The World Federation are now on Internet and World Wide Web. Thus those individuals, Jamaats or companies which have installed an E-mail system can now have direct access to W.F. information via their computers.

The Africa Federation also intends to link its Secretariat to the Electronic Mail System as soon as this is made easily available in Tanzania.

Death, Marriage or Birth announcements.

With the Samachar being distributed world-wide, what better media could you have to inform our members about a death, marriage or birth?

Give it a thought the next time you want to make an announcement. We will be only too glad to accept!

Editor

Shi'a References included on INTERNET

The World Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.) Islamic League (WABIL) has entered a complete file on Shi'aism in the international computer network known as INTERNET. All subscribers to the INTERNET (there are at present about 20 million world-wide) will have access to the Shi'a reference works and to important information on the Shia's and Shi'ism.

Through the Internet, Shi'a books will now be freely available in every country without danger of censorship or confiscation. Individuals, Universities, Institutes and Organisations can now have easy access in various languages to the vast treasure of knowledge about the Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) and their guidance.

The programme is named WABIL NET and its code on the Internet is:

<http://cealpha1.swan.ac.uk>

If a book is included in this programme, it is tantamount to distributing 20 million [the estimated number of current Internet subscribers] copies of the book to different parts of the world. To date the Holy Qur'an, Nahjul Balaghah, Saheefah Sajjadiyah, Du'a-u-Kumayl and various collections of ahadith as well as information about the 12 Imams [a.s.] have been put on the programme and there is room for added materials and books.

Further information can be obtained from:

The Secretary General,
World Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) Islamic
League,
17A Phillimore Gardens,
London NW10 3ll,
United Kingdom.
Phone: [0-181-] 459 8475
Fax: [0-181-] 451 7059.

Federation Samachar

DATELINE TORONTO

from Alhaj Baqir Aloo

Academic Achievement Award - Toronto Jamaat recognised about 50 youths who successfully completed University or Community College courses leading to a degree or diploma. A unique way to express its pride in the education of its children by the Jamat, the programme was initiated about five years ago by Br. Nisar Sheraly. This year it was aptly done on the Prophet's Birthday. In an interview, Nisar expressed that an educated community will be able to withstand any social, economic or political upheaval with dignity and diligence. Let us encourage our children to pursue further education as emphasised by our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

Madresa Teacher Training - entered its fifth year at the beginning of September. Instead of letting students go away, after their completion of madresa studies, Nisar Sheraly, a qualified teacher and Principal of a secular school here, takes them for training for a year followed by another year of practicals as Assistant Teachers under a mentor before they graduate. Adults who wish to teach at the madresa also take this course. The enrolment has become manifold and presently the class has 30 students. Besides religious knowledge which is imparted by Ulema, professionals and experts, students are taught methodology, innovative teaching techniques, evaluation, counselling, record keeping and many topics that would enhance delivery of religious education.

Maulana Mohamed Rizwi and Dr. Liyakat Takim are regular lecturers on Islam and Shiaism. This class is conducted at the central madresa on Sundays at 9000 Bathurst which houses As-Sadiq Islamic School on week days and has 443 students on the roll with 85% attendance. Br. Shabbir Rehemtulla is the Principal, a hard working, knowledgeable and devoted worker. Another madresa catering for Toronto Jamaat children is housed in a school building and is known as Eastern Madresa. It has some 300 students on the roll and has a devoted principal by the name of Mrs. Masuma Jessa. Eastern Madresa teaches Arabic, Farsi, Urdu besides usual madresa subjects and has several non-shia students on the roll.

As-Sadiq Islamic School - entered its second year of operation with a split grade 3 and 4 class and a new curriculum developed by an expert in line with the Ministry of Education requirements. The new qualified teachers in conjunction with the Parents Committee and the Board of Trustees actively engage in ensuring the standard and success of the school. A Computer Lab and a novel Phonics Open court are in the works while students are beneficiaries of 26 acre environmental classrooms. Islamic values are integrated into the curriculum in a way that students learn Arabic, English and French simultaneously. Such a unique facility is unrivalled and an envy of the Public Education System. Local and overseas visitors are welcome to visit the school.

The Toronto *CRESCENT* *VILLAGE* in perspective

...waiting list of 190 applicants vouches on its success

In 1986, the Golden Crescent Group of Ontario, as part of their involvement with the Seniors of the community, proposed that the possibility of setting up a Seniors Home under one of the Governments' programs be considered.

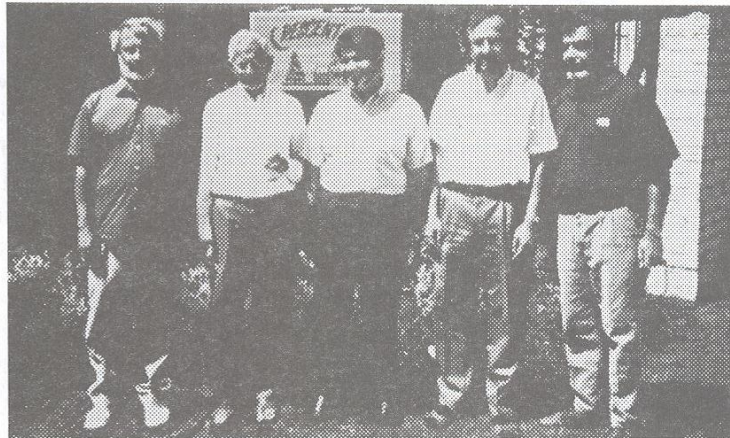
This proposal was submitted to the Islamic Shia Ithna-asheri Jamaat of Toronto for the purpose of sponsoring a necessary group to look after the project. It was clearly specified that the group would be an independent one.

The proposal was accepted and a group formed which eventually registered itself as the "Jaffari Islamic Housing Corporation".

Soon after the formation, two things happened. One, the Government stopped funding projects specifically for the Seniors. Future projects had to be multipurpose with the aim of providing accommodation to individuals with varying incomes. The project was now to be classified as an "Affordable housing" project. The rent was to be 25% of the family's income with both minimum and maximum limits set. There were to be no preferences for the seniors.

Secondly, the property boom in Canada had then just started. Builders were hence not interested in developing affordable housing since there was more money to be made outside this concept.

However, the Board members continued their efforts with a view to obtaining a suitable piece of land. In 1991, the Board was able to locate a site. This coincided with



Board Members from left to right: Gulam Sajan, Baqir Alloo, Sajjad Ebrahim, Dr. Haider Fazal and Hassanali Bhimji.

a sharp drop in interest in properties. The land at 138 Yorkland Blvd, the present site of Crescent Village, was thus obtained. The necessary plans, which had to be tailor-made to meet the Ministry of Housing's budget guidelines, were then patience and was extremely time consuming. But for the efforts of Sajjad Ebrahim and Murtaza Alibhai, one wonders whether the project would have been brought to fruition!

After approval of the project by the Ministry, the next phase involved the actual construction. Anyone familiar with the construction industry in Canada, would realise how alert one has to be in dealing with the builders. If one is not careful and vigilant, one can easily be taken for a ride. Once again, Sajjad spent numerous hours on site dealing with the builders.

While the construction was going on, applications from members of the shia community were invited. The allocation was to be in four categories - 'deep core', 'shallow - core', 'non-shallow core' and

'market' - which related to varying income levels of the families. Of the total of 170 units, the Board was entitled to allocated 80% of the houses/apartments at its discretion, as long as the applicants met with the basic criteria. The allocation was to be one on the basis of 'first come first served' provided all things were equal. The remaining 20% were to be 'deep-core', to be allocated to the Regional Housing Authority. For these, tenants were to be selected from a list provided by the Housing Authority.

The process adopted for implementation was to select a group of 44 youthful volunteers from the community and divide them into teams with the responsibility of carrying out the initial interviews, both for our 80% and the Government's 20%.

Initially, the full Board comprising of six members reviewed applications after jointly analysing the assessments carried out by the volunteers and thereafter began

[continued on page 11]

....Crescent Village in perspective

[..from page 10]

allocating homes.

However it was soon realised that the task was enormous and it was not practical for the full Board to be involved. Therefore, it was decided that in view of the heavy workload on Sajjad and Murtaza, the remaining four members should undertake the responsibility of allocating the homes.

The first half of the homes were allocated, based on the applications in hand. Once these people moved in, people who had hitherto not applied, also began to apply. Flood gates were opened and this made the task of allocating the remaining homes so much more difficult.

The project is now fully occupied and there are over 190 applications on the waiting list.

This makes allocation of the homes very difficult every time there is a vacancy. Not only is it necessary to consider the date of the application but the circumstances of each applicant. At times the more pressing applications have to be given priority to others. This is allowed under the guidelines.

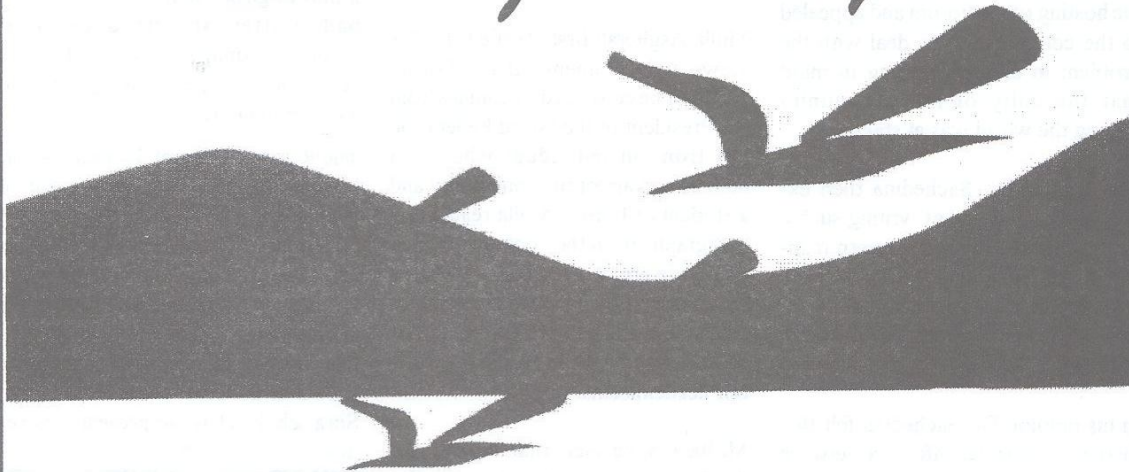
The Board members comprise of Sajjad Ebrahim, Ghulam Abbas Sajan, Kassim Moledina, Hassanali Bhimji, Mohammed Baqir Alloo and Dr. Haider Fazal. Murtaza Alibhai who recently resigned for personal reasons has been replaced by Mohammed Baqir Alloo. Prior to that Raza Sumar had also resigned to be replaced by Kassim Moledina.

The funding of the project is 100% by the Government of Ontario and Canada. The Government is responsible

for any shortfall between income and expenditure and there exists a 35 year mortgage. In addition, there are various operating expenses. The income is derived from the rent earned and obviously because of the massive stature of the project, the cost of which was in excess of \$ 24m, there currently exists a substantial shortfall.

The Board is interested in having the tenants involved in general activities at the Village and to this effect has formed a Liaison Committee comprising of Muhammad Baqir Alloo, Muhammad Hussein Lakha, Akber Juma and Hasina Mawan. The latter three members were elected by the tenants and Baqir Alloo, who also resides the the Village, is the Board's representative.


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Toronto's Open Forum clears the air

The book Islamic Messianism by Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina is controversial. Is the controversy justified? The writer claims that religious heritage has to be researched and presented objectively and what matters is the conclusion...the other opinion is that irrespective of the fact that research is done objectively and that faith is not shelved, any book that misguides should not be allowed....The Forum ended with a compromise which surely bodes well for the unity of the community world-wide.

An Open Forum to resolve the controversy of the book 'Islamic Messianism' by Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina was held in Toronto on 30 September, 1995 amidst an attendance of over 1000 members.

Among the religious scholars who attended were Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer, Syed Muhammad Rizvi and Dr. Liyakat Takim.

The purpose of the Forum was to give an opportunity to Dr. Sachedina to defend his book amidst visiting scholars and members of the community who in turn were allowed to raise their objections or approbations.

At the outset, the President of Toronto Jamaat, Nazir Gulamhussein explained the circumstances that led to the hosting of the Forum and appealed to the congregation to deal with the problem in civility, bearing in mind that the unity of the community around the world was at stake.

The author, Dr. Sachedina then explained the purpose of writing such a book for non-believing western readers in the academic world and the method that was used in compiling information on the subject of the Mahdi in Islam.

In his opinion Dr. Sachedina felt that there is an essential difference between research work undertaken strictly for the community of believers and that compiled for academicians. He demonstrated his method by citing relevant materials written by various Shi'a scholars from the time of the ghayba in the tenth century onwards. He claimed that these books which were discussed in their proper historic context,

handled the subject logically and rationally and ultimately proved the future coming of the twelfth Imam [a.s.].

Dr. Sachedina said that, like any other scholarly books written by even the most prominent Shia scholars, his research was not free of errors of judgement about certain details and their interpretation. He however accentuated the fact that he had at no time abandoned or compromised in the truthfulness of the Shi'a belief of Twelve Imams and said the conclusion of his book asserted this.

He said that his book had a different approach from that followed by departments of religious studies in trying to express knowledge about religion. Despite the different approach, he said that ultimately the truth prevailed.

Mulla Asgharali first clarified that his views and comments at the Forum were not be construed as coming from the President of the World Federation but from an individual who is "a humble servant of the community and a student of Islam." Mulla read a few paragraphs from the book and opined that there are contradictions between the conclusion and the statements of research in the subject matter, which he said was "written to please western academicians."

Mulla emphasised that he did not doubt on the integrity of Dr. Sachedina's faith in the Twelfth Imam [a.s.] but was antagonistic to the research methods used by university educated Muslim professors studying Islamic faith whereby they become 'outside' observers rather than 'inside' believers who advocate their personal beliefs at all times.

To clear the air, Mulla told the audience that the community needs the services of Dr. Sachedina and said the best compromise could be achieved by advising Dr. Sachedina not to defend his book. He also advised community members not to spend time arguing on the book because nothing conclusive or constructive would be achieved through such bickering.

Maulana Muhammad Rizvi said that the controversy about Dr. Sachedina's book had also reached the religious establishment at Qum. He said that Ayatollah Safi Gulpaygani, a friend of Dr. Sachedina had written a critical response to the book but had praised his faith. He said that Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, the author of an important Persian book on the Twelfth Imam [a.s.] had asked Dr. Sachedina to translate it into English and that Dr. Sachedina had written an introduction to Ayatullah Amini's book in which he reaffirmed his personal faith in the Twelfth Imam [a.s.].

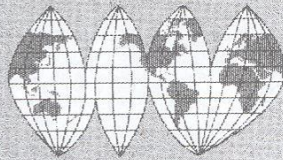
The Resident Alim of Toronto Jamaat, Liyakat Takim, said that the negative evaluation of Shi'a academicians was unfair because at no time did such academicians suspend their faith while writing or deliberating on Islamic subjects in western universities. He said that in order to reach out to an audience that does not share Shi'a belief, Shi'a scholars have to present their religious heritage objectively.

Apology

Due to space constraints, we have not carried the *Global Update* and the *Youths* page with its *Prize Quiz*. Results for the previous quiz and a new quiz will insha'allah be carried in our next issue.

Editor.

ELECTION



ROUND-UP

The Council of European Jamaats

The current office bearers on the Executive Committee of the Council of European Jamaats are:

Br. Ahmed Dungersi	President
Br. Nazir Virji	Vice President
Br. Murtaza Dattoo	Secretary
Br. Abdul Hirji	Asst Secretary
Br. Mohamed Alibhai	Hon. Treasurer
Br. Kassam Manji	Past President
Br. Hasnain Walji	Exec Councillor
Br. Salim Govani	Exec Councillor
Br. Shafiq Haji	Exec Councillor
Dr. Liyaket Dewji	Exec Councillor
Dr. Sibtain Panjwani	Exec Councillor
Br. Lavar Vasram	Exec Councillor

The Sub Committee Chairmans are:

Education	Dr. Sibtain Panjwani
Finance	Mohamed Alibhai
Relief Fund	Under Finance
Youth	Shafiq Haji
Public Relation	Ahmed Dungersi
Welfare	Ahmed Dungersi
Matrimonial	Dr. Liyaket Dewji
Maulana	Kassam Manji
Euro Hajj Mission	Murtaza Dattoo
Publication	Hasnain Walji
Economic	Nazir Virji
Secretariat	Nazir Virji

Songea

Elections were held on 31 July, 1995. The following were elected into office:

Hussein Rajani	President
Mohamed Versi	Vice President
Alihussein Lilani	Hon Secretary
Rizwan Rajani	Joint Secretary
Mustafa Jaffer	Hon. Treasurer

Wessex

The Annual General Meeting was held on 24 September, 1995 with the following being elected:

Sibtain Versi	President
Yaseen Rahim	Hon. Secretary
Tehsin Nurmohamed	Hon. Treasurer
Mohamed Taki Jaffer	Member
Dr. Jaffer A. Jaffer	Member

Nairobi

At the Biennial General Meeting of the Jamaat held on 15 September, 1995, the following were elected into office:

Br. Zulfikar Khimji	Chairman
Br. Mohamed Merali	Vice Chairman
Br. Shabbir Kanji	Hon. Secretary
Br. Naushad Moledina	Asst. Secretary
Br. Iqbal Kalyan	Asst. Treasurer
Br. Muslim Khimji	Treasurer
Br. Barkat Rajani	Member
Br. Mehboob Moledina	Member
Br. Ebrahim Fidahusein	Member
Br. Zahid Dattoo	Member
Br. Asgher Bandali	Member
Br. Mustafa Khimji	Member

Peterborough

At the Annual General Meeting of the Huseini Islamic Centre of Peterborough which was held on 10 September, 1995 the following were elected to the Management Committee for a one year term:

Nazir Virji	President
Abdul Hirji	Vice President
Mubarak Mamdani	Secretary
Iqbal Manji	Asst. Secretary
Ramzan Walji	Treasurer
Husein Asaria	Asst. Treasurer
Amir Bhimani	Member
Hussein H. Walji	Member
Raza Rahim	Member
Raza Tarbhai	Member
Raza Ladak	Member
Sibtain Walji	Member
Zulfikar Mamdani	Member
Zulfikar Manji	Member

South London

The following have been elected into office for a two year term:

Murtaza Bharwani	President
Anver Master	Vice President
Shabirali Mandan	Hon. Secretary
Riaz Ladha	Asst. Secretary
Mustafa Dattoo	Hon. Treasurer
Muhsin Nanji	Asst. Treasurer
Shabbir Suleman	Mukhi
Gulam Suleman	Asst. Mukhi
Mumtaz Kassam	Member
Gulam Kaba	Member

Dar es Salaam

The Africa Federation has appointed Alhaj Roshan Fazal as the new Chairman of its Setwel Board. The full team is:

Roshan Fazal	Chairman
Ramzanali Nanji	Vice Chairman
Mehboob Fazal	Hon Secretary
Nazir Kalyan	Member
Fidahussein Ebrahim	Member
Gulamhussein Mukhtar	Member
Zakir Pirbhai	Member
Gulam Bhimani	Member

The Ex - officio member will be the Asst. Treasurer of the Federation, Alhaj Ahmed Alloo.

Members of this Board who are not from Dar es Salaam are Alhaj Ramzanali Nanji, Alhaj Nazir Kalyan [Nairobi], Alhaj Fidahussein Ebrahim [Mombasa], Alhaj Gulamhussein Mukhtar and Alhaj Zakir Pirbhai [Arusha].

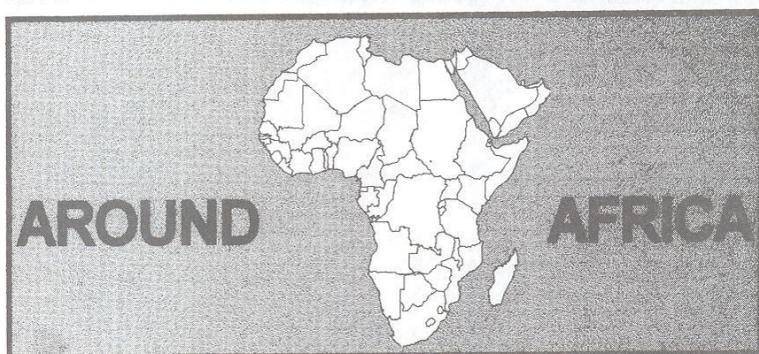
Leicester

At the Annual General Meeting of the Muslim Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Community of Leicester, UK held on 5 May 1995, the following were elected to the Management Committee for a one year term:

Muslim Rajani	President
Sayed Ghulam Askari	Vice President
Munawer Badami	Secretary
Pyarali Master	Treasurer
Abdul Karim Alldita	Mukhi
Murtaza Mawji	Member
Sadiq Kanji	Member
Murtaza Moledina	Member
Sayed G. Askari	Councillor to W.F.
Raziyabai Alladita	Chairlady
Fatimabai Mawji	Vice Chairlady

Milton Keynes

Mussadique Ladak	President
Bahadur Ali Dalal	Hon. Secretary
Nayab Haider	Hon. Treasurer
Mohamed Alibhai	Mukhi
Hasnain Somji	Asst. Mukhi



New York Jamaat President visits Dar

The President of New York Jamaat, Alhaj Abdulrasul (Shul) Khalfan, visited Dar es Salaam in August, 1995.

During his visit he was invited to a meeting with the office bearers of the Supreme Council and he also met with leaders of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat.

At the meeting held at the Council's office under the Chairmanship of Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani, Shul Khalfan pointed out that the great majority of the members of New York Jamaat hailed from Africa and therefore the Jamaat there followed the activities and progress of the Africa Federation with great interest and that there was a special respect and concern felt for the sister community in Africa.

With regard to the issue of the community dispossessed and displaced from Somalia, Shul Khalfan commended the Africa Federation for its endeavours and success in meeting the challenge almost single-handed. He also noted that the entire issue was a matter of concern for our community world-wide.

Shul Khalfan also expressed his concern at the lack of interest seen in Africa towards higher education for the youths. Whilst accepting that there was a limit to which the Council could help, he considered this trend as alarming. It was noted

that to promoted education, much more depended on the parents as also on the youths themselves.

For the information of the readers, New York Jamaat comprises of about 800 members including minors. The population is however growing fast through birth and from new immigrants from other states or abroad.

The unemployment rate is almost nil and about 75% of the families own their own houses with about 40% being in business. Such a ratio of prosperity is considered excellent for the community and probably is unmatched.

The community students there have shown competitive ability to gain admission into colleges and universities to pursue professional careers. From experience, girls and the boys have shown equal ability to compete for places of repute in the field of higher education.

At the end of the meeting, Shul Khalfan presented to the Chairman, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani, a copy of the First Edition of the members Directory of New York Jamaat compiled by its Directory and Census sub-committee headed by Br. Amir Khalfan.

Shul Khalfan who hails from Tanzania, emigrated to the United States in 1980. He informed us that the Federation Samachar has in recent years gained considerable popularity in the USA.

Samachar to issue guidelines to correspondents to improve news inflow

The Chairman of the Editorial Board of *Federation Samachar*, Munir Daya has said that his Board will soon issue guidelines to all correspondents as to what is expected from them as official representatives.

He said that the response from Jamaats to a circular issued by the Supreme Council calling for correspondents had been responded to well with many appointments being made.

Speaking from past experience, he said that news feedback from Jamaats "failed to fill the bill" with only few correspondents actually sending in regular updates, thereby leaving activities in some Jamaats uncovered.

He said the ultimate objective of the proposed guidelines is to ensure a smooth and regular input of activity reports, news and photographs from all constituent Jamaats.

Brother Daya said that there is an increasing international readership of the *Samachar* because many of our brothers residing overseas have either family or nostalgic connections with Africa. He said, "overseas readers yearn to read about their brothers in Africa and at times are even motivated after reading about communal developments here. Therefore it is important that all important activities at our end are adequately covered."

He said the primary objective of the *Samachar* was to keep members informed on religious laws and news and said that only Jamaats with enlightened members can be classified amongst the healthy Jamaats.

Shedding more light on the team that works at the helm

The office-bearers of the Africa Federation have been profiled hereunder. The Samachar Editorial Board asked them a question as to how it felt like to be at the helm and if they harboured any personal objectives in their position.



Name: Mohamed G.M. Dhirani [Chairman]

Age: 65

Qualification: Accounting Diploma

Profession: Managing Director of Forem Litho Printers Ltd.

Past Community or other social service: served in various capacities in the Jamaat and Federation. Was the President of Dar es Salaam Jamaat for four terms, the Chairman of the Education Board of the Supreme Council for two terms and the Chairman of the Africa Federation for two terms. Also served as one of the Editors of the Federation Samachar during the Chairmanship of Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer.

Family details: Wife, two sons and two daughters.

"A very responsible position which requires good public relations and tolerance. I would like to see that brotherhood and unity is maintained. The primary emphasis now should be to mobilise our youths towards education and community service and ladies should also be given an opportunity to progressively participate in communal affair withing the allowance of our Sharia. The Africa Federation is an active organisation and along with my team, we look forward to steering it in the best possible manner during our term in office."



Name: Mohammed Hassanali Pirbhai [Vice Chairman]

Age: 54

Qualifications (if any): B.S.c. (ENG). M.I.C.E. Chartered Civil Engineer

Professional, business or working capacity: Director - Design Partnership Ltd.

Past Community or other social service: -

Family details: Wife and 3 daughters

Sports involvement (if any): Cricket, Tennis and Swimming



Name: Mohamed Yusufali Somji [Hon. Secretary]

Professional, business or working capacity: Pan Insurance Broker

Past Community or other social service:- Has had a wide experience of communal affairs beginning from 1974. He was then the Hon. Secretary of the Social Upliftment Sub-Committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat. He also served as the Hon. Secretary of the Dar es Salaam Ithnaasheri Union and was Jnt. Secretary of Dar es Salaam Jamaat. He has been the Chairman of Union Sports Club, Al-Muntazir School and the Central Health Board of the Supreme Council. Previously also served the Supreme Council as Hon. Secretary.

Family: married with four children

Sports involvement (if any): was an active cricket player



Name: Asger Jafferli Dhanji [Hon. Asst. Secretary]

Age: 43

Qualifications (if any): B.S.c (ECON) LON.

Professional, business or working capacity: Managing Director of Waljis Travel Bureau

Past Community or other social service: Nil

Family details: married with 3 children

Sports involvement (if any): Squash captain for Union Sports Club for one term

"To work for the community at Africa Federation level gives me immense satisfaction. Although I have no past experience in any community works, I find the 'team' very helpful to me in all aspects of Africa Federation work. The work-load is heavy but challenging. All of us have to shoulder responsibilities because through unity our work will become easier to accomplish. Wisdom is a rare phenomenon that comes with age. However working for the community at any level advances one's wisdom at a considerable pace."



Name: Mohamed Ahmed Hassam [Hon. Treasurer]

Age: 49

Qualifications (if any): F.C.C.A.

Professional, business or working capacity: Auditor

Past Community or other social service: Chairman of Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary, Chairman of Ithna-Asheri Union, Hon. JT. Secretary, Dar es Salaam Jamaat and also immediate past Hon. Treasurer of the Africa Federation. Currently also the Chairman of Central Board of Education of Dar es Salaam

Family details (children etc.): Married with four children

Sports involvement (if any): Plays some golf

"To be a member of the Executive committee of the Africa Federation is both heavy and light. Heavy with the responsibility of the office and light because it gives you the satisfaction of doing some thing useful for your community. Haven't all of us benefited from this community's various services such as burial of our dead, getting medical attention at our hospital, having our children educated at our schools and if nothing else, from the running of our mosques and Imambadas which operate so efficiently.?"

We ought to pay back by providing some of our time for the cause of the community. And when one plunges in such a service, then there is no greater satisfaction. It is never too early nor too late to start. The right time is 'NOW' for no one is sure to see tomorrow. To build a better community one and all have to share the burden and believe me, the burden is not going to be very heavy if all of us are prepared to share."



Name: Murtaza Abdur Rasul Nanji [Hon. Acting Secretary]

Age: 50

Qualifications: Diploma in education

Professional, business or working capacity: Worked for 15 years as a school master and English Department Head, then worked for seven years as an Insurance Loss Adjustor and currently operates an emporium in Dar es Salaam.

Past Community or other social service: was the Hon. Asst. Secretary of the Africa Federation for the term that just ended.

Family details (children etc.): Married with two children

Sports involvement (if any): likes to swim and read.



Name: Ahmed Hussein Alloo [Hon. Acting Secretary]

Age: 47

Qualifications: Completed foundation Exams of the Association of Certified Accountants (ACCA).

Professional, business or working capacity: Manager of Allied Printers and Traders.

Past Community or other social service: this dates back to 1973/4 when he served as Assistant Secretary of the Ithnaasheri Union and between 1978 and 1985 he served three more times in the same capacity and once was the Asst. Hon. Secretary of Union Sports Club. Also served as Hon. Asst. Treasurer in the previous term.

Family details (children etc.): Married with a son and daughter.

Sports involvement (if any): loves the game of cricket and has played for Union Sports Club for a number of seasons. He has also umpired many matches organised by the Dar es Salaam Cricket association [DCA].



Name: Yusuf Gulamhusein Dattoo [Trustee]

Age: 62

Qualifications: A.M.I.S.K.

Professional, business or working capacity: Surveyor, Land Estate Agent and Developer

Past Community or other social service: A Past member of Lions Club and a Trustee for Mombasa Jamaat for 7 years.

Family details (children etc.): Two sons, three grandchildren

Sports involvement (if any): walking, swimming and cycling.

"I felt privileged when I was appointed Trustee for Kenya by Alhaj Habibbhai Mulji when he took over the helm of the Africa Federation. Since then, along with my fellow Trustee from Kenya, Alhaj Ramzan Nanji, our objective has been to improve the income generated from the Federation properties in Mombasa, something which we successfully did in Mombasa. The present team under Alhaj Mohamedbhai Dhirani has ambitious plans to improve the income even further and I am proud to be a member of this important team."



Name: Habib Pyarali Virani [Trustee]

Age: 57

Professional, business or working capacity: Businessman

Past Community or other social service: Hon. Secretary and Vice Chairman of Africa Federation

Family details (children etc.): Wife with 3 children

Sports involvement (if any): an active snooker player.



Name: Ramzanali M. Nanji [Trustee]

Age: 53

Professional, business or working capacity: Businessman

Past Community or other social service: Past Committee member of the Nairobi Jamaat, Chairman of Bilal Muslim Mission of Nairobi for the past 10 years, Regional representative of the Central Health Board, Trustee of the Africa Federation and Treasurer of Setwel Board.

Also assists in organising medical treatment for patients from outside Kenya.



Name: Gulamabbas Janmohamed

Professional, business or working capacity: Managing Director and proprietor of Dar es Salaam Printers

Past Community or other social service: Served as President of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Chairman of the Supreme Council Think Tank Committee and Trustee of the Africa Federation.

We intend to carry the profiles of each Chairman of the various Boards under the umbrella of the Africa Federation. All Chairmans have been notified to this effect and those who have as yet not responded are reminded to kindly send in their profiles with a passport size photograph urgently.

Editor

Cover Page commentary....

A full 50 years have elapsed since the Africa Federation was formed. One of the criterion to judge a successful organisation is by its period of existence. The Africa Federation has withstood the test of time and as the years have rolled by, with different services being rendered and numerous issues and problems being sorted out, members of the community in Africa and even in other parts of the world have come to grips with the fact that the Federation is indispensable.

The Africa Federation includes 40 Jamaats spread over some 12 countries in Africa. In addition to providing assistance and engendering co-or-

-dination in such fields as health, education, welfare, religious education and propagation, sports and other socio-cultural issues, the Africa Federation, as a mother organisation always has to have a watchful eye on the political, religious, economic and other issues affecting our community at large so as not to leave our members vulnerable to distress.

We should be thankful and consider ourselves lucky that right from the outset fifty years ago, we have had many devoted individuals who have served the Federation in one way or another.

The current generation will be

familiar with the names of the two devoted individuals, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani and Alhaj Habib Mulji who along with their teams have shared the ultimate responsibility of the Federation for the past 12 years.

The challenges that lie ahead are formidable but not insurmountable. Whilst we try to adapt ourselves to a technologically more advanced world and simultaneously also vie to understand, practice and propagate our religion correctly, no sincere member can afford a 'head in the sand' behaviour and remain isolated.

Let us all unite to tackle the challenges ahead. United we stand, divided we fall.

BIAS AGAINST HIJAB IN TANZANIA SCHOOLS IS CONTAINED

The long religious bias against Islamic Hijab in Government schools in Tanzania has been finally contained.

In his letter dated 23 August, 1995, S.P. Mkoba, Acting Commissioner for Education in the Ministry of Education and Culture, directed the Heads of all Government Secondary Schools and Higher Institutions to permit Muslim students to put on Hijab while in schools.

However, the colours of the dress of Hijab are required to match those of the students' uniform in the schools or institutions concerned.

This permission which was long due came in the wake of continuous grievances raised by local Muslim leaders in various of their addresses to the former Tanzania President, Alhaj Ali Hassan Mwinyi. The last such session was on August 10, 1995 when the President was the Chief Guest at a Baraza held at national level in Dar es Salaam to mark the celebration of Maulid.

Hijab is obligatory and abandoning it due to compulsion or otherwise is sinful in Islam. There can be no laws which enforce sinning. The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, like those of other countries which uphold human rights, allow freedom of worship. Any laws or regulations which in effect prevent followers of any Faith from fulfilling their religious obligations are ultra vires.

The primary schools which are normally under the control of the local councils have allowed Hijab

since the 1980s. It was therefore a matter of great satisfaction that the President in his response to the address at the Maulid Baraza finally put this sensitive religious issue, which had been simmering for some years and which risked the national unity in view of the great majority of Muslims in Tanzania, to an end by explicitly directing permission of Hijab in all schools.

The grievance over the ban of Hijab in schools was raised by the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania a decade earlier at a time when many Muslim parents were becoming more concerned over the erosion of moral standards in the conduct and behaviour of the youths, many of whom aped liberal western vogues. Parents thus began to enforce the obligation of Hijab upon their daughters upon reaching the age of 9 and upwards.

This concern began to be also shared by other Muslim communities and Institutions when incidents of pregnancy among secular primary and secondary schools students began to rise. The extent of teenage pregnancies especially amongst school children has now become an acute problem in Tanzania and in wake of this it is rather sad that the Hijab ruling took the Government so long to resolve upon.

Otherwise the nation could have, right from the outset, been saved from the religious controversy that transpired at the risk of national unity, morals and peace. Nevertheless as is commonly said; it is better late than never!

Moon Sighting and situation on Eid prayers is clarified

When some members of the Community sought clarification from the Africa Federation on the issue of moon-sighting according to the rulings of different Mujtaheeds, the issue was forwarded to Hujjatul Islam Seyyed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi of Dar es Salaam for further enlightenment. He referred to the circular issued by the Supreme Council on 8 March, 1994 [25 Ramadhan, 1414] with reference GEN/125/94 which categorically mentioned the fatwas of Ayatullah al-'Uzma As-Seestani and of the late Ayatullah Al-Khui and the late Ayatullah Al-Gulpaygani.

It is clear from the above circular that according to all the three Maraji', if the moon is sighted in the East, it will be valid for towns and countries in the West.

In case the moon is sighted in the West, it will not be valid for those Muqallideen of Ayatullah As-Seestani or Ayatullah Al-Gulpaygani who are in the East. However for the Muqallideen of late Ayatullah Al-Khui it would also be valid in towns which are to the East if these towns share a portion of the night with the town where the moon was sighted.

The Supreme Council will declare the new moon only if it is proved according to the fatwa of Ayatullah al-'Uzma As-Seestani. In a situation wherein Muqallidin following the rulings of other Mujtaheeds observe Eid on a day conflicting with the ruling of Ayatullah Seestani, they have been called upon to offer their Eid prayers at home to avoid a situation whereby two Eid prayers are held on consecutive days in one Mosque.

Bilal Mission consolidates activities in Kigoma

A Bilal Muslim Mission team headed by Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi with Murtaza Jivraj [member of the managing committee], Hassan Kareem [secretary, Bilal Mission, Kigoma], Sheikh Ramadhan Idrissa Kwezi [Principal, Madresatu Ahlil Bayt A.S. Temeke] visited Kigoma on 18 September, 1995 for tabligh activities.

After arriving on 18 September, 1995 in Ujiji where Brother Mohamed Rafik Haji Jaffer gave them access to his Land Cruiser, the delegation then visited Simbo and other neighbouring villages on the following two days during which they laid foundation stones for the mosque at Simbo and the madressa at Kalela.

There are about 85 Shi'a families in Ujiji whilst 85 students were enrolled for the madressa. At Simbo there are about 700 Shia's who use a small mosque and a madressa housing three classes made of burnt bricks and *makuti* thatching.

During the delegation's visit, two empty adjacent plots were bought for Shs. 80,000/- and it was agreed to procure bicycles for the madressa teachers to help them undertake tabligh tours. It was also agreed to provide implements for a farm which they propose to cultivate.

The Kalela Centre is the Mission's first Centre in Kigoma region. There are now about 160 Shia's there and the Mission has resolved to make Kalela and Simbo as full-fledged Shi'a Centres. At Kalela, a ghusl-khana has been built through local assistance.

On 21 September, 1995 a Seminar was organised at Ujiji. The response was good with 65 delegates coming from 17 villages. The delegates came from (population in brackets): Simbo (700), Kalela (160), Kamara (280), Kwaga (40), Kigogwe (88), Kasulu (n/p), Ujiji (about 450), Kigoma (n/p), Nyantore (15), Mwakizega (191), Kizenga (60), Mwazega (about 100), Sunuka (100), Kabeba (about 100), Samwa (80), Kazuramimba (200) and Vamia (about 80).

During the Seminar, a training course to be undertaken in Dar es Salaam for teachers and congregational prayer leaders was announced and 14 confirmed participation. Emphasis was also made on the need to have a census.

Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi then addressed delegates on the prevalent Islamic situation and advised them that the Bilal Muslim Mission had opened its regional office in Ujiji and appointed Sheikh Bakari Omari Mbilango as the region's Sheikh. All centres and branches of Bilal in Kigoma region will now be under his control. The delegation returned to Dar es Salaam on 22 September, 1995, very tired but delighted.

Council distributes portfolios

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani has allocated specific portfolios to his office bearers so as to make the administration of the Secretariat more effective and efficient. The delegation will enable adequate sharing of supervisory responsibilities. Correspondence will however continue to be addressed to the Honorary Secretary.

The responsibilities will be shared as follows:

THE CHAIRMAN

ALHAJ MOHAMED DHIRANI
TEL.: 27722/25032/30089 (O)
23460 (R)

1. Khums
2. Movement of Aalims
3. Mulyanis and Zakirs
4. Settlement Welfare Board
5. World Federation
6. Moon sighting
7. Foreign Dignitaries

VICE CHAIRMAN

ALHAJ MOHAMED PIRBHAI
TEL.: 31391 - 2/27856/22453 (O)
26146 (R)

1. Central Health Board
2. Sports Council
3. Bilal Muslim Mission
4. Immigration
5. Inter Communal Relations

HON. ACTING SECRETARY BR.
MURTAZA A. NANJI
TEL.: 27442 (O) and

HON. ASST. SECRETARY
ALHAJ ASGHER DHANJI
TEL: 22076 - 7/26128/30107/
34093 (O)
67721/67034 (R)

1. General Correspondence
2. Circulars
3. Minutes
4. Office Bearers' Meetings
5. Secretariat and Staff
6. Directories
7. Hajj programme
8. Census and Statistical Planning
9. Flag Day
10. Video Tape Distribution.

HON. TREASURER
ALHAJ MOHAMED HASSAM
TEL.: 20742 (O) 20533 (R)

1. Education Board
2. Secondary Education
3. Tabligh
4. Hawza
5. Federation Samachar
6. Sociology

HON. ASST. TREASURER -
ALHAJ AHMED H. ALLOO
TEL.: 20742 (O) 20533 (R)

1. Finance
2. Accounts
3. Welfare assistance and loans

The Trustees Gulamabbas Janmohamed [Tel: 21836/21989/ 864551-2/31616(O); 31685 (R)] and Alhaj Habib Virani [Tel: 22640/20896 (O); 36082 (R)] will be responsible for Trustee matters.

Education Board stream-lines loan application procedure....

One of the functions of the Higher Education Board of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats of Africa (KSISC) is to scrutinize and recommend a limited number of educational loans each year for undergraduate studies to qualifying and outstanding male and female students from constituent Jamaats, who have limited finances at their disposal. The amount of loans approved per year is largely dependent on available funds, the accumulation of which varies according to repayments from students who have completed their studies.

During the 19th Constitutional Conference held in April, 1995 at Dar es Salaam, the Education Board Secretariat (EBS) which for the past twelve years was located at Moshi was moved to Nairobi. A number of prospective students have since applied and have been awarded loans but it has been noted that many students are not aware of some important details which have to be followed when applying for a loan.

Students wishing to apply for a loan should submit their application forms to the Jamaat Education Board representatives at least three (3) months before the funds are required. These forms can be obtained from the local Jamaat offices or the EBS in Nairobi.

It is expected that the Jamaat's Education representatives will scrutinise and forward the duly completed application in accordance with detailed instructions given therein to the EBS in Nairobi within one month

of receiving the same i.e. two months before the funds are required. Candidates should remember that any canvassing especially at the EBS level will mean automatic disqualification.

As soon as the application is received by the EBS, it will be scrutinized and if found incomplete, the local Jamaat representative will be notified. Late or incomplete applications will take longer to process and in some cases may not be considered. It is therefore important for the student and local Jamaat's representative to ensure that the application forms (in duplicate) are duly completed and all required attachments, especially the report from local Jamaat's are sent as one package to EBS to avoid unnecessary delays and complications.

The main criteria for approving loans are:

1. Good academic and religious records; mock results will be accepted with applications but final approval will be based on final results/admission;
2. Applicants should have a genuine financial need;
3. Conditional and/or final admission to a reputable institution of higher learning (preference is always given to local Colleges).
4. Thoughtful and coherent educational and career plans.

Candidates are normally also evaluated on their extra curricular interests and achievements along with their potential to achieve their ambitions and their likelihood to succeed in an academic environment.

The Education Board normally approves loans to cover the partial/full cost of tuition fees only. An additional amount may be approved in very exceptional cases to cover course materials such as text books and part of the living expenses. The cost of travel is not included in the loan amount. Applicants are expected to make every effort to obtain funding from other sources, so that the amount requested from KSISC can be reduced to a minimum. Preference is given to those who have been able to secure the remaining funding from alternative sources.

Proof of any funding from alternative sources must be submitted before an application can be finally approved. **Applicants have been advised not to seek additional loans or funding from any of the sister organisations of the KSISC, like the World Federation, NASIMCO and the like.**

In certain cases the EBS may deem it necessary to meet the candidates and applicants should therefore be prepared to be interviewed by the EBS in Nairobi and/or the Local Education Board committees about their financial situation, their academic performance, extra-curricular achievements and career plans. In this respect the **local Education Boards have to send the interview report separately and under confidential cover to the EBS. Applications of those students for whom an interview is deemed necessary will not be considered without such reports.**

Loans are approved on the

[.....continued on page 21]

...and calls for prompt repayment of previous loans

[...continued from page 20]

condition that the students will furnish the EBS with a regular updates of their scholastic results at the end of each term. The KSISC reserves the right to withhold or withdraw the loan amount approved, if the EBS considers the academic results of a recipient to be unsatisfactory. Students are not permitted, without prior written approval from the EBS, to move to any other educational institute or to change their course of study or to deviate from the degree programme for which they were originally given the loan.

A number of past recipients of loans from the KSISC have defaulted (see enclosed table) on their moral obligations of repaying the loans forwarded to them even after several years since graduation. The repayments, as per the loan agreement, should have commenced twelve months after completion of studies. The EBS being cognisant of the fact that the repayments form a major source of funding for future students, has therefore devised new forms, which are aimed at making the guarantors more responsible in ensuring timely repayments.

Guarantors will be required to sign a guarantee form and an Agreement/Bond will also have to be signed by the applicant and the two guarantors when the loan is approved. The terms and conditions of the Agreement/Bond will form part of the loan agreement between the KSISC,

the student and the guarantors.

The table below indicates the grave financial status of the Board due to insignificant repayments being made by a number of students. Even after such trivial repayments, the Board has been able in 1995 to remit US\$ 50,000 to students who are currently studying. An additional amount of US\$ 60,000 is expected to be approved for new applications during the period 1995/96. This has only been possible due

to generous donations from various well wishers. If the Board were to depend only on the repayments by students, as the case should be, the Board would today be unable to meet its obligation for the students who are currently studying and would also not be able to approve any new loan applications. The EBS has expressed its gratitude to all donors who have supported their Education programme and has called upon all defaulters to meet their repayment obligations at the earliest.



STUDENTS LOAN SUMMARY (ALL FIGURES IN US\$)

STUDENTS/JAMAAT	AMOUNT LOANED	REPAYMENTS	BALANCE OUTSTANDING
7 Students (DSM)	111,230	15,300	95,930
6 Students (Mombasa)	73,040	1,000	72,040
4 Students (Arusha)	37,150	9,140	28,010
3 Students (Moshi)	53,500	15,000	38,500
1 Students (Zanzibar)	43,540	500	43,500
1 Students (Tanga)	3,150	2,390	260
Total (22 Students)	\$321,610	43,830	277,780

Mombasa Sportsmen awarded and elected

At the Annual General Meeting of Jaffery Sports Club - Mombasa, held on 22 September 1995, Br. Aunali Kanji was once again elected the Chairman for the year 1995/96 and was thereafter given a mandate to appoint office bearers and committee members. He retained his Office Bearers and appointed some new committee members. His team consists of:

Br. Shokat Daya Vice Chairman
 Br. Murtaza Kassamali Hon. Secretary
 Br. Amir Merali Hon. Treasurer
 Br. Riyaz Virjee Hon. Sports Secretary
 The Committee Members are:
 Br. Rajabali Bandali (IMM Past Chairman), Br. Kassamali Jagani, Br. Abbas Nasser, Br. Gulam M Khaku, Br. Husein Khaki, Br.

Salim Bhalloo and Br Riyaz Fazal.

In the same meeting, the following were awarded trophies for the different sports they excelled in:-

Junior Cricketer of the Year

Mohsin H. Mawji

Cricketer of the Year

Moh'd Alimoh'd

Junior Footballer of the Year

Anver

Junior Squash player

of the Year

Altaf Visram

Squash Player of the year

Mustafa Nasser

Junior Tennis Player of the year

Sajjad Kanji

Tennis Player of the Year

Mehboon Virjee

Junior Table Tennis Player of the Year

Mazhar Gulamhusein

Junior Volleyball player of the Year

Azim Dossa

Volleyball player of the Year

Moosa Haji

Sportsman of the year

Abbas Nazerali

Best Disciplined Youth of the Year

Ahmed Virji

Annual Appreciation Award

Murtaza Kassamali

Thinking caps put on at Nairobi's Haydari Madrasah

The Haydari Madrasah recently organised a workshop on Extra Curricular Activities at the Ladies Imambara in Nairobi. According to a report filed to us in September, 1995, this workshop was attended by 34 ladies and 11 men with the primary of reviving activities like sports, scouting, debating, drama, science clubs etc. that normally take place after class hours. Such activities provide an opportunity for physical growth, enable members to socialise and help them to inculcate leadership skills in a recreative environment. Some students who involve themselves in these activities during their Madrasah years continue with their indulgements for many years after leaving the Madrasah.

After a welcome address by Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, participants were divided into five groups and after an hour of deliberations group leaders were asked to present proposals.

Among the main proposals that

came in were:

1] Regular parent-teacher meetings be held wherein parents can be told what to expect from their children and be advised on the syllabus to be covered and on how they can be of assistance to the teachers;

2] Madrasah should encourage volunteer parents to attend classes to create more awareness on the work done.

3] Other activities suggested were to start a storytime session [with dramatization], maintain gardens to subsequently explain on the wonderful creations of God, to try out simple experiments, to make gifts like cards etc., to hold interclass quizzes and competitions, to undertake craft work and to encourage speech deliveries.

4] To take children on picnics and outings, like to farms and orphanages and

5] To give simple homework that can be done with parents.

For the upper classes additional suggestions came in. These included emphasis on the recitation of duas and surahs with proper makhraj, punctuation along with memorisation. Educational trips, audio visual aids and practical sessions to demonstrate theoretical studies for such acts as wudhoo, namaz, tayammum and ghusl. were also suggested.

It was unanimously agreed that from Class 6 [which girls of 9 years normally attend], activities be conducted separately. In addition to sports like netball, swimming and badminton, the possibility of indoor activities like cooking, crochet knitting, mehndi applications and educative games was also envisaged.

Bwana Ali Sheriff of Arusha suggested that a public speaking and letter writing course be also introduced whilst Brother Raza Dattoo called on lady teachers to give extra emphasis to Thursday classes which he said had been neglected.

DATELINE MAURITIUS

Tabligh work spreads out to Dar prisons

The Bilal Muslim Mission has been allowed by the Commissioner of Prisons to teach religion on weekends and to distribute Islamic books to Muslim prisoners in Dar es Salaam and the Coast Region. The Mission expressed its indebtedness to Brother Mohamed Said Kiaratu of Kibaha for getting this permission.

There are nine prisons in the Coast Region. The Bilal Muslim Mission has started work in four prisons which are in Dar es Salaam. The other five prisons are at more distant places like Mafia and Utete and financial restraints have prevented the Mission from spreading out to these areas immediately.

The inmates in every prison have asked for a **Musahafu**, **Busati** for prayers and **Shukas** to pray in. The Mission would like to fulfil their requirements but because there are thousands of prisoners the cost involved is big and the Mission has invited donors to pledge in amounts for this purpose.

Scholarship for religious studies

A full scholarship is available for a female student to study Religious studies in Qum - the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The course is full time and will span over a period of two to three years. Students must have completed Form Four to qualify for consideration and the deadline for applications is 31 December, 1995. Applications should reach the Chairman of Education Board, P.O. Box 66545, Nairobi, Kenya not later than 31st December, 1995.

Federation Samachar

Jamat Delegation visits His Excellency Cassam Uteem, The President of the Republic of Mauritius

On 18 October 1995, a Jamat delegation comprising of Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Masroor Hasan, Maulana Sayed Shamsul Hasan Zaidi, Al Haj Raza Hussain Kassamally Esmael (President), Al Haj Sajjad Husain Rajani (Treasurer) and Brother Shabbir Husein Rajani (Secretary) paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Cassam Uteem, the President of the Republic of Mauritius at the State House, Le Reduit.

During the half an hour meeting, members of the delegation exchanged views with H.E. Cassam Uteem on the social situation of the country. Religious matters and matters of interest for the Jamat were also discussed. The delegation told the President that our Jamat has always been for a peaceful Mauritius and we shall always strive for peace and harmony in the country.

Jamat Delegation visits Pepsi Cola Company (Quality Beverages Ltd)

Jamat delegation paid a visit to the Pepsi Cola Company (Quality Beverages Ltd) on 18th October 1995. Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Masroor Hasan, Maulana Syed Shamsul Hasan Zaidi, Al Haj Raza Hussain Kassamally Esmael (President), Al Haj Sajjad Husain Rajani (Treasurer) and Brother Shabbir Husein Rajani (Secretary) formed the delegation.

The delegation got the opportunity of visiting the factory from manufacture to bottling and distribution of the soft drinks of the company. We got a very warm welcome by the Managing Director of the Company, Mr. Carrim Currimjee. Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Masroor Hasan expressed his appreciation as to the hygienic environment in which the work is carried out in the factory.

Visit of jamat Delegation to Hon. Mukeshwar Choonee, Minister of Arts, Culture, Leisure and Reform Institutions

A Jamat delegation comprising of Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Masroor Hasan, Maulana Syed Shamsul Hasan Zaidi, Al Haj Raza Hussain Kassamally Esmael (President), Al Haj and Brother Shabbir Husein Rajani (Secretary) paid a courtesy visit to Hon. Mukeshwar Choonee, the Minister of Arts, Culture, Leisure and Reform Institutions on 19 October 1995.

During the meeting, Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Masroor Hasan stressed on the freedom of religion in Mauritius. He said that Mauritius is one of the few countries in the world where freedom of worship prevails. He said that the authorities have left no stone unturned to preserve their culture. Hon. Choonee then explained that Mauritius has close ties with India and Pakistan because of our culture. Matters of mutual interest were also discussed and the Minister assured the Community of his full support.



....With
H.E.
Cassam
Uteem, the
President
of the
Republic
of
Mauritius

**Inna Lillahi Wa Inna
Ilaihi Rajeeon**

**MURABBI HAJI
AKBERALI
NURMOHAMED**

We regret to announce the death of Murabbi Haji Akberali Nurmohamed which occurred at Antananarivo, Madagascar on Sunday 12 November, 1995. He was 96 years of age.

The late Akberbhai devoted his life to community service in Morondava and in one way or another he was involved in many of the services rendered by the Jamaat there.

Until his death he was very active and used to attend most of the meetings of the Madagascar Territorial Council.

To keep himself occupied the late Haji Akberbhai involved himself in hobbies. He maintained a record of rainfall in Morondava for over 50 years using his own instruments fixed at his residence. Government officials there used to refer to him for past rainfall records.

His other hobby was to maintain records of births, weddings and deaths in the community based on the information available to him. He used to keep abreast with community news by reading all Gujarati publications.

The community, in the death of Haji Akberali Nurmohamed, has lost a very illustrious person who was quiet by nature and who could recollect the community's history for the past many years.

The Secretariat prays for the magferat for the soul of the late Akberali Nurmohamed and requests for a Sura - e - Fateha.

**Inna Lillahi Wa Inna
Ilaihi Rajeeon**

**ALHAJ
HASSANALI
PIRBHAI VISRAM**

We regret to announce the death of Alhaj Hassanali Pirbhai Visram which occurred in Vancouver BC in early August, 1995.

Late Murabbi Hassanalibhai is the son of Pirbhai Visram, popularly known as "kaka" who was an active member of Kampala Jamaat and a keen supporter of the Africa Federation.

Like his father, Hassanalibhai too was a strong supporter of the Federation and served it in the capacity of Hon. secretary under the Chairmanship of Alhaj Ebrahim Shariff from 1956 to 1961 and even won a Husseini Medal for his exemplary services to the community.

He was a generous donor and a vivid example of his generosity still prevails in Arusha, where the Jamaat until today receives benefit from a house donated by him.

Those who knew and worked with him remember him as a highly intelligent person with a keen foresight.

He migrated to Canada in the early seventies and his demise will be very much felt by those who were acquainted with him.

May Allah [s.w.t.] repose the soul of the deceased in eternal peace. Amen.

Sura - e - Fateha is requested for the departed soul.



Ziyarat Video

The Tabligh Committee of Shia Ithna-Asheri, Jamaat of Dar es Salaam has produced an English Documentary of Ziyarat on 14 Masoomeen. Cassettes are now on sale in various Jamaats.

**East Africa get 1732
US visas but
applicants need to
respond fast**

Applications for the US Immigrant Lottery Visa have been scrutinised and though 100,000 names have been picked, only 55,000 visas will be made available. Visas were expected to be issued from October 1, 1995 and those chosen have been given up to September 30, 1996 to take necessary action.

Because more names are drawn than the number of visas available, selected applicants need to respond quickly. Those who applied but have not received any notification by now should consider themselves unsuccessful.

The National Visa Centre received about 4.5 million qualified entries during the application period. An additional 2.2 million were disqualified for failing to follow proper directions. From East Africa, the Department of State has allotted 395 visas to Tanzania, 956 visas to Kenya and 381 visas to Uganda.

**You need an identity
in Arusha**

The Arusha Jamaat has announced that guests will only be accommodated at the Musafarkhana there on presentation of proper identification, confirming that they are *bona fide* members of a constituent Jamaat.

Dar ladies religious workshop enlightens participants

The world today has become a global village. We have access to and are exposed to different cultures, traditions and values. Unislamic ways are steadily but surely creeping into our society, thereby influencing and confusing the minds of children and youths.

Keeping this in mind, the Husseini Madressa Girls section organised workshops during Muharam and Safar last year to make our girls and ladies aware of what is happening around the world today and to inculcate the true spirit of Islam.

The first workshop was held from 12 July to 16 July 1995, which was divided into Juniors and Seniors to cater for young and old. The Juniors' theme was "The Tragedy of Kerbala". This was divided into four topics and the lectures delivered by different speakers.

'History of Kerbala' was by Miss Sajeda Panju, 'Philosophy behind the event for Kerbala' by Miss. Sakina Dewji, 'Lessons learnt from the event of Kerbala' by Mrs. Nasreen Tejani and the 'Rights of parents' by Mrs. Atiya Sumar. The speakers delivered excellent lectures giving full justice to the individual topics.

The Seniors workshop was titled 'Muslims of Today' which covered current affairs of interest to muslims. Lecturer, Dr. Kadhim Dhalla compared the present with the past, that is to the time of ignorance (Ayyamul Sahiliya). He emphasised on the similarities in the practices of the past and present saying that today the only difference is that our practices are shrouded with technical advancements. He said that Muslims around the world are facing atrocities from the Kaffirs and the Mushrikeen and that we should pray for the emergence of our last Imam (AS) who is in Ghaibat, to come and save Islam.

The second lecture was by Dr. Murtadha Alidina on 'Other sects of Islam'. They are Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi, Hambali, Ibadiya, Kadyani, Ismailia and Wahabi. Wahabism was discussed at length by Mrs. Sayyeda Sheriff and Dr. Alidina. The lectures were very informative and made the ladies aware of our roots.

Federation Samachar

The second workshop was held from 3 July to 5 July 1995. The first speaker was Br. Ahmed Sheriff on 'Importance of religious education in the light of Sahifae Sajjadiya'. He talked of the influence of western culture on our lives is so much that it makes it difficult to inculcate the spirit of Islam in ourselves and our children. He also called on our youths to study religious education by using modern day electronic devices like computers and E - Mail.

Then Dr. Kamanpuri effectively spoke on 'Islam in the 21st Century'. In his delivery he intrinsically tried to distinguish actual Islamic ideology to that portrayed by the west.

Then followed a lecture by Zakira Sayyida Malika Nagwi on 'Shias in the West'. The Shias in the West are facing a big challenge in staying steadfast to the teachings of Islam as the culture, language and life - style of the majority of the people is un-Islamic. The Zakira said that to remain firm footed one must accept that the teaching of religion is based more on divine philosophy rather than simply being classified as a divine religion. She decried traditionalism and said customs and rites are not to be given emphasis and that more awareness should be on one's actions and beliefs.

The last speaker of the second workshop was Dr. Kadhim Dhalla who enlightening the attendance on 'Imam of the time'. He said we need to perceive our Imam in to reality and not as somebody somewhere and that the main means of cultivating love of Imam is Azadari and Majlises.

All the lectures were followed by a questionnaire pertaining to the lectures. On the final day of the workshop, discussions were held in groups and resolutions were passed. The lectures were also video and audio taped, the copies of which were made and sold at the Husseini Madressa Girls section.

Apart from the workshop, the girls also organised majalises at the madressa during the first five days of Ashrae Zainabiya. Lectures were delivered in comprehensible English and Gujrati by teachers.

Its sporting time in Dubai

The seventh Supreme Council Sports Festival will be hosted by Jaffery Sports, Dubai from 24 to 30 December, 1995. Over 300 sportsmen from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Zaire, Madagascar, UK, Pakistan, Canada, USA and Dubai are expected to congregate for the majestic meet.

The idea of an annual sports festival involving our youths was first conceived in 1984 with an objective to foster the bonds of friendship, fellowship and brotherhood. However with the major costs and extensive preparations required, the original intention of having the Festival organised each year was eclipsed.

To date six Festivals have been organised and this is the first time that the sportsmen will be contesting for glories out of Africa. Full results will be carried in our next issue.

Government appointments...



Two community members have secured Government positions during the recent elections held in Tanzania. A well known Dar es Salaam businessmen and sports philanthropist, Abbas Gulamali (37) secured a parliamentary seat for the Kilombero constituency in Morogoro region whilst Sister Yasmin Alloo was nominated as a Member of Parliament for the women's seat in the National Assembly.

Gulamali holds a certificate in accountancy and economics which he obtained from the Jersey school. In 1992 he was crowned a special medal by the East and Central African Football Federation (CECFA) in recognition of efforts towards furthering soccer in the region and was also presented a sports diploma by the National Sports Council [NSC]. We congratulate the two and pray for their success.

They visited..

The special representative of our Marja, Ayatullah AL-Ozma As-Sayyid Ali Al-Husaini Seestani visited East Africa in July this year. Sayyid Mohamed Javad Shahrastani from Qum, Iran accompanied by our Marja's Wakil in Mashhad, Sayyid Jaffer Sayyedani and Mr. Kamal Redha Alwan were in Nairobi on Thursday 13 July, 1995.

The visitors also visited Mombasa and Madagascar to familiarize themselves with tabligh and social activities in the area. On arrival in Dar es Salaam they were shown various tabligh activities being undertaken by the Supreme Council and the Dar Jamaat. They accompanied a joint delegation of the World Federation headed by its President Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer and the Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani to Nakuru and Kampala before their visit to Dar es Salaam.

The World Federation President, Mulla Asgherali Jaffer arrived in Nairobi on Wednesday 12 July, 1995 on World Federation business as well as to recite majalis. In addition to the two majalis in Nairobi on 12 and 13 July, he also recited the last five majalis of Ashar-e-Zainabiya in Mombasa. He then made a joint visit to Nakuru and Kampala with the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani and his delegation which comprised of: Alhaj Asghar Bharwani, Chairman Dar es Salaam Jamaat; Alhaj Hussein Walji, Chairman Mombasa Jamaat; Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji, Chairman Nairobi Jamaat and Alhaj Aliraza Mulla Nanji. The Vice President of World Federation, Alhaj Manzoor Kanani also travelled as a member of the Joint Delegation.

On his return leg Mulla Saheb visited Dar es Salaam where he discussed tabligh affairs with the Supreme Council. He also is recited two majalis before his departure.

Want a house in Nairobi?

A scheme is underway in Nairobi to undertake housing development on a seven acre land which is located in an exquisite area at just a five minutes drive from our new Lavington complex, comprising of a Mosque, Imambara and Madrasah. The Nairobi Jamaat President, Zulfikar Khimji termed it as an "open project" which is first being offered to our own brothers in East Africa. If the response is lacking, he said it would then be forwarded to outsiders. The following details have been provided:

Maisonette Type	No. of Units	Land Cost Kenya Shs.	Appx. Total Cost of the Finished
5 Bedroom	10	720,000/=	4,500,000/=
4 Bedroom	40	600,000/=	3,800,000/=
Flat Type	No. of Units	Land Cost Kenya Shs.	Appx. Total Cost of the Finished
4 Bedroom	12	300,000/=	3,200,000/=
3 Bedroom	24	250,000/=	2,800,000/=
2 Bedroom	6	200,000/=	2,300,000/=

This construction cost is based on current market price but could marginally fluctuate. The project is on a self financed basis and is not a Jamaat project but has the blessings of Nairobi Jamaat.

Federation Samachar

CHB spreads out for efficiency

To improve communication and efficiency in handling medical issues that require CHB involvement, the Central Health Board of the Africa Federation has decided to co-opt one member from each Jamaat in Africa to be its liaison officer.

The Chairman of the Health Board, Aunali Khalfan said that he sincerely believed that this move would help to speed up issues and said that in the case of ambiguous cases from out of Dar es Salaam, the liaison officers would to some extent be expected to provide necessary counsel.

Constituent Jamaats have been called upon to send in the name and full address of their representatives along with a passport size photo. The CHB then plans to hold a meeting for all members to set out working modalities.

Mohamed and Samiha declared 'BEST STUDENTS'

We extend our congratulations to Mohamed E. Peera and Samiha M. Alloo of Dar es Salaam for winning the 1994 Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Supreme Council Award for the 'Best boy' and 'Best girl' students of the year.

The criteria for winning this award is based on academic achievements [75%], attendance and conduct [5%], extra-curricular activities [5%], sports achievements [5%] and Madrasah progress [10%]. Girls, for whom sporting achievements do not apply, are instead awarded 10% for extra-curricular activities.

On behalf of the Africa Federation we congratulate the above winners and pray for their success in future endeavours.

A Golden time indeed!

The 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Africa Federation were held on a grand scale in April this year. Our photographer, Murtaza Jivraj knew that photographs go a long way in preserving memories and wasted no time on the occasion.



A well deserved Hussaini Medal for the past Chairman, Habib Mulji by Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi.



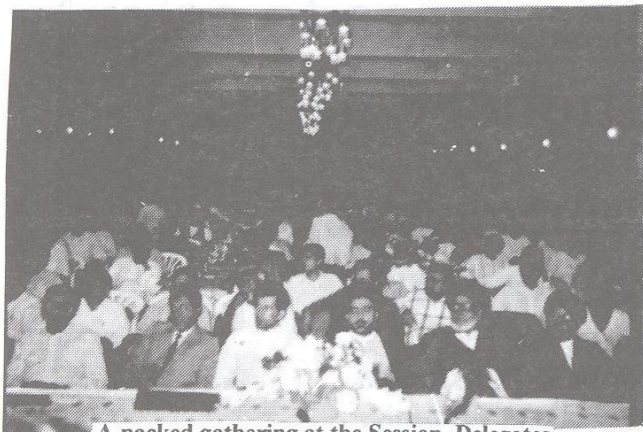
The ball is in your court now...from one Chairman to another.



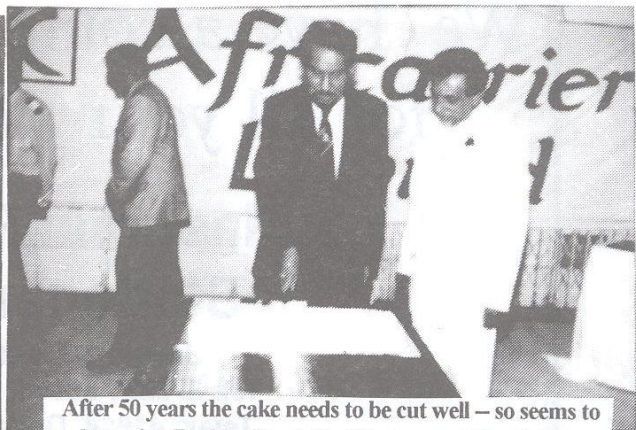
The host Jamaat President, Asgher Bharwani did not forget to say goodbye.



Some religious counselling from Bilal Muslim Mission's Chief Missionary, Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi.

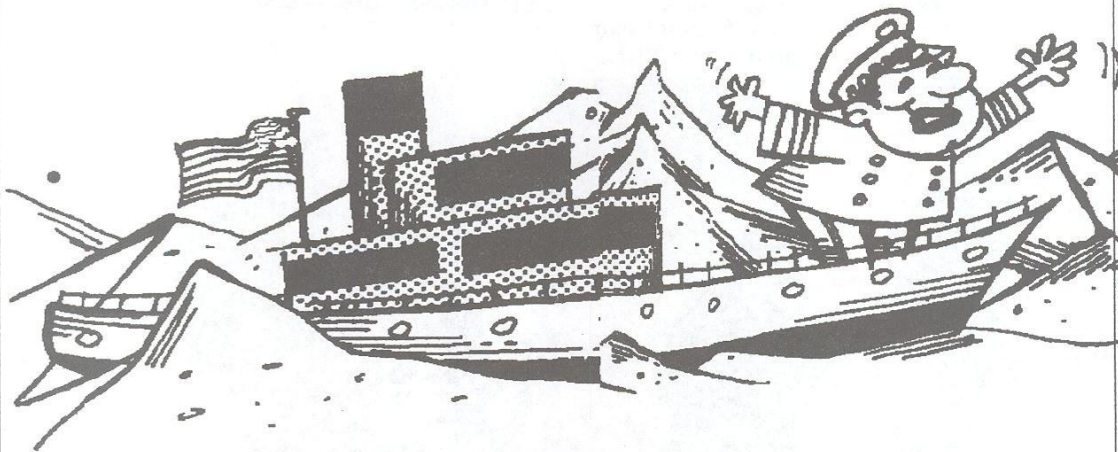


A packed gathering at the Session. Delegates came from all over the world.



After 50 years the cake needs to be cut well – so seems to be saying Roshan Fazal, the Chairman of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations to new Chairman Mqhamed Dhirani.

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Toronto President outlines his action plan

During his visit to Toronto in August this year, our Editor, Munir Daya talked to Nazir Gulamhusein, President of Toronto Jamaat who outlined his plans for his first term in office.

Daya: It is generally believed that with a new Chairman comes new zeal and vision. With 3 months having elapsed since you were elected President of Toronto Jamaat, what action plan for the Community's development have you charted out for implementation?

Nazir: In the name of Allah, the Beneficent and Merciful.

I could write a book on a 3, 5 and 10 year plan for this community. The Toronto Jamaat is an excellent community, diversified and blessed. Managing its affairs is a challenge but is also an experience I cherish. Our achievements in the last 25 years are remarkable and I intend to build on what we have achieved.

It is important to realise that the structure of our Jamaat is changing rapidly; youths are developing socially and academically and we now see the need to allow our youths to be an integral part of our development lest we find ourselves building something for tomorrow based on a vision they do not share.

Though we are a religious organisation, my aim is to achieve general economic upliftment and to create solidarity amongst our members. This would make us noticed and heard among the 'Power Brokers' in Canada so that we can fight for our interests and for those of our other communities, especially those in the third world.

Above all, I want to build a sense of pride among the membership, which in turn will create a general willingness amongst members to contribute towards the build up of our community.

Federation Samachar



The Samachar Editor, Munir Daya with Toronto Jamaat President, Nazir Gulamhusein.

Daya: Do you feel that a 2 year term in office hampers long term planning and that a three year term would be more apt to enable continuity in investment planning?

Nazir: That depends on how a leader performs. I am comfortable with a two year term because my brand of management calls for involvement of the entire executive committee with also a full commitment of the community. I do not believe in indispensability of any one with this kind of management continuity. The continuity of my vision is known to the community and I strongly believe that if they support the vision, my presence is not necessary to achieve the goals.

Daya: Since when have you been associated with community service and do you intend to take yet another term in office, if given the opportunity to do so?

Nazir: Community service runs in my blood. My parents have taught my brothers and I to give as they have. I have been associated with the Madrasah in Toronto for 4 years

and am now with the Jamaat. Previously I also served on the executive Committee in Toronto. In my Election manifesto I made it clear that I would remain President for a maximum of two terms subject first, to the community accepting my platform and second, that my Vice President, whom I have hand picked and committed to groom in this term to take over, felt that he was not ready. There is no change to this and presently I can foresee no circumstances that would bring about a change. Fresh approach and new vision is essential to ensure that we do not stagnate.

Daya: The Toronto Jamaat is said to be the largest Jamaat in North America. Has an official census been conducted to find out the actual number of members we have? What would you estimate the Khoja population of the Jamaat here to be, taking into consideration registered nad unregistered members.

Nazir: We have attempted to get an official census done in the past and we intend to do this again this

[continued on page 30]



.....Toronto interview

[.....continued from page 29]

year. We have about 4000 heads of Khoja's in Toronto and in our Jamaat we do not differentiate between Khoja's and non Khoja's.

Daya: The Toronto Jamaat does not have the word 'Khoja' in its title. This implies that attendance at functions, access to facilities and an election to management committees is unrestricted. Whilst attendance and access to facilities appear to be okay, don't you think that access to non Khoja's to manage community affairs and assets should be restricted to shun the possibility of leaving ourselves vulnerable to mismanagement and to incursive cultural changes?

Nazir: This is a philosophical topic. From a cultural stand point, the fear should not be of changes from non Shia's. Reality suggests that cultural changes will be more influenced from the Canadian way of life. We have to teach strong Islamic values and this should start in the home. That is the only way to protect ourselves. As regards the running of the Jamaat is concerned, Toronto Jamaat does not face this problem because of the sheer size of the Khoja population. I am not concerned about the name Khoja not being there but I feel strongly that non Khoja Jamaats should show reciprocity in spirit. My challenge is to them to treat all members equally irrespective of their background. This unity concept can only work if it is multi-lateral and there has to be 'give' from all sides. My impression is however that this is not the case and reciprocity is wanting.

Daya: In the current environment of affableness between Khojas and non Khojas, how would you rate the contributions [financial, intellectual and

Federation Samachar

physical] of non Khojas towards the Jamaat?

Nazir: Our Jamaat makes no distinction in its membership and while Khojas dominate, I do not wish to make any comment that would undermine our non Khoja members. We treat them as ours and they have the same rights as Khoja members. I repeat my challenge to non Khoja Jamaats to reciprocate and to other Khoja Jamaats to follow Toronto's example.

Daya: Can you briefly outline the history of Toronto Jamaat, with such information as when it was formed and how subsequent development took place. Can you also comment on the traditional concept of one Jamaat, one Madrasah, one Mosque etc.?

Nazir: Toronto Jamaat was formed in the early seventies and the first major influx came from Uganda after which it has grown steadily. Our Centre at 7340 Bayview Avenue was built in 1979 and while it was expected to cater for the needs of our Jamaat to the turn of the century, the community's needs outgrew the Centre's capacity fairly quickly. We now have a rented Centre in Brampton to cater for the needs of our members living in the West End of the city and a centre in the East End owned and run by non Khoja's but always available to our members and regularly frequented.

We acquired another property at 9000 Bathurst Street, which presently houses a secular school and one of the Madrasah's, both of which are run independently of the Jamaat.

We also have a Madrasah in the West End and East End to cater for children living in those areas.

There are about 800 children who now use the Madrasah facilities and the Toronto Jamaat also caters for the needs of Hamilton whose residents have taken a membership of our Jamaat. We believe that once we have accepted members, we should cater for their needs. If the Central Body is strong, visionary and can command the respect of the membership at large, there should be no fear of any problems of decentralisation.

Daya: How has the community responded to the Bathurst Community Centre and what has the response been to the Islamic School. What religious gatherings or sporting events are held there?

Nazir: The Community has responded to Bathurst as one would expect them to. There were misgivings and the project has its problems and difficulties but there is light at the end of the tunnel. We have developed a plan for the property which involves building a cemetery, a seniors home/shelter, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and residential homes. This is a mega project with significant financial implications but which we intend, as much as possible, to self finance.

As regards the school, anything new takes time to take off. Our Community's history world-wide shows clearly the importance of such a school and I have no doubt that it will succeed after teething problems are sorted out.

Presently the Facility, apart from the school, is also used for Madrasah and for sports like soccer, baseball and volleyball.

Daya: The Crescent Village Housing Project was intrinsically

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.....Toronto interview

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launched to cater for the elderly and less affluent members of our Community. I have been advised that there are now affluent families living there because of the many amenities offered. Is this true and if so, this does indicate that with the existent high demand for such housing, another similar housing project would not be out of place. Does the Jamaat have any plans to undertake a similar project?

Nazir: The Crescent Village houses a lot of our members. The Jamaat does not own or run it. We have received similar comments from our members and will take it up with the Board of Directors of the Project to the extent that we can. We however have no say in how the Project is run or managed but the Board has able members of the community who are approachable and we shall do so.

We however do not intend in the near future to engage in a similar project. Moreover there is a Government funding freeze in respect of such projects.

Daya: **I am given to understand that the Canadian Government, in its efforts to cover deficits, has now targetted the over 65 Age Group for more tax revenue. If this is correct, can the community offer our elders relief by generating some short or long term investment plans?**

Nazir: Your understanding is a matter of interpretation. Notwithstanding, that all of us have to plan for our retirement we cannot expect automatic assistance from our children. We have to hedge against inflation and deterioration in currency values. We do not have the infrastructure for this at the Jamaat

Federation Samachar

level but we plan to have a counsellor available to assist the seniors at some stage in the foreseeable future.

Daya: **Your Jamaat is a member of NASIMCO. What benefits do you enjoy from such a membership?**

Nazir: We believe that we have an obligation to other Jamaats in North America because of our size. NASIMCO helps us to streamline the process of performing that function.

Daya: **In June, 1994 the UN rated Canada number one in terms of quality of life. However it is reported that the Country's level of reserves has been dropping over the past few years and disposable incomes have been eroded by increasing taxes. Does this put more pressure on community members to venture into business?**

Nazir: This year Canada was again rated number one for quality of life. You are right about dropping of disposable incomes and yes, in the next decade Canadians have to face real decisions. It is going to get tougher from hereon and it will be a matter of survival of the fittest. One choice is to get to the top quartile in your professional field or create a business niche and maintain that. We have budgetted an amount for professional help for our businessmen and aspirants and this should be in place by the year end.

Daya: **The influence of the social environment, with all its temptations to glamour, can be alarming in places like Canada. What programmes do you organise for the youths and does the Jamaat have a Youths Committee?**

Nazir: We have an active Youth Group. I believe that values have to be taught at home and if this is done youths will know where to draw the line. I strongly believe that we have to teach our parents on how to raise their children in this society so that they can culturally integrate without sacrificing religion.

Daya: **What do you foresee our next generation of youths to be (pertaining to religious knowledge)?**

Nazir: I have some fears for the age group from 18 to 30 now. Under that, I believe that they are able to hold their own when compared to any child from any other society.

Daya: **When I was in Toronto during Muharram some 4 years ago, some members stayed away from the Ashura procession fearing that they would portray a negative image on the Canadian Government and that they could even be branded as terrorists. I fail to understand why these members should shy away from such propagation. Do members still stay away on such grounds?**

Nazir: The fear is misplaced. There is no pressure from the Canadian Government and in fact, we plan to organise one next year.

Daya: **How well are you aware of the World and Africa Federations. What do you think of their activities?**

Nazir: These are both essential parts of our development and their existence is vital. I believe that the strength of the individual Jamaats is fundamentally important and the World Federation, Africa Federation and NASIMCO can feed off the Jamaats. The central bodies

[...continued on page 32]



.....Toronto interview

[.....continued from page 31]

should carve out a role for themselves to avoid duplication of effort which would then synchronise the entire set-up. Information flow should also be above average because as you know, the communication gaps are the source of many problems that crop up in the community.

Daya: *The Federation Samachar seems to have a healthy readership but we face bottlenecks in increasing readership. Can you propose a method whereby more copies can be made available to your members? What do you personally think of the Samachar?*

Nazir: I think that with proper liason with our own Jaffery News, this could be achieved with relative ease. I feel the *Federation Samachar* is an essential component of our community's development efforts. Any publication that provokes thought and keeps the community advised of what is going on, can be nothing but good.

Daya: *What public relations does your Jamaat undertake to propagate Islam. Do you have access to TV channels, radio networks, schools or the like?*

Nazir: We have very many things that are undertaken by the resident alim and other individuals in the field of religious propagation. If you were to ask me whether enough is being done or whether we are organised in this area, my answer is no! During this term I do intend to organise this area with a carefully laid out program, to optimise our efforts and get results. A lot can be done but remember we are an infant Jamaat. Having said that, I can say with

confidence that in the next ten years, Toronto Jamaat, because of the environment it is in and the government policies here, can be a model Jamaat which can make significant contributions to the development of our brothers world wide.

Daya: *You have your own publication, the Jaffery News which carries updates of your Jamaat. If members raise constructive criticisms with objectivity, are the editors given liberty and independence to carry such criticisms with the primary intention of encouraging constructive ideas?*

Nazir: Absolutely and categorically yes. There is no pressure on the editorial board. Our aim is to better the community and no individual is bigger than the Jamaat. In fact we welcome such criticisms. All we ask for is that before engaging into criticisms, find out the facts and after doing that if you believe in what you want to state, notwithstanding whether you are right or wrong, make your point. I will always encourage that.

Daya: *I am advised that the book 'Islam' has been withdrawn from circulation. I am also given to understand that Mulla Asghar has deemed the book suitable for distribution after having personally gone through the book. I honestly found nothing objectionable. Can you draw further enlightenment to this issue?*

Nazir: I am disappointed with members of the Jamaat who do not discuss the whole issue. This has been explained so many times but it appears that when a new person asks the question, the response is not objective but rather dependent on which side of the coin one sits. The objection simply is that the limited funds that we spend on

tabligh should be utilised for propagating Jaffery faith. By propagating Jaffery Faith, which we are required to do constitutionally, we would be propagating Islam, automatically. If the emphasis is on propagating Islam, the propagation of Jaffery Faith could, I repeat could, be limited. I for one believe that we should propagate our Faith without any hold back and I do not concur with a notion that this only confuses the masses. When the school board tells me that you cannot have your Eid on the same day, do you really believe that coming out with a general publication on Islam will hide our differences. I would suggest not. I hope this sheds some light on the objections.

Daya: *The family crisis in Canada remains at monumental proportions. As many as one in two marriages end in divorce and 100,000 children aged between the ages of ten and sixteen run away from home. Spousal and child abuse is also rampant. To what extent are our families affected?*

Nazir: Welcome to reality. We are not immune to this problem. I repeat that the cultural shock is from the outside, not so much from fellow muslims. We intend to build a shelter at the Bathurst project and that I presume will answer your question.

For your information the south east Asian community has the highest occurrence of spousal abuse. People intending to wed have to be counselled, as do parents to be and parents. We react to problems as a community and we should be ready for eventualities. These problems are with us and will increase. We have to accept it and do something about it.

Depression can be overcome

Everyone goes through occasional bouts of the "blues"; it's part of life. But when they last for weeks or months and are accompanied by other signs, there may be reason to suspect depression. Depression is a real illness and it cannot be cured by simply thinking positively.

Depression affects our moods, our energy and our entire body. It affects many and can occur at any age. People who have had depression in the past are more likely to experience it later in life. Although it is a serious problem, there is good news; by seeking help at the onset of the illness, the length and severity of the symptoms can be reduced.

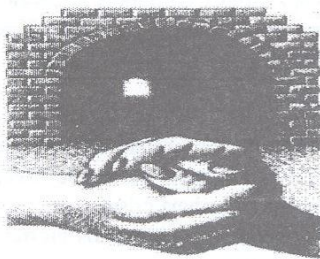
WHAT CAUSES DEPRESSION?

Researchers believe the depression is caused by an imbalance of certain chemicals in the brain (transmitters). Contrary to what was once believed, depression has nothing to do with a weakness in one's character or personality.

SYMPTOMS

As with asthma or arthritis, depression has its own signs which vary from one person to another. But generally speaking depression causes certain thought or physical symptoms:

- + I don't sleep well
- + I'm not interested in sex
- + I find it difficult to concentrate
- + I often feel nervous for no apparent reason



- + I find it hard to make decisions
- + I don't feel like seeing anyone
- + I'm discouraged about the future
- + I don't feel like eating
- + I'm irritable and easily angered
- + I feel worthless
- + I'm tired and lack energy

If you often experience several of these signs, you should speak to your doctor or another health professional.

TREATING DEPRESSION

Depression can be overcome with psychological counselling, participation in discussion groups and through support from family and friends. If necessary, antidepressant drugs may also be used. They work by modifying the production of chemical transmitters in the brain, thereby re-establishing mood and energy. With sound advice and professional follow-up, these medications are very effective in helping people regain their normal lives.

As with all medication, antidepressants can cause side effects. Your pharmacist can explain these to you and provide ways to overcome them. In many cases, side effects are temporary and will disappear as your body gets used to the drug.

WHEN WILL I FEEL BETTER?

Anti-depressants are highly effective drugs yet they can take up to four weeks to have a full effect. At first, fatigue lessens following which energy and appetite generally begin to come back. Finally, an overall sense of well-being returns.

Very often for depressed people there is light at the end of the tunnel

ASTHMA CONTROL

Asthma is a very common condition that interferes with a person's ability to breathe easily. Coughing, tightness or heaviness of the chest, wheezing and shortness of breath are typical symptoms. These symptoms can be mild or severe and can occur occasionally or everyday.

If asthma is well treated, it should not interfere with normal activities, including exercise and sports. A good treatment approach requires that you understand your condition, the goals and expectations of treatment and how to take the medication.

Asthma is a condition in which the airways in the lungs become inflamed and highly irritable. This irritability makes them narrow more easily in response to exercise and when exposed to dust, smoke, cold air or things that a one is allergic to. As the airways narrow, airflow in the lungs is restricted, making it more difficult to breathe.

The goals of treatment include:

- 1) Understanding what is meant by "control" of your asthma symptoms.
- 2) Maintaining control with the least amount of medication required.
- 3) Preventing the development of severe symptoms by recognizing and treating flare-ups quickly.
- 4) Understanding your treatment well enough to adjust medications yourself while still seeking advice from your doctor or pharmacist.

Effective asthma treatment should provide:

- + Freedom from coughing, wheezing, tightness and shortness of breath.
- + Ability to exercise without limitation from asthma symptoms.
- + Little or no need for symptom-relief medication (bronchodilator inhaler used less than daily).
- + No side effects from medication.
- + No symptoms at night.

Effective asthma treatment requires that you make proper use of medications and avoid breathing substances

[continued on page 34]

Managing diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that affects the way our bodies use the energy we get from food. With diabetes, the pancreas may not produce enough insulin or the body may not be using the insulin correctly. The result is high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) which can cause eye disease, kidney failure, heart disease and decreased sensation in the hands and feet.

Health professionals have always believed that better blood sugar control would reduce the complications of diabetes but scientific tests only confirmed this recently.

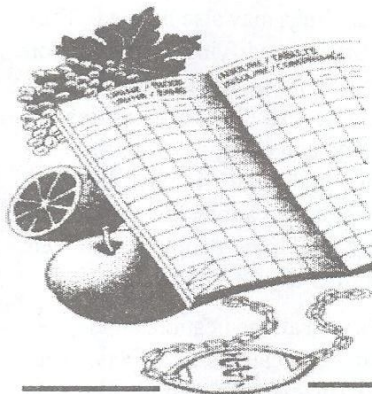
THE DIABETES CONTROL AND COMPLICATION TRIAL (DCCT)

The DCCT was a multicentre, nine-year study which examined more than 1,500 people with TYPE 1 diabetes. Half of the people in the study used conventional diabetes treatment involving either an insulin pump or three or more insulin injections per day. Participants also received ongoing support and education regarding care and management. The goal of the intensive treatment group was to keep blood sugar levels in the normal range.

After nine years of study, the research showed that improved control of blood sugar levels reduced complications for people with TYPE 1 diabetes. Eye disease, kidney disease and nerve damage were all reduced considerably, in some cases by as much as 76%. These were impressive and exciting results.

WHO CAN BE HELPED?

No matter what type of diabetes you have, better blood sugar control will improve your health. Your doctor can help you decide on a management plan that suits you. One should remember that knowledge and understanding are the



One can stay healthy by following a diabetes management plan

keys to managing one's diabetes.

A FEW TIPS...

Remember these important guidelines to keep your diabetes under control.

+ Take your medication regularly, as prescribed, to control your blood sugar.

+ Plan a regular blood sugar testing routine with your diabetes doctor.

+ Follow your meal plan and discuss any required changes with your professional dietitian.

+ Learn what exercise does to your blood sugar levels.

+ Learn how to adjust your food or medication when required.

+ Learn what to do if you have a low blood sugar reaction.

+ Ask your doctor for the results of your last glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) test.

And remember, do not change your diabetes management plan without consulting your doctor.

CONTROLLING ASTHMA

[...continued from page 33]

that might bring on asthma symptoms. There are two types of asthma medication; one type **prevents and reduces inflammation** and, when used properly, helps reduce the need for the other type of medication, which provides only **temporary relief** from asthma symptoms by opening up the airways.

Medications which prevent and treat inflammation provide long-term asthma control; they do not provide quick relief from asthma symptoms.

Federation Samachar

They should be taken everyday, exactly as prescribed.

Medications for temporary relief are used to open up the airways quickly when asthma symptoms appear. The most effective is a bronchodilator inhaler which is best used only when needed to relieve symptoms. When asthma is controlled, patients may no longer need to use the inhalers everyday. An increased need for temporary relief medication is an early indication of a flare-up of asthma.

Inhalers and similar devices must be

used correctly to be effective. If in doubt, ask your pharmacist, doctor or nurse to show you the proper technique.

You need to see a doctor if:

- + Your asthma symptoms are poorly controlled or seem to be getting worse.
- + Asthma symptoms interfere with your daily activities.
- + Your need for symptom relief (bronchodilator inhaler) is increasing.
- + You have received emergency treatment for an asthma crisis.
- + You wake up a night/early morning with a cough.

When "No Questions" raise questions!

The parents and community leaders are quite right in feeling concerned and raising alarm over the spiritual well being of the youths in the community because the youths always run the risk of their faith in Islam and mazhab being shaken.

We are well aware of the harmful influence to which the youths are exposed more often by design, like the propaganda by the western mass media against Islam and Islamic values.

Sadly, we tend to believe that the hostile treatment of Islam by the western media can be the only source of such risks. We fail to realise that a greater risk with disastrous results can come from poor preaching in the community.

The youths are generally aware of the design of the western media against Islam and only those with a shallow knowledge of Islam and a weak faith can be a willing victim.

Poor preaching however, can act as a double edged knife. It can bolster the faith of youths if rightly handled or diminish even a strong faith if it is wrongly handled.

A preaching of a low intellect calibre dishes out examples and metaphors of questionable scientific values which often are contrary to the reality of life and such preachings resort to narrations of dreams and miracles from unreliable sources to press the acceptance of arguments which as a result create scepticism and doubt in the minds of youths where and when there were none before.

The situation becomes exasperated when a preacher is emotionally engaged in marshalling arguments through a misinterpretation of a Qur'anic verse to prove a point, whilst the same point happens to be in conflict with other Qur'anic verses which are however conveniently not referred to at

that time.

At times, one wonders if such preachers are at all aware of the philosophy and message of Tauhid in Islam when they labour through the maze of unappealing arguments just to prove a point which is not even fundamental in Islam or worse, in conflict with Tauhid.

Fortunately by the grace of Allah (s.w.t.), not all preachers are of the calibre who leave behind a trail of scepticism and doubt in beliefs in their sessions of preaching. There are some good ones who are aware of the risks involved if youths are addressed to casually in the antiquated style that their parents were.

We can therefore understand the reason why the culture of "no questions" at the end of our preaching sessions or anytime thereafter is jealously protected by those preachers who know they can not survive challenges in their own field!

The 'threes' that add up to make you 'rich'!

There are three important qualities to govern with. These are temper, tongue and fair conduct.

There are three things to cultivate. These are courage, affection and gentleness.

There are three things to commend. These are thrift, industry and promptness.

There are three things to wish for. These are health, good friends and contentment.

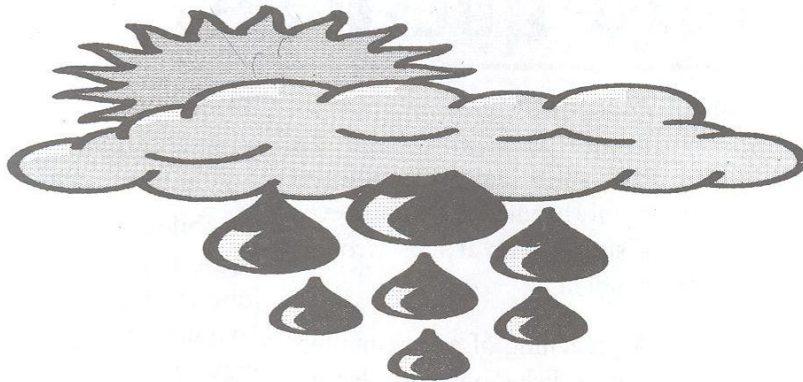
There are three things to despise. These are cruelty, arrogance and ingratitude.

There are three things to admire. These are dignity, gracefulness and intellectual power.

And there are three important things to give.

These are alms to the needy, comfort to the sad and appreciation to the worthy.

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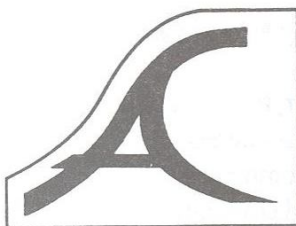
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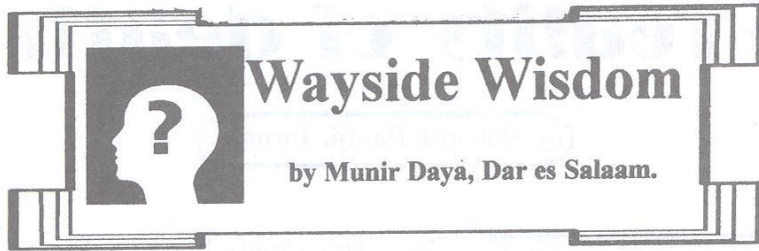
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Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam.

Wearing beggars' shoes!

Mendicity should not be allowed to lead to mendacity

For many of us who have a regular and honourable means of sustenance and a permanent abode to sleep in at night and to rest in when tired or sick, the maltreatment that beggars have to put up with may not even draw a second thought simply because we do not view the situation by putting ourselves in the beggars' shoes!

A poor man, with all his worldly possessions packed in a sack, needs more than bread to guide him through life because poverty is an enemy to happiness and enslaves a person to a rigorous lifestyle wherein society remains indifferent to one's plight even when one may be dying.

Many beggars are afflicted with

serious physical disabilities not from birth but because of living in impoverished conditions and because of their indigence, they are disregarded at hospitals where they should be receiving priority in treatment.

Poverty brings dejection and for the dejected who are also uneducated or barely literate, it is rather unrealistic to expect them to possess certain virtues which we would generally expect from an average person. Thus it is wrong for us to classify beggars as thieves because of their shrewd methods of collection which may range from artificial limping to feigning of blindness.

Deception or hood-winking is not permissible but in some cases people are drawn into it out of being

desperate. For beggars the future holds no hopes and being ruthlessly despised by society, it is unnatural for them to behave in a civilised manner. Their offspring, who may be otherwise healthy, often also begin to beg at an early age not because they like it but because they are helpless.

We do hear of the plight of beggars in our majlises and in maxims but in practical life it is not easy to be poor. The poor need to be housed in decent Centres where they can support themselves through farming, tailoring or other similar chores. Such Centres should also provide important amenities like health, education, religious and sports facilities so that inmates and their children have a purpose to life.

By any standards, Centres are not expensive to set up and administration costs can be greatly covered from the income generated from self-reliant work done by the beggars. The poor must be liberally cared for so that mendicity should not be tempted into mendacity nor want exasperated into crime.

The urge to live...

The urge to earn, live and enjoy life is one that almost all healthy people harbour. When urges are fulfilled, people fly high emotionally and this is the natural high that comes when we achieve something in life like passing an examination, winning a sports tournament, building a new house or owning a new car.

When we feel emotionally high, many things seem possible and we often feel euphoric. Euphorism leads to complacency which often puts one into a precarious situation whereby one is drawn to condone imminent adversities.

In life, the capacity of enjoyment ebbs and flows with changes in circumstances relevant to one's life. Just like

there are days when we are emotionally high, there are days with unpleasant experiences when just about everything seems to be going wrong. Regardless of such inevitable sufferings that we encounter in life, we gradually come to terms with problems and are compelled to live with them successfully or unsuccessfully.

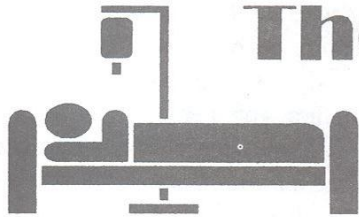
With an abiding faith in Allah [s.w.t.] and through the many supplications which we have at hand to salvage us out of trouble, many of us get the inner strength to counter adversities.

The book 'Passion of Life' by Murial James illustrates how an 18 year old girl who was a skier competing for the American Olympic team crashed

in one race just before the Olympic try-outs. Her neck was broken and she was permanently paralysed from her shoulders down.

Specially designed implements for eating and extensive psychotherapy helped her regain minimal use of one hand but she had to give up skiing. These hardships did not however destroy her urge to live but strengthened her spiritual search for meaning to her life and her hope that she could be useful to others some day, sustained her through her agony.

She subsequently went to college, got her teaching credentials and successfully taught children with learning disabilities and other handicaps. She is a moving example of how the urge to live and the power of hope can make one resilient.



The reality of death

by Shagufta Damji, Toronto.

**INNA-LILLAH WA-INNA ILAYHI-RAJI-OON
TO GOD WE BELONG AND TO HIM WE
SHALL RETURN.**

These were the words that my dad (Marhum Hassanali Suleman Daya) always recited whenever he heard of anyone's death. Recently, it was my turn to recite these words upon his death. I then realised that when we lose the first one of our parents, however aged, the loss seems too great to overcome. We are so used to the presence and warmth of parents since childhood, that we never think of the world without them.

Despite knowing what I was in for before my departure from Canada to Tanzania, I still found myself unprepared for the loss and the anguish was too great to contemplate. It is his memory that I have before me as I write this article and when I reach those parts that I find difficult to put on paper, it is his prayers and encouragement which keep me going.

Death is a reality which all human beings believe in. However, it is also a reality which most of us do not wish to think about or face. In Islam, death is not an end to our existence; it is a passage which takes us from this world to the hereafter - the actual purpose for our creation and the result of our work in this life.

The world can be compared to a transit lounge at a busy airport.

All passengers in transit leave the lounge when their flight is ready for departure whilst at the same time a new lot of passengers enter the lounge to also await their own flight time. Whether we fear death or not depends on how much prepared we are in the transit lounge for the reckoning of the Day of Judgement.

Preparing for death is a lifetime job. It begins on the day one reaches the age of "bulugh" when one is held accountable for his or her deeds in the eyes of Almighty Allah. Imam Ali bin Abu Talib (a.s.) has beautifully described the preparation for death:

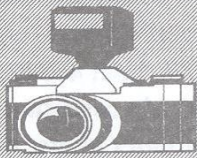
**"Fulfilling the obligations,
refraining from forbidden
acts or things and acquiring
a noble character."**

Death is destined for us all but when someone close to us passes away, we are more reminded of our mortality. We begin to feel that perhaps we could have done more or better for the departed relative. I was correctly reminded recently that a good son or daughter could never have done more or better for the parent as he or she can do now. The noble thing to do after the death of a parent or other loved ones is to offer salaah and sadka. The spiritual benefit is much more than the wealth of this world during their lifetime.

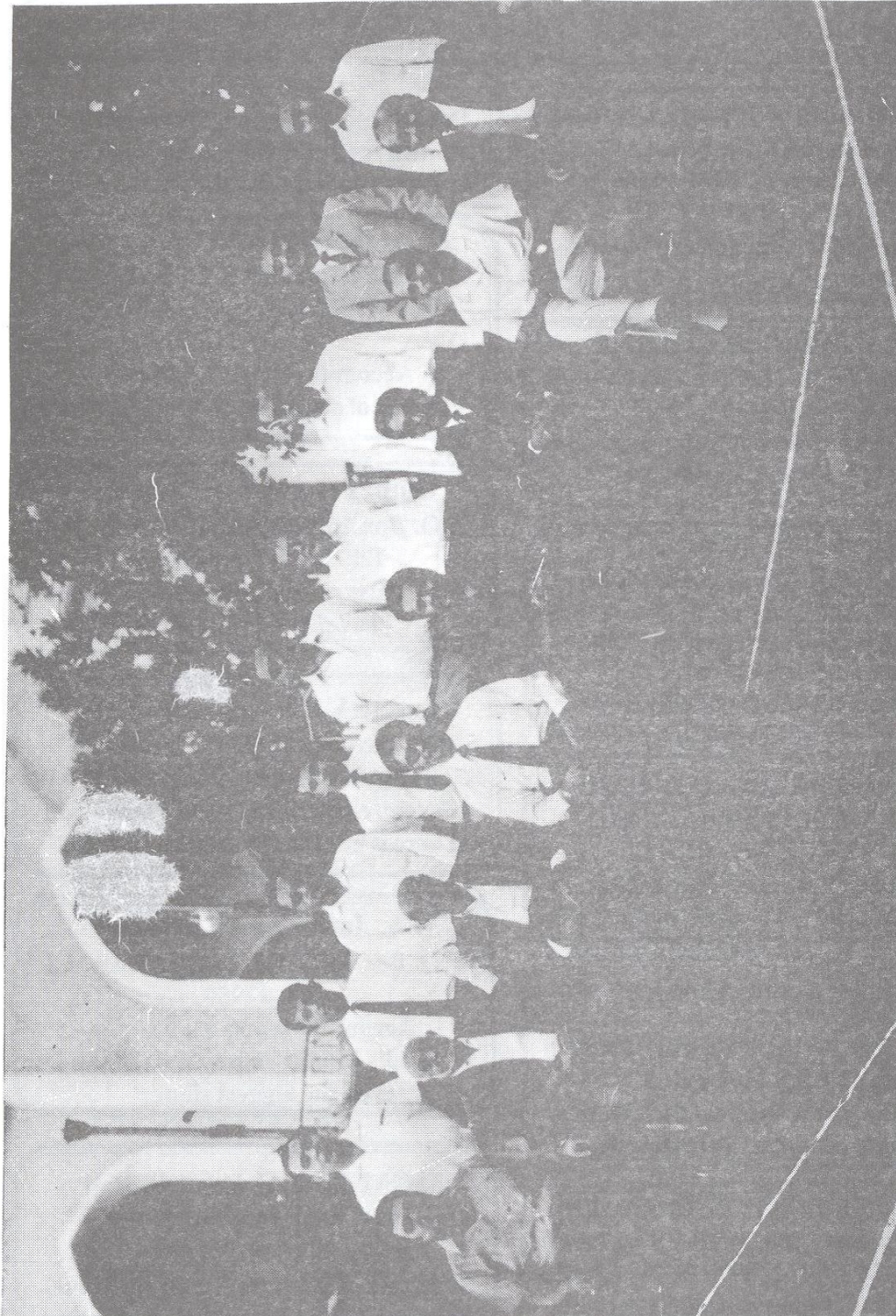
This earthly life is a blessing only because it offers death as an access to an eternal bliss. Without death this life would have been a liability with no end. The bond in the family would have been destroyed and scientists would have been engaged in inventing means for death to be elsewhere! And just like we have to wake up to ponder over a dream, we have to die to know that this life was only a sleep and that death is the actual awakening!

May Allah [s.w.t.] grant us the strength to face the loss of our loved ones. At the time of death the sympathies that we receive either through the physical presence or through messages of condolence provide some respite in one's affliction. Through one such letter of sympathy I was reminded that grief for a short period is normal but if it lasts longer it becomes unIslamic, for it implies unawareness of "We are from God and To Him is Our Return!"

I must not forget to mention how fortunate we are indeed to have relatives, friends and a community such as ours, whereby everyone comes to share our grief and sympathise on the untimely death of a loved one. It is impossible to acknowledge to each one individually but I pray to the Almighty to reward each one of us a place amongst the righteous creatures of Allah [s.w.t.]. Readers are kindly requested to recite a Sura-e-Fateha for all our momeeneen who are no longer with us.

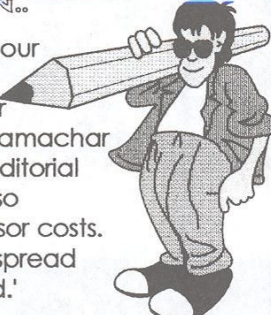


Down Memory lane



Members of the Executive Committee of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri [KAMPALA] Jamaat in 1971. Sitting from left:- Asgherali Bharwani, Mohamedali Merali, Ebrahim (Kamadiya), Habibbhai Walji, Yusufali Karmali (Vice President), Sultanali G. Datto (President), Roshanali Darweshali Rashid (Hon. Secretary), Haji Pyarali Khimji (Jnt. Secretary) and Akbarali G. Sabur. Standing from left to right: Mohamed Hussein A. Nathoo, Husseinali M. Meghji, Roshanali G. Jamal, Gulam A. Sajan (Hon. Treasurer), Mohamed Jaffer G. Jamal, Amiral A. Kassam, Mohamedali Kara Walli, Anverali R. Jagani, Fidahussein A. Merali.

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The next 50 years -- we can't afford to be 'wet behind the ears'

Views as expressed by Mrs. Mumtaz M. Khaki, Mombasa

The Federation of K.S.I. Jamaats of Africa is - as yet unique and exemplary. With an experience of fifty years, it has matured and set examples for others to follow.

The past 50 years invokes mixed feelings - pride and satisfaction for the noteworthy achievements made by the Federation as a unifying factor and regret for its inability to do much more that could and should have been done.

We have to take stock of the community today and draw lessons from past successes and failures and brace ourselves against the challenges of the future.

At present, the migration of thousands of East Africans to all over the world, particularly Europe and N. America, has drastically changed the role of the Africa Federation and placed additional demands on it.

Another important difference from the problems in the past is that Non-Khoja organisations and individuals have started playing roles in areas which were exclusively under the control or influence of the Africa Federation. This has diluted its control in many fields - particularly Tabligh.

These organisations and/or individuals have their own agenda when working in areas where our Community exists. At times some of them even create discord amongst our members. The present policy of many leaders to '**Run with the fox and hunt with the hound**' has to stop. The displeasure of the Federation and the Community for such outside groups must be shown very clearly

and pressure must be put on them to work through the Federation only. The Africa Federation is primarily a religious institution. Though Islam has adequately provided for every aspect of our lives and given clear directives, we have instead elected to confine ourselves to certain traditions and ceremonies.

The present system of Madrasahs have proved ineffective in instilling real **Taqwa**. Nothing short of a revolution is needed in this field. A Master Plan of at least five years is needed, the effects of which will be seen five years later.

The basis of our Community is **Taqwa** but it is painful to note that members of our Community watch with amazement, the leaders openly flouting Sharia without a word of protest or with any effect on their **Leadership**. If this trend is not arrested, the Community will cease to be a **Religious Community** and turn into a **Social Club**.

The Leaders of the Africa Federation - themselves being people of Taqwa - need to take steps, without fear or favour, against such **Leaders**, if we are to preserve some faith and religion to hand over to our children. Silence has only encouraged growth of this type of leadership.

The most important thing which needs to be done and this is under the control of the Africa Federation, is to change the method of and approach to **preaching**, with an objective to create more interest amongst listeners, thereby also calling for our preachers to pursue new educational and more pragmatic topics in Islam.

If we cannot encourage our children to study in Howzas and learn to teach what is actually required by our Community, then the least we could do is to establish a 'School' for Molvis where anyone recruited to preach to our Community should spend some time to learn about our requirements and thereafter adapt their majalis accordingly. This would be of particular importance to resident Aalim.

As of now, we have to ask ourselves, "Why aren't we able to make a person a true follower of Imam Husein (A.S.) when we, the Shi-ites, have an institution of Majalis which has done greater service to Islam than any other institution?"

The answer lies in that there is a mistake in our way of delivering the message. The **METHOD** is wrong and **NOT** the **MESSAGE** and the **method** is to be revised, surely not the principle.

The next twenty-five or fifty years will pose a greater challenge to the Federation **than ever before**. Its success does not lie solely with the President or office bearers of the Federation. Each and every member of the Community has a definite role to play. Our survival is at stake. If we want to survive, there is only one course open to us. We must forget all our differences and feel and behave as true Shias. If we would realize this goal then indeed we would be making a unique achievement.

I pray to Allah [s.w.t.] to help us all to achieve this goal.

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