

Safar 1417 A.H./July 1996

*Federation  
Samachar*

# IMAM HUSAIN'S

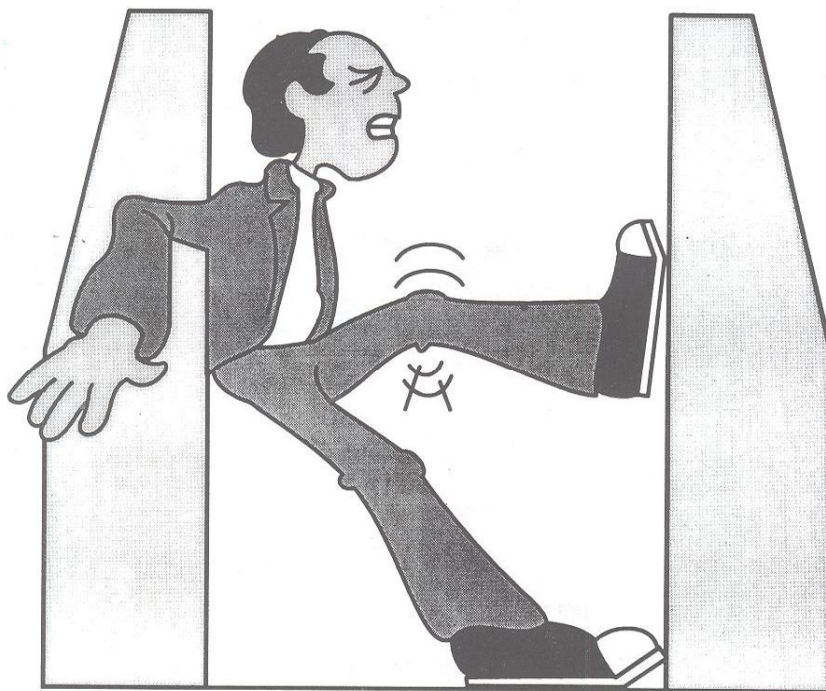
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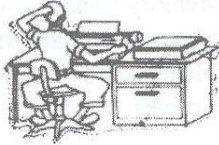
# FEDERATION SAMACHAR

A publication of the  
Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna  
Asheri Jamaats of Africa.

Volume 30, NO. 1

Safar 1417 A.H.

July, 1996.



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The Editors welcome readers to submit letters, articles, comments or photographs to the Samachar. To ease the return of photographs, readers should send us their proper address. All correspondence to be addressed to:

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### COVER PICTURE

- \* The Holy Shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.)
- \* Opening night of the 54th Council Session held in Nairobi

## From the Editor's Desk

### *We surely have progressed*

It amazes me when in official meetings and in some informal conversations the communal administrative infrastructure is unduly blamed either for being sluggish or for not doing enough to enable the community to stay with the times. The population of the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri community world-wide numbers to about 130,000 and looking back in perspective to our infrastructure and status some decades ago as compared to where we stand now, one can only marvel our rate of progress in both, the secular and religious spheres. Moreover the plans that we have in the pipeline to cross into the 21st century asserts the fact that we are indeed an aggressive community always yearning for secular and religious advancements.

By any standards, however successful any society may be, there are shortcomings which have to be overcome. A society or an organisation is deemed successful by its achievements and more so by its appropriate diagnosis of the problems and shortcomings at hand and its ability to overcome them. With a correct diagnosis of problems, strategies can be charted out to overcome shortcomings and as long as we are an alert community yearning for progress, we will continue to prosper.

For us progress is tantamount to building and improving facilities such as madrasahs and mosques for understanding, practicing and propagating our faith. Similarly progress is also judged by our efforts to economically uplift our community and the country we reside in through more business opportunities, better housing and the like. Other factors which can be taken into consideration when assessing progress include the provision to provide education to our youths through schools and scholarships, protection and welfare programmes for the elderly and under-privileged, ability to resettle members from one country to another in the event of political instability and for the provision of affordable medical treatments to those with serious afflictions.

From a seceding minority that we were at the end of the 19th century, our community has spread to virtually all corners of the globe with 'religious awareness' being particularly catalysed after the Islamic revolution in Iran. Today our Jamaats world-wide have made great strides in the fields of health, business, education, welfare, religious education and propagation, sports, economic well-being and other socio-cultural issues.

Only in Africa we have more than 40 Jamaats spread over 12 countries, each of which continues to be a corner-stone in the continuous efforts towards consolidation of our faith. Around the world we have many more jamaats which through the World Federation and other regional Federations, organise regular annual meetings. In such meetings many ideas are exchanged, evaluations and re-evaluations made and eventually strategies are charted out on how to handle the future.

The community now has many mosques, madrasahs, schools, dispensaries or hospitals, housing complexes and homes for the elderly, traveller homes, sports grounds, social halls and the like which through religious, sporting, business or social gatherings enable members of the community to meet regularly. The community is also adapting well to technological advancements in the world and whilst we have many professionals in different fields, our institutions have also computerised and many are even on the internet. By being constantly on the move in one field or another, we engender an environment conducive to progress.

We may have a long way to go but by any standards our institutions and organisations have successfully endeavoured to cater for the needs of the community in one way or another. With the help of Allah (s.w.t.) and many devoted individuals serving selflessly to further our cause we have excelled. The progress is there to be seen and whilst constructive criticisms are acceptable, let us not undermine our efforts with undue adverse criticisms. May Allah (s.w.t.) guide us in our endeavours.

**Editor**





## Report of the Editorial Board of the *Federation Samachar* presented at the Supreme Council Meeting held in Nairobi in April, 1996.

Following the last Session of the Supreme Council held in Dar es Salaam in April, 1995, three Issues of the *Federation Samachar* have been published in the first year of our new term.

The first Issue was released in July, 1995 [Safar 1416 A.H.]. This Issue, amidst other news, covered the 19th Constitutional Conference and the 53rd Session of the Supreme Council along with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations. Another news item covered was on the poor repayment of Education loans by students. The Editorial reflected on the importance of the media and its role to promote Communal progress.

The next Issue hit the stands in December, 1995 [Rajab 1416 A.H.]. This Issue carried profiles of the team at the helm of the Supreme Council along with photographs of the Golden Jubilee celebrations. It also included various reports from around Africa plus a lavish coverage of news from out of Africa including a report on the Toronto Forum and the Crescent Village in Toronto. This Issue further carried an interview with the Toronto Jamaat President whilst the Editorial 'We can't burn the candle at both ends' dwelt on the

effect of Madrasah timings on the secular education of our children.

Lagging by one issue, the Editorial Board resolved to come up with a bumper March, 1996 issue to compensate for the Issue missed out in September, 1995. This 52 page Issue covered the Tabligh Camp held in Nakuru and included a concise coverage of the Sports Festival held in Dubai in December, 1995. The Issue also carried an interview with the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher M.M. Jaffer and pondered on the need for higher intellectual content in our Majalis. The Chairman's visit to northern Tanzania and Kenya was also covered whilst the Editorial called on the Community to be more pragmatic and cautious in the fight against AIDS which has already fatally inflicted some members.

The Editorial Board has noted a unique trend amongst members whereby supplications are recited without being understood. Surely the recitation of duas in Arabic is noble but does not such supplication become shallow if not understood? To this effect we have commenced a column to enlighten readers on the significance of various Surahs. The March, 1996 Issue

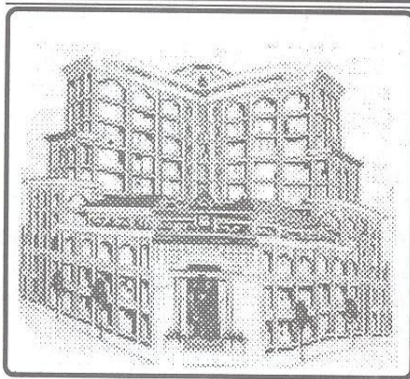
covered the Surah Yasin.

In all Issues, regular features like Shia World News, News from Around Africa, Editorial, Anon, Women's page, Health pages, Fiqh, Down Memory Lane and Wayside Wisdom have been carried. These are supplemented by religious and feature articles.

Judging from the letters and comments that we receive, the Editors are pleased to note an increasing interest in the *Samachar*. The increased coverage of Communal events and a good selection of interesting feature articles have probably helped to this effect. The Board continues to receive individual subscriptions from abroad and copies in bulk are also sent to different Jamaats around the world.

We have continued with the 'All-Colour' front page and have plans to print future copies on attractive art paper with at least four pages in colour. The additional cost involved is T.Shs. 1 million per issue. This can be generated by increasing the selling price by say T.Shs. 200/- to T.Shs. 500/- and by obtaining two further pages of

(continued on page 5)



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## Editorial Board report..... April, 1996.

box adverts from Jamaats out of Dar es Salaam. The projected additional revenue would then be:

1800 copies [normally sold] @ 200/=  
= Shs. 360,000/-  
30 box adverts @ Shs. 20,000/-  
= Shs. 600,000/- / Shs. 960,000/-

The Editorial Board has continued to send publicity posters of each Issue, prior to its release, to major Jamaats. The Jamaats are expected to put such posters on their notice boards so as to draw more awareness to each forthcoming Issue. The Editorial Board very much needs the support of Jamaats to effectively distribute copies. Smaller Jamaats can probably deliver Issues individually to each family in their Jamaat so as to maximise distribution. The objective, as we all know, is not commercial but rather to keep our members informed of events and educated on religious and general issues.

'Knowledge is power' and a Jamaat with enlightened members is a healthy Jamaat. At this stage may I acknowledge that there have been some hitches at our end in distributing copies to Jamaats. Rather than revert to reasons and explanations, I feel a better alternative is to assure Jamaats that in

future, copies will be expediently sent. There goes a saying that 'if you don't pull up your socks, we will pull down your trousers' and surely we don't want our trousers pulled down!

News feedback from Jamaats has 'failed to fill the bill' despite the appointment of correspondents. Correspondents are expected to send in news materials, photographs and adverts from their Jamaat but there has been a very limited response. We have been advised that some correspondents are in the dark as to how to begin and the Editorial Board has thus come up with proposed guide-lines which will soon be sent to each correspondent. May we remind those Jamaats not having a correspondent, to appoint one immediately to ensure a smooth flow of information.

The *Samachar* offers a forum for expression of views and ideas on Communal issues. Comments should be objective, constructive and therefore effective. We had to be selective in accepting articles for publication and tried to refrain from knowingly promoting any debate on views which were ill-conceived or which resulted from misconception of an issue.

The Editorial Board wishes to thank the Secretariat for the independence extended to it when producing the *Samachar* and our Board has remained open to dialogue when counter opinions are raised. At the same time our Board assures readers that such independence is in no way misused to accommodate malicious or insincere subject matter.

We also thank all advertisers and correspondents who sent in articles, news items and photographs and are also grateful to Jamaats, Organisations and individuals around the world who have assisted in distributing the *Samachar* in their respective areas.

We will endeavour to continue to make the *Samachar* a truly effective media by presenting information that is true and authentic without being fearful when defending truth, justice and fairness. Lend us your support, even if it means being constructively critical and surely we will then all be performing a noble task.

Wasalaam.

Editors.  
April, 1996.

### Current Advertising rates in the Federation Samachar are:

Back page (in colour with colour separation work)	TShs.	220,000/=
Back page (in colour without separation)	TShs.	150,000/=
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Small box inserts	TShs.	15,000/=

Currency conversion rates are: US\$= 600; Pnd. Sterling= 900; Can\$= 500 and Kenya Shilling=10



# Your Letters

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

Dear Brother,

## Samachar is late in Arusha

The *Federation Samachar* is a very informative magazine and it helps us keep in touch with our brothers around the world.

However we regret to note that here in Arusha we receive the copies quite late. I request that in future, copies be sent as soon as the issue is released in Dar es Salaam or even earlier, to enable a simultaneous release. This will avoid a drop in sales that ensues through news becoming stale or by members receiving copies from Dar es Salaam.

I have two further suggestions:-

1. To print a subscription form in the magazine and
2. To bring out a bumper issue coinciding with yearly Council Sessions, giving details of the year from all Jamaats. Jamaats should be requested to furnish details including photographs a few months prior to publication.

I also request for details of advertisement rates so that we can try and send you some adverts from Arusha.

Your brother in Islam.

Sadiq Chagani  
Arusha.

Dear Brother,

## Seeking TTQ

In your last issue there was coverage of the Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an (TTQ) whose distribution of religious books, especially the Holy Qur'an is impressive.

I have seen a copy of their newly released Holy Qur'an with a commentary by S.V. Mir Ahmad Ali and should say that it is very enlightening.

Does the TTQ have a representative in Tanzania. If not how can I get a copy?

S. Raza, Dar es Salaam

The address for TTQ is P.O. Box 73115, Elmhurst, New York 11373-0115, USA.

Editor

Federation Samachar

Dear Brother,

## Samachar unites

The last issue of the *Federation Samachar* confirms that this communal paper is all out to unite our brothers world-wide. In addition to news from Africa, you also carry so much communal news from around the world.

Its amazing how your small Editorial team can cover such an extensive area in your periodical. Well done and keep up the efforts.

F. Mavji, London.

Thank you for your comments. To assist us we have devoted correspondents plus writers who keep on sending us the news. We encourage readers world-wide to send us news and views so that we can make the *Samachar* even more informative.

Editor

Dear Brother,

## Pleasant memories from Dubai

I was pleased to read the article *Dubai Hosts Memorable Sports Festival* in the last issue of your wonderful magazine *Federation Samachar* which I regularly read.

It was a privilege and a pleasure to attend the 7th KSI Supreme Council Sports Festival held under the patronage of the KSI Muslim Jamat of Dubai and remarkably organised by the Jaffery Sports Club there.

There is no doubt about the importance and advantage of sports for physical fitness and for its role in building one's character and tolerance. Moreover such communal gatherings foster brotherhood and consolidate bonds between members.

The souvenir book, containing photographs of those who took part was of high quality and should remain as an everlasting cherishment for the participating players and their families.

All the subcommittees, from the people in transport and catering to those who were in-charge of accommodation performed superbly.

After a competitive day on the field, the sauna was appreciated and with our location being right in the heart of the city we could combine our sports endeavours with sightseeing and shopping.

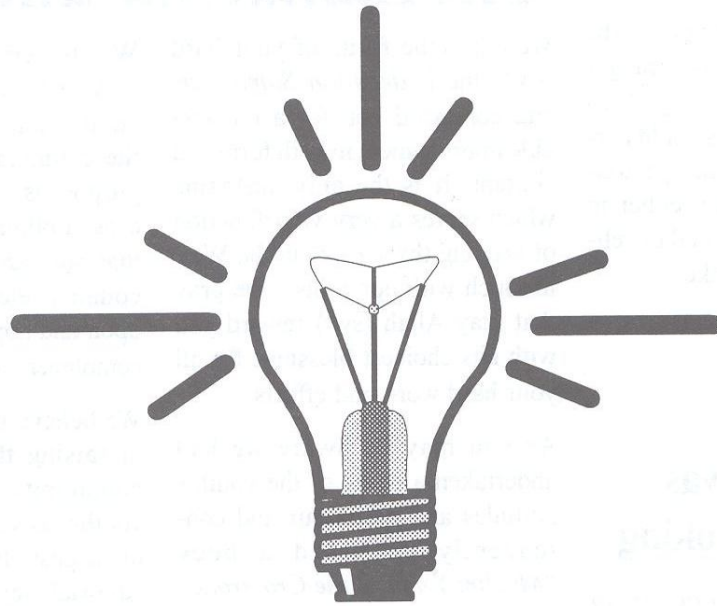
My hats off to Jaffery Sports Club, Dubai for organising a memorable Festival and once again I congratulate you for the wonderful coverage in the *Federation Samachar*. Please keep it up.

With salaams and duas.

Sultan A. Karim  
Mombasa.

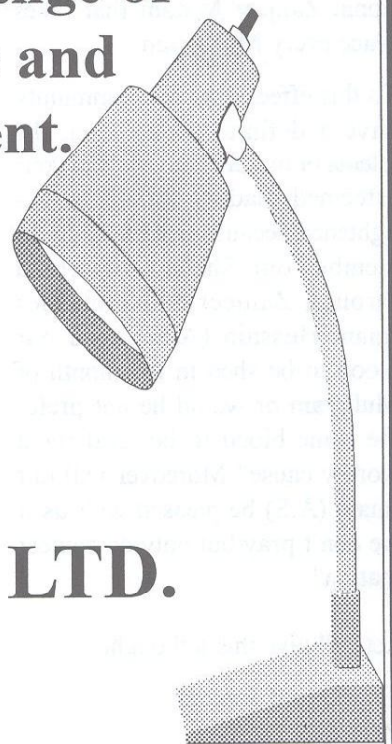
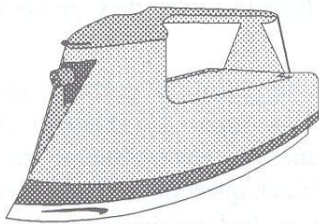


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# Your Letters

Dear Brother,

## Profiles welcomed

I wish to congratulate you on the new item introduced in your magazine "*Shedding more light on Board chairmen*". This could perhaps be extended to other personalities in the community either in the field of business, social or religious service and the like.

Anver M. Rajpar  
Karachi.

Dear Brother,

## Editorial was thought provoking

I have read your *Federation Samachar* Volume 29, No.3 of Zilqad 1416.

After minutely going through your Editorial "*We need to be serious about AIDS*", it appears that your main objective was to highlight the situation with regard to the traditional Zanjeer Matam that takes place every Muharram.

To this effect does the community have a definite ruling from the Ulema or marja? If so, we feel your esteemed readers should be enlightened because whilst we do remember our Shohad-e-Karbala through Zanjeer Mataam does Imam Hussain (A.S.) need our blood to be shed in the month of Muharam or would he not prefer the same blood to be used for a worthy cause? Moreover will our Imam (A.S) be pleased with us if we don't pray but only do zanjeer matam?

Lets all give this a thought.

Concerned Reader  
P.O. Box 15574  
Nakuru.

*Federation Samachar*

Dear Brother,

## The *Samachar* and youths

We enjoy the fruits of your hard work, the *Federation Samachar*, and commend you for a remarkable improvement in both form and content. It is the only magazine which serves a very vital function of keeping those of us in the West in touch with our roots. We pray that may Allah (swt) reward you with His choicest blessings for all your hard work and efforts.

As you may be aware we had undertaken a study of the youth's attitudes and behaviour and consequently published a book "*Muslim Youth at the Crossroads - Advancing into the 21st Century*". As a follow up we conducted a series of workshops in Toronto and I am enclosing a Preliminary Report for your review. We earlier also sent a copy of the book and a summary/review for possible coverage in the *Federation Samachar*.

Dear Brother,

## "Chalaki" and "Khoobi"

I read your *Federation Samachar* for the first time and liked it very much. I am told your are frank and sincere in your views and as an editor you do tell the community and leaders where they go wrong. Islam teaches us to do this.

I particularly liked your art of preparing and putting up questions to the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgar Ali Jaffer in your interview. Editors in India have the same art. The politicians call it "*chalaki*" but readers call it "*khoobi*". Each question in the interview had a message to inform readers and you touched very important issues.

Leaders try to defend themselves but your purpose in any interview is to inform them politely where they go wrong and what the community expects from them. We have the duty to respect and obey our leaders who are also expected to respect and obey rules and procedures.

Because of your interview I came to know many things about the World Federation. I now look forward to the next issue.

Ekbal Raza, Bombay.

We are very interested in moving this critical debate, about the youths, into the consciousness of the community world-wide. The purpose is to solicit feedback and cross-pollinate ideas in the hope that we can come up with some common elements that all agree upon and hopefully implement in a complimentary fashion world-wide.

We believe that your role is vital in raising the awareness of the community on the issue of the youths, as you have done so often in the past. If it is in line with your editorial objectives we hope you will give this some coverage. I also request you to review the materials and give us your personal feedback.

Sadik Alloo, USA

The book and subsequent Workshops have created a wealth of information now awaiting action. Its a great start and we have given due coverage in this issue.  
Editor



Dear Brother,

## "THE MIMBAR NEEDS YOU"

An article in the March 1996 issue of the *Federation Samachar* on the Open Forum in Toronto has caused a stir among a certain section of the community.

Revisiting an event is fine and perhaps summarising the proceedings and even commenting. But the article, purportedly written by Fidahusein Hameer has distorted the full proceedings.

The writer has been quick to quote Mulla Asgher on various paragraphs. But when Mulla "called upon Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina not to defend the book" he also said "we will stop talking about the book". In Mulla's own words, he said "...we will not call upon you to defend it and we will not touch it again. Okay". Unfortunately, Br. Hameer preferred to quote the first part of the sentence without completing the full sentence. And at what stage did Mulla "appeal to all to ignore the book"? I am not advocating reading or not reading the book but why accuse Mulla of having said something he didn't?

What about "the Mimbar needs you" part which Mulla said so eloquently and repeatedly? How come Mulla is not quoted in Br. Hameer's article? Obviously his article would be dissipated into nothing if this statement was included. Surely it does not serve the writer's purpose to quote this statement.

It is in order to quote Ayatullah Gulpaygani towards the end. But Br. Hameer has forgotten to also quote Muhammad Ali Taskhiri, the

Director of the Islamic Propagation Organisation of the Iranian Ministry.

Muhammad Taskhiri says in his letter of 25 August, 1992, "I would like to bring it to one's esteemed notice that I am not in agreement with anyone's inference about the writings in the said book and do not evaluate it as being deviating and harmful for Shi'ism.

*And in case some inexpressive and/or ambiguous points and interpretations are found in such academic researches which may create misunderstandings and incorrect references in the people's minds, the proper solution is to mention and/or discuss the matter in a brotherly and scholarly way. Hence, one may not regard somebody to be a disbeliever on the basis of the existence of a number of inexpressive expressions and/or ambiguous interpretations in his writings.*

*Certainly we all know that holding the Mu'min in reverence and guarding the prestige of the Mu'min, in particular the Shia, is a divine duty and we may not question the reputation of others due to difference of opinion and differences in attitude towards some points which do not harm our principles of belief." Unquote.*

In fairness to Dr. Sachedina, Mulla Asgher had also said to Dr. Sachedina, after saying that the "Mimbar needs you" that "there are thousands and thousands of subjects under the sun which you can convey and save generations from going astray. Keep them

steadfast."

Obviously Mulla's vision of the future must have been inspired to realise that Alims of the calibre of Dr. Sachedina can contribute tremendously to the new generations' religious consciousness and that the community needs such Zakireen to "save generations from going astray".

M.A. Nathani  
Dar es Salaam.

Dear Brother,

**Surah Yasin  
commentary was  
excellent**

In your last issue of the *Federation Samachar* I was pleased to read through the significance of Surah Yasin, something that I honestly knew has much importance but the meaning and reasoning of which I didn't really know.

When one recites the Surah with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding its recitation, the same Surah greatly inspires one to righteousness and makes one more aware of the presence of God.

I suggest that the *Samachar* should provide similar commentaries of other Surahs so as to enlighten readers further. How about Dua-e-Kumail?

S. Mohamed  
Dar es Salaam.

**Thank you for your comments. We intend to continue to provide commentaries on different Surahs and in this issue have carried the Surah Al-Fatiha.**

Editor.



## Your Letters

Dear Brother,

### Lack of intellectual discussions -- a paradox to the very purpose of our Imambaras

For a long time now a large number of our community members throughout the world have been disillusioned by the Majlis reciters, the Zakireen, especially those who visit us for a short period for some very important occasions when attendance at the Imambara is high and emotional attachment is intense. The community feels let down. The occasion comes and goes, but the community is hardly better off with any knowledge or meaningful inspiration which should have been derived from majalis attendance.

The message is not being delivered. Most preachers come unprepared and blabber through for about an hour to cover the time given. This is not a new issue. It has been raised by many community members for a long time and discussed in informal gatherings, seminars and even at Africa Federation level. In October 1994, the Hujjat Imambara in London organised an international conference on "*The role of Imambaras and Majalis in modern times*". One main theme on Majalis that seemed to recur in many papers is, to quote the report, "...format", "*the combination of language, style, content, mode of delivery and duration of the programme*".

If the community feels let down by the type and quality of

Majalis we hear from our Mamber, then why don't we train our own potential reciters? Again, this community has tried to do just that, within its administrative capabilities but has not succeeded through the creation of its own Hawza. What has succeeded are the efforts of some individual members some of whom have become shining examples, those who have the knowledge and know how to convey it.

It is these persons whom we should take advantage and learn from. Without our own Zakireen, those who understand us, our attitudes and our language, many especially the youth, will feel continuously let down. If we don't take advantage of our outstanding personalities, we only are the losers. Other communities are already taking advantage of such learned personalities.

Furthermore, what our community in East Africa lacks as an activity within the community is a genuine intellectual discussion and constructive dialogue on key issues open to all community members. Other communities do it, we do it in other countries, we do it here in East Africa in Schools and Universities. Why not in our Imambaras?

M.A. Nathani  
Dar es Salaam

**Muslim food -  
airlines can be  
made to toe the line  
set by universities**

In the last issue of the *Federation Samachar* I noted one letter 'Muslim food that includes meat that is not halal' which was carried on your Mailbag page.

This letter mainly related to food limitations in aircraft. I think what our communities world-wide should be doing is to recommend all the main airlines to come up with halal food in the true sense ---something that all Muslims can eat without making one exception or another.

I am now advised and it has been reported in some of our religious magazines here that various Universities in the USA have included halal food in their menus with some also closing down for Eid-ul-Fitr just as they do for Christmas.

At the Harvard University and Syracuse University in the USA they now have official servings of halal meals. And at the George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, bathrooms now provide the facility of performing wudhoo.

Like the Universities, airlines can be made to honour our request especially with today's high air-fares.

A. Mahmoud  
Toronto



## ***Samachar* should not be deceptive and sensational**

Although overall *Federation Samachar* is doing a good job, I believe under the notion of independence of the editor, you have fallen into the trap of negativism and sensationalism.

The independence of the editor is important but you have to remember that you are publishing a paper to serve the community where positive criticism should be made where warranted. Negativism and sensationalism are best left to others.

There was recently Mulla Asgher's bashing vis-à-vis *ijaza* for *khums*. And now in the March, 1996 issue there is Dr. Sachedina's bashing when at the Toronto Forum it was clearly agreed that Dr. Sachedina will not get involved in defending "Islamic Messianism". Therefore, is it not unfair on your part to publish letters and articles giving negative and sensational feelings when the party concerned has agreed not to defend himself any more? It does not matter what is on Internet for there are all sorts of garbage on Internet.

We have enough negativism in our community. If you want to bash Mulla, do it at the meetings where he is present and do not apply the principal of chicanery when going into print. And for those wanting to bash other individuals, do it when they are able to defend themselves. Besides, such negativism does not help the Shia cause.

What also is bothersome is that in the one and the same issue, you publish a negative article and an interview with Mulla Asghar where he has stated, "I would say that the Forum was a demonstration of the maturity of the Community in resolving a long outstanding issue." Would maturity not have dictated that the article on the Forum not be published?

**Ghulam Abbas Sajan**  
Toronto.

The *Samachar's* primary objective is to relate truth and raise dialogue with no intention of malice. Mulla Asgher was asked to explain the *khums Ijaza* not because we mistrusted him but because a reader required to be enlightened.

Asking is not tantamount to bashing and in full fairness we also provided Mulla an opportunity (see the interview in our last issue) to tell us why he chose not to reply. This issue was also candidly discussed at the Supreme Council Meeting without any undue feelings being raised.

The Open Forum article was carried because it narrated and analysed what others who attended the Forum saw or heard, providing also a guideline on the burning issue of what Dr. Sachedina's status as a preacher is. Just like any work of art is open to criticism and praise, so is literature. When observations are made, a dialogue ensues. Such dialogue is healthy because it engenders ideas. We believe our leaders are matured enough to understand that their statements, preachings or work can be analysed for flaws, adequacy or perfection and the *Samachar* has and will continue to provide a forum for those genuinely wishing to defend their work.

Incidentally the current issue carries a counter opinion on the Forum, with more observations and facts. This then is the advantage of dialogue limited within the periphery of intellectualism. I thank you for your candid observations which I appreciated even more because they have come from a friend and an ex-Jamaat President. **Editor**

## **Parents and their children**



Parents who don't teach their children on how to behave at the Mosque and how to keep clean have no regard for others;

Children who don't say thank you when receiving a present should always have the gift taken away immediately;

Never give misbehaving children treats;

Only ineffective parents get sworn at by their children;

Parents who don't insist that their children help with chores in the house have no right to complain about being treated like a maid;

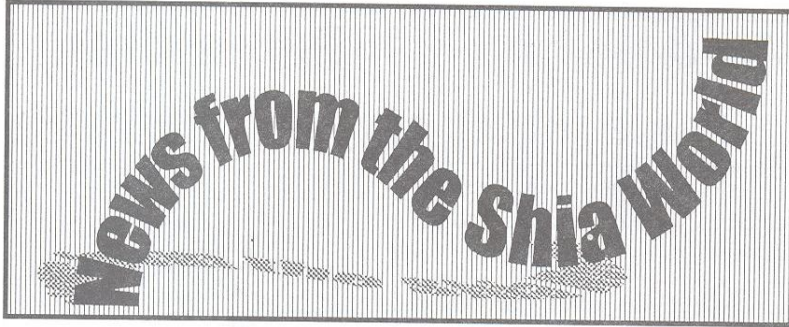
Unrealistic praise of one's children's skills will produce mediocre performers;

Giving your children honest feedback is more beneficial than undeserved compliments;

Good parents discipline before the stares of others tell them it is necessary and.....

...Effective discipline is as much a part of love as hugs and kisses.





## Hamilton Jamaat in perspective

The Hamilton Jamaat was formed in August, 1974 and with Allah's blessings continues to effectively organise religious functions at different times. Despite having members from almost 10 different countries, the Jamaat has worked with fine co-operation. Some of its members reside outside the Hamilton area in Oakville, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Fort Erie, Brantford, Burlington and Stoney Creek.

Currently the Hamilton Jamaat has over 20 families as fully paid members, all of whom live in or around Hamilton. The number of families are expected to increase to 30 by the end of 1996.

The Muharram program this year was again very successful with English, Arabic, Urdu, and Farsi sessions being held. In addition, every Thursday night, majalises are held with Doa-e-Komail, Salaat, and Ziarat and of course other Khushali and Wafaat majalises are also organised. During the last Ramadhan Iftar was arranged at the Centre on each Saturday, with all members bringing niaz to join the others in breaking their fast.

The madrasah, which started five years ago, is run under the Heritage Language program offered by the Board of Education at Sir John A. MacDonald School. Currently the Madrasah has two teachers and 30

students.

The youths of Hamilton Jamaat plan to form a youth committee which will then co-ordinate their activities with the Toronto Youth Committee. A surprise visit last year by the seniors of Toronto Jamaat provided a fine opportunity for the Hamilton Jamaat members to seek advice from their seniors.

The Hamilton Jamaat also had the privilege to host for the first time, the Nasimco Executive Council meeting held there in June last year. The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher M.M. Jaffer also visited Hamilton Jamaat last year wherein he observed that the Jamaat there required a larger facility and that existent facilities could be extended.

Two members of the Hamilton Jamaat were honoured by Honourable Tony Valeri, MPP from Ottawa, a former back bencher in the Federal Government. Br. Ramzan Manek was awarded for his unselfish and generous service as President of Hamilton Jamaat since August 1974 and Sheikh Hakin Luqman, a senior citizen was awarded for participating in Jamaat affairs since the existence of the Hamilton Jamaat.

The Jamaat is currently developing the property which it acquired in 1991 to build premises for religious observances.

## Moroccan women want incorrect Muslim law on divorce amended

A Moroccan women's group has launched a campaign to force the Government there to change the country's Islamic divorce law which currently does not abide by the correct Islamic guidelines on divorce. The women's group claims that the existent divorce law discriminates against women.

The Women's Action Committee (UAF) invited lawyers, professors, psychologists, politicians and human rights activists to a symbolic tribunal to generate public support for its cause.

The UAF leader, Latifa Jebabdi has said that, "*Women were not consulted and their point of view was not taken into account on divorce law and of other family issues.*"

She said women were being viewed as children needing guidance and that the existent laws discriminated against them because Moudawana (family status law) is a blend of Sharia and modern civil law. It was promulgated by a group of Muslim scholars under the supervision of the Royal Palace in 1958, two years after independence.

The Government led by Prime Minister Abdellatif Filali amended the legislation dealing with women's rights two years ago but feminist associations feel that the authorities have not gone far enough.

Under the amended laws, women can no longer be forced into marriage against their will and man cannot take a second wife without the approval of one's spouse.

**(Surely Islam has never forced women into marriage and to marry a second wife, the approval of one's first wife is only one of several conditions to be fulfilled. Editor)**



# Iran protests against plans of internal sabotage

The Islamic Republic of Iran has sent a letter to the United Nations protesting against what it described as secret plans by the U.S. Government to spend \$20 million to support terrorist activities against Iran.

The protest letter by Iran's Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, to the UN Secretary General, Boutros Ghali, followed disclosures in the American press, including the widely read *Washington Post* which said that the White House has approved a bill authorising the United States to set up a 20 million Dollar covert programme to destabilize Iran.

The Islamic media world-wide has condemned this move. One of the strongest editorials came from Pakistan's Islamabad-based daily newspaper, *The Muslim* which said the Clinton administration's secret plans to support terrorist groups inside and outside of the Muslim

country is a flagrant violation of the Algiers declaration which was signed in 1981 by the USA, not to interfere in the affairs of foreign countries. The Algiers declaration actually ended the hostage crisis in Iran at that time.

An editorial in the Tehran-based *Kayhan International* said the United States of America "has an infamous history of financing covert (secret) programmes against regimes which do not succumb to its imperial ways".

It also said the American people were tired of its government's "daily doses of Iran-bashing, Iraq-bashing, Cuba-bashing... instead of cleaning its own internal problems".

Meanwhile the head of Pakistan's Institute for Strategic Studies and founder of the Pakistan Jihaad Party, Imam Murtaza Pooya, has said that that the United States and

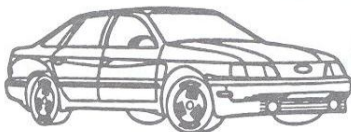
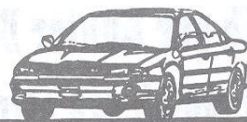
its western allies in Nato are planning, in its "new Middle Eastern policies", to cut up Muslim lands into ethnic and racial lines so that these different nations fight each other in power struggles.

Imam Pooya said this "balkanization" of Muslim lands is a dangerous threat against Islam and the Muslim people in the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

Other world Muslim leaders have also warned the world Ummah about this danger of being divided and pointed out that one of the well-known strategies used is to create and widen the "Shia-Sunni differences myth".

The leaders pointed out that the CIA and other anti-Islam agencies have plans to exploit educationally ill-equipped and other vulnerable "ulama" (mullahs) from different Sunni and Shia sects for this purpose.

*md motors*



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# True Islam is not unduly aggressive clarifies Indian historian

*At a time when deliberate attempts are being made to create artificial differences between Hindus and Muslims by a section of politicians and intellectuals, Octogenarian Gandhian, historian, veteran parliamentarian and former governor, B.N. Pande, decided to travel all around India to expose the former's distorted views. Below are excerpts from an interview he gave to an Indian journalist early this year.*

**Question:** *These days one hears a lot about aggressive Islamic fundamentalism. What do you think of this phenomenon?*

**Answer:** By its very nature, Islam can neither be aggressive nor fundamentalist. I have done careful research on Koran. What has struck me is that at numerous places the Koran has highlighted that all men are brothers and that there is a single God who has sent prophets to different communities to preach the same theme of universal love and brotherhood. In fact, the Koran says that he who differentiates between one prophet and the others is a real 'kaafir'. So how can Islam be aggressive?

That is why I tell non-Muslims to change their stereotype image of Islam. Similarly, I tell Muslims that Islam is NOT necessarily what the mullahs preach.

**Question:** *Then what about the concept of Jihaad in the name of which so many Islamic terrorist groups are justifying their actions? At least that is what one hears in our part of the world, be it Kashmir or Afghanistan?*

**Answer:** In both Kashmir and Afghanistan, the ongoing disturbances have nothing to do with Islam as such, because, according to Koran, Jihaad are of two types: Jihaad-e-Asghar and Jihaad-e-Akbar. In the first type, a Muslim can resort to violence only when someone deprives him or any of his dear ones of life and property, not otherwise. As regards

Jihaad-e-Akbar, which is the greatest Jihaad indeed, the ideal Muslim is he who controls the five senses or what we Hindus call 'indriyas'. Similarly, Sufism, even before its arrival in India, did agree with the main features of vedanta, particularly the philosophy of absolute monoism. This, in turn, means that Hindus and Muslims have no fundamental difference.

**Question:** *How do you, then, explain the many wars fought in the past for the sake of Islam?*

**Answer:** This is a serious question and needs to be viewed in a proper historical context. Here, two things are important. One is that Islam was conveniently used to justify these wars by the Muslim kings. It was no doubt wrong but then the fact is that rulers belonging to other religions were doing exactly the same thing. Take the example of the famous Crusades which lasted 200 years from 800 A.D., between Muslims and Christians for the control of Constantinople. Here, Christians used slogans like "exterminate Islam and exterminate Muslims".

In fact throughout these 200 years, Western literature - and that includes every European language was full of fulminations against Islam and everything to do with Islam. For Prophet Muhammad, they even coined a new word, "MAHOUD", meaning a devil or Satan, "mistakenly claiming to be God". Nothing could have been more insulting to Islam than this. Unfortunately this bias against

Islam continues in Western writings even today. Terms like "Islamic Fundamentalism" are manifestations of this bias.

It is to be noted that in mediaeval times, both in the Middle East and Central Asia, Islam precipitated intellectual awakening, having positive consequences far beyond the region. In the court of the Caliph of Baghdad, research was carried out in science and technology, huge libraries were built and important treatises and texts of every religion were translated. Indian pundits were honoured guests in the court of Baghdad.

In fact Tasawwuf or Islamic mysticism (*mysticism practised by Muslims, as Tasawwuf has nothing to do with Islam per se!* - Ed.) which originated in Khorasan and Mesopotamia, was strongly influenced by Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples situated there, as has been testified by the Chinese pilgrim Hsuen Tsang, who passed through these lands.

**Question:** *Despite this background, how do you explain the stories of Muslim kings invading India throughout the Middle Ages, looting Hindu temples and killing non-Muslims mercilessly?*

**Answer:** This, again, has to be seen in the proper context. Those days - and this was true of all religions - the ruling tribe keenly valued the concept of valour. Those days, for

(continued on page 16)



(from page 15)

instance, after "Vijayadashami" every year, every Hindu king would go to another Hindu kingdom and demand "Yudham Dehi", which meant "come for war or else submit your kingdom to me". Going by the same logic, I must say that there have been more wars among Rajputs than between Muslim invaders and Indian kings. Similarly, Muslims have fought more among themselves than they have fought against others.

Regarding the looting of wealth and the accompanying brutalities by the Muslim invaders, it was not something unique to the fact that the invaders were Muslims. Many people do not know that Mahmood of Ghazna had a Hindu general named Tilak who suppressed the rebellion in the then Turkistan so brutally that it had no parallels.

**Question:** *Your views on the charges that the Muslim invaders and then the Muslim rulers converted many Hindus to Islam by using force?*

**Answer:** Nothing can be preposterous. I have not done any research to say authoritatively that the overwhelming majority of the converts were those who just rebelled against the highly tyrannical and unjust Brahminical social order. At least, that is what happened in Bengal and Gujarat.

**Question:** *If the facets are so different from the stereotype impressions of Hindus about Muslims and Muslims about Hindus, then what led to these images?*

**Answer:** I think it was basically due to the British rule, particularly the way history books were written during this period. The Britishers, in my opinion, deliberately over-glorified the rules of Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka and Vikramaditya to give an impression that the rule

*Federation Samachar*

## NOT REALLY A MULLA!

A South African Sunday newspaper gave splash front-page coverage to the thuggery of a so-called "Man of God", Maulana Ghulam Saajid Makki, Imam of the biggest mosque in the southern hemisphere in Grey Street, Durban.

The trustees of the mosque claimed in an interdict application that Maulana Makki:

- insulted members of the congregation;
- frequently failed to attend mosque to lead prayers;
- had sown discord and disunity and created factions with the congregation;
- conducted himself in an unseemly and obscene manner as described in papers filed in court in a legal proceeding instituted against him by his wife, Amina Makki; and that
- his conduct was inconsistent with the standard of moral and spiritual integrity required by an Imam of the Juma Masjid.

Mrs. Amina Makki, who was forcibly given in marriage to the Maulana by her parents when she was 13 years old and still at school, claimed in her affidavit to the court that:

- her husband had raped her and attempted to sodomise her;
- he had slashed and lacerated her forearm with a knife and broken bottle;
- he assaulted her by striking her head

against the headboard of their bed;

- he punched her causing her to suffer a "black eye" and cut lips;
- he pointed a firearm at her forehead and even threatened to shoot her;
- he took her to a Shallcross cemetery at midnight on two occasions and threatened to leave her there alone unless she undertook NOT to report any of his misconducts to anyone.

Mrs. Makki, who described herself as an "abused wife", was awarded Rand 2,500 a month maintenance and Maulana Makki was ordered further to give her R3,000 towards her cost for defending a divorce action he had brought against her.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) exhorted his Ummah to treat their wives with utmost love and humanity. He said, **"Give her to eat of what you eat yourself. Do not slap her on the face. If you are displeased with nine bad qualities in her, then try and be pleased with one good quality she possesses."**

Another Hadith says: **"The best of you are those who are best to their wives. And I am best to my wife"** There are numerous such Ahadith of our Nabi (S.A.W.) enjoining the male members of the Ummah to handle the fair sex fairly and gently, showing them respect and tenderness.

rule of the Hindu kings in the past was simply magnificent and that all this came to an end with the advent of Muslims in India. On the other hand, the study of mediaeval history was neglected.

I strongly believe that reading the mediaeval history of the country will go a long way in restoring Hindu-Muslim amity.

**Question:** *Could you elaborate on this?*

**Answer:** The mediaeval period was the one which saw Muslim Sufis and Hindu saints coming

together to preach the message of oneness, love and brotherhood. I am referring here to the great cult of "Bhakti" which manifested itself in a beautiful synthesis of music, dance, drama, painting, literature and philosophical discourses, befitting the rich and varied Indian panorama.

Therefore, my message is let us go back to the links of the mediaeval period in order to bridge the numerous divisions confronting not only our country but also the whole world.



# JIBA Europe to host World Trade Fair

JIBA EUROPE is to hold a World Trade Fair Exhibition in London from 26 July 1996 to 28 July 1996. About 150 exhibition stands ranging in price from Sterling Pounds 100 to Sterling Pounds 5000 (inclusive for the 3 days) will enable businesses of varying size and budgets to exhibit and promote their products and services to a large buying audience of visitors.

JIBA EUROPE is expected to put all its energy, efforts and influence to make this a very productive outlet for the business and professional community. British and overseas businesses, Commercial attache of High Commissions and Embassies of many countries, other commercial organisations (who share a common interest in the promotion of local and international trade), banking institutions amongst others have been invited.

A comprehensive advertising and publicity campaign to draw lots of visitors to the exhibition is also planned and special invitations are to be extended to member(s) of the Royal Family, the Government, at both local and national levels and to leaders of ethnic minority groups.

Allocation of the exhibition stands is being made to a wide variety of businesses with special encouragement to manufacturers, suppliers, sellers, importers and exporters of garments, textiles, glassware, food products, light machinery, pharmaceuticals, medicines, animal healthcare, computers, cosmetics, herbal products, stationery, laboratory equipment, foodstuff, spices, catering supplies, toys, books, furniture, blankets, shoes, household items, utensils, business machines, computer software,

advertising gifts, travel agents, clearing and forwarding agents, insurance agents, financial consultants, jewellery, petroleum products and many others.

Exhibitions of one kind or another have a pedigree and history stretching back almost to the dawn of mankind. Our need to trade has brought with it an understandable need for sellers and buyers to meet. Exhibitions are more important now than ever before. No other medium of selling is as successful as an exhibition.

Time and travel is saved by having customers come to the sellers, known decision makers and prospective customers attend, the contact is face-to-face, no appointments to be made and no secretaries to convince because the buyers are just a few feet away. Exhibition visitors are generally also more responsive to new ideas than when in their offices or homes.

Moreover at an exhibition, the buyer has voluntarily set aside time

to be sold to. The exhibition stand can be a perfect place from which to do business. It is like a temporary sales showroom but more neutral, with the buyer feeling more at ease. The stand is a temporary showcase for products or services. Stunning visual impact can be achieved with light, colour and movement. Hands-on experience can be offered, products can be touched, heard, smelt, tasted as well as seen working. No other medium gets the products so close to its market. Interest of a prospective customer can be turned quickly into a buying desire and even into an order.

The venue, Earls Court Olympia, is a leading Exhibition and Conference Centre being the third most visited London building. Its location is ideally in central London with excellent public transport facilities, nearby public attractions and hotels.

JIBA looks forward to an active participation by members.

## Karachi murderers sentenced to death

Thirteen activists of Sipah-e-Sahaba involved in three different cases of murders of a total of twenty-seven innocent persons, were sentenced to death with a fine of rupees three lakhs each or in default, another three years rigorous imprisonment each. The convicts included Hafiz Ahmed Bakhsh, General Secretary of the Sipah-e-Sahaba Karachi.

The accused persons, including two absconders, were involved in the Mehfil-e-Murtaza, PIB Colony, Imambargah Fazl Abbas and PECHS mass murder cases. In the PECHS mass murder case, seven persons belonging to two families were massacred in cold blood in two flats near PECHS graveyard. The court sentenced all the accused to death and also imposed a fine of Rs one lakh each or in default, to undergo imprisonment for three years each.

In the Imambargah Abu Fazl Abbas of PIB Colony case, fourteen persons were shot dead. The gruesome incident took place on February 25, 1995. In this case also, all the accused persons were sentenced to death each and also a fine of Rs. one lac each or in default three years further rigorous imprisonment.

In the third case of massacre at Mehfil-e-Murtaza PECHS, which occurred an hour after the Imambargah Fazl Abbas tragedy, fifteen persons including the Imam were done away with. The culprits were the same as in the Imambargah Abu Fazl Abbas incident. They were sentenced to death plus rupees three lakhs fine each or in default, three years rigorous imprisonment.



## NASIMCO holds annual meeting

The NASIMCO Annual General Meeting was held at Bayview centre on Saturday April 6, 1996 with delegates from all over North America congregating to pass the accounts, approve the budget and to discuss general matters concerning the member Jamats.

In a welcome address to the meeting, the President of Toronto Jamat, Nazir Gulamhusein called on the Nasimco leadership to redefine its objectives so that the community at large can justify its existence.

The Nasimco President, Ahmed Bhalloo outlined the activities of Nasimco highlighting the efforts being made to get the Government of Canada to recognise it as a sponsoring body for refugees. He bemoaned that the World Federation and the Africa Federation have not responded positively in providing the necessary papers.

A lively debate on the working of the World Federation (WF) followed when delegates questioned the method of allocation of funds by the WF. Hujjatul Islam Sayid Mohamed Moosawi and Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina attended as special guests. Alhaj Ali Hemani represented the World Federation.

### Scout Founder member passes away

Brother Mohamedhusein Kermali passed away on June 6 and was laid to rest at North York Cemetery on June 7 after Juma prayers. Jaffer Taki Abdulhusein of New York and Nisar Sherali gave a last scout's salute at the grave-side, to the deceased, who was one of the founders of the 10th Zanzibar Scout Troop.

He is still remembered for organising an impressive Torch March on the evening of Imam Ali a.s. 1400th Birthday Anniversary when the narrow streets of Zanzibar reverberated with the chanting of YA ALI - YA ALI. Marhoom is the father of Br. Ashik Kermali, a budding preacher and devoted missionary worker.

*Federation Samachar*

## DATELINE TORONTO

from Alhaj Baqir Alloo, Toronto

□ The Bayview centre was redecorated and a new carpet was laid prior to the holy month of Ramadhan for the comfort of worshippers. During Ramadhan, programmes began in the evening with salaah, Iftar, darsa, dua' and malis. The attendance was very good despite bitter cold weather that had gripped North America.

Boys and girls trained in reciting the holy Qur'an and dua's at regular Thursday night classes held at the Bayview Centre, took turns to read Dua's in both, the gents and ladies sections. This was the first time for ladies to have their own Dua' sessions and it was heart-warming to see the young girls and boys read Dua's with correct pronunciations in full confidence.

The Thursday religious classes are co-ordinated by Brother Shafik Kara for the boys section and Sister Nargis Valimohamed for the girls section. Brother Mohammed Ashiq Kermali also plays a pivotal role and is helped by a team of proficient youths. In the girls section, which currently has about 90 students, a pivotal role is played by Sister Nargis Valimohamed and Sister Nanu Walji who are helped by a dedicated team of ladies volunteers.

At the Jaffery Islamic housing "Crescent Village" Centre, mo'mineen gathered at Maghrib time for Jamat prayers and returned with their families at 8.00 p.m. for darsa, dua' and majlis. Brother Mohamedhusein Lakha conducted prayers and co-ordinated programmes helped by volunteers. Local preachers were invited and others living in the complex were encouraged to give short talks sharing their experiences with the audience.

The West Imambara at Brampton was also active in this holy month with similar programmes. Preachers there included Husein Khimjee, Asiq Kermali and Haider H. Jaffer. At all three centres mo'mineen and mo'meenat spent the night of twenty first Ramadhan in prayers within the mosque. A Qur'an Recitation competition for boys and girls in age groups was also arranged and results were declared on the night of 29th Ramadhan when prizes and gifts were distributed.

Eid Prayers were held on Tuesday, February 20 at the Bayview Mosque (3 sessions), at Crescent Village Centre and at West Imambara. A big feast was arranged at the Bayview Centre in the evening to facilitate all members to meet and exchange greetings. Youths and the "not so young" were also kept busy during the month in sports activities held on weekends.

□ At the Al-Sadiq School an "Iftar" Programme was held during which students demonstrated their trilingual ability before an audience of parents and invitees. The students demonstrated their fluency in English, French and Arabic. Meanwhile the management has resolved to expand the school to cover Grades 4, 5 and 6 depending on enrolment response for these grades. The School also hosted a one day seminar of the Islamic Schools Federation of Ontario on 8 June, 1996. Speakers included Nawaid Razvi, Mohamed Rizvi, Hamid Rizvi, Nusrat Jaffer, Sabiya Sadiq, Qasem Mahmud, Ikram Makki and Nisar Sherali. The Federation has 14 schools affiliated to it.

□ Meanwhile at a well attended meeting of our Jamat held on March 17, 1996 at the Ja'ffari Islamic Centre, a master plan for the proposed Islamic Education and Community Centre at 9000 BATHURST was adopted by majority of votes.

Moharram was celebrated with the usual solemnity and zeal. Maulana Mohamed Raza Rizwani from Qum preached at the Bayview Centre whilst Sayed Mohamedhusein Zaidi and Maulana Shafiq Hudda preached at the West and Hamilton Centres respectively. The ladies were graced with preachings by Zakera Sabeeha Hairder from Karachi and the youths had brother Zulfikar Amir Manji of Peterborough Jamat. On Ashura Day a solemn procession with Alam and Tazia was organised from Thornhill Community Centre to Bayview Centre in which some 500 men, women and children participated. A special pamphlet was distributed to the public during the procession. The appeal for funds to cover all the Moharram expenses estimated at \$55,000 was over subscribed by about \$ 10,000. At the Crescent Village, where majaalis from Bayview were transmitted live through a Conference video, some 200 men, women and children participated.

A Food Bank established for the poor drew a fairly good response whilst 55 litres of blood was donated to the Blood Bank.



## NASIMCO issues youths proclamation

The following 'youths proclamation' has been issued by the President of NASIMCO, Ahmed Bhalloo for the 1996-97 period.

*"NASIMCO, noting its charter to promote the welfare of the community, and recognising that a majority of the communities are now anchored, and with centres having been established, believes that the sails of the youth now be set afloat in the uncharted waters of the new world.*

*NASIMCO, noting that the first generation of citizens having come to the land of opportunity and faring well, and recognising that this generation has laid a path laden with growth, experience, success and prosperity, now must devote its energies and resources to the upcoming generation.*

*NASIMCO, noting that the upcoming generation, our youths, are the real treasures of our community*

*and recognising that the nurturing of the youths will be the ultimate measure of success of this generation, harkens this community, individually and collectively, to be the lighthouse that guides the youths and beckons them to their rightful place in our community.*

*NASIMCO recognising its above responsibility commissioned a study "Muslim Youth at the Crossroads, Advancing into the 21st Century", believes now that we must define the vision of the youth generation, define the challenges and opportunities for the youths and define the attendant courses of action.*

*NASIMCO acknowledging that much has been done and much remains to be done, hereby resolves that 1996-97 be proclaimed "The year of the youths" and that life be breathed into these stated embryonic definitions.*

### Birmingham launches new projects

The Birmingham Jamat is soon to undertake the Syeda Zainab Project which is a multi purpose project that will house the Jamaat's Muhammadi Madressa and Playgroup comprising of about 400 students. The new building is expected to house 22 classrooms, a playgroup/nursery area, library, assembly cum sports hall and the administration office. This million pound project is expected to commence in mid 1996.

The Jamat has recently also acquired a huge building across its Complex at a cost of Sterling 150,000. Details are being worked out on how best to use this building known as the "KSIM Building".

The Jamat has begun fund raising and sterling 200,000 has already

been collected. In addition, sterling 40,000 has been raised through the London Jamat and sterling 50,000 was put in by the World Federation. The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher has also given full permission for the utilisation of the Sehme Imam (a.s) money for the project under his Ijaza from Ayatullah Al Uzma Syed Ali Hussein Seestani.

Of the funds received, 85% will go for the Syeda Zainab project and 15% for the KSIM Building. If donors wish, then the full 100% will be used for Syeda Zainab Project. Khums money will not be used for KSIM Building. Momineen and Mominaat are urged to support this noble project.

## Rocking the boat - -Iranian Style

Most mornings at about dawn, young women carry slender racing kayaks to the edge of an artificial lake near Lake Tehran, then shove off on a gruelling two-hour training run. They sweat and they feel the burn.

Nothing unusual about that, perhaps, except for one thing: these athletes work out in *chadors*, the hooded robes designed to hide the female form in keeping with Iran's strict Islamic dress code.

Their male coach says the extra clothing adds 10 seconds to their times on a 500m course.

This is the Iranian national women's flat-water kayaking team, among the newest entrants in a growing movement to make sport acceptable and accessible to women.

The Government has begun to upgrade sports facilities for women and has granted permission for women to compete internationally in a handful of sports, as long as they can do so without compromising Islamic rules on covering their bodies.

Other sports in which the Iranian women have been allowed to compete internationally are table tennis, horse-jumping, skiing and shooting.

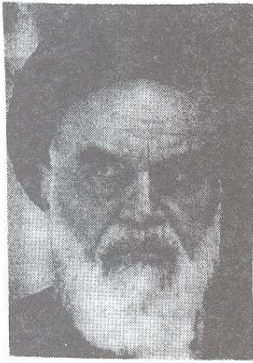
### Toronto to get Children Park

At the Annual General Meeting of the Toronto Jamat held on 17 March, 1996 a resolution was approved by majority of votes to spending \$ 12,000 to build a Park for children within two years

The building of the Park is expected to be financed by the Golden Crescent Group in Toronto.



# Iran marks 7th death Anniversary of Imam Khomeini



The Iranian Government, its Embassies overseas and various religious institutions commemorated the 7th death anniversary of the leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Imam Khomeini who passed away on 3 June, 1989 in Iran.

It is a difficult task to assess the implementations manifested in the Islamic arena by Imam Khomeini (May God Bless His Soul). His divine achievement was, of course, the Glorious Islamic Revolution. Throughout his fruitful life, he set out to strengthen Islamic principles as well as to raise the banner of struggle and opposition against world oppression and infidelity.

Imam Khomeini was born in Khomeini, a small town south of Tehran in 1902. He was born to a religious family and since his early days he showed inclinations of a pious and persevering personality, drawing inspiration from the family and religious teachers around him.

He helped crystallise pure Islam by bringing Islam's universal and genuine outlook to the world thereby saving Islam from imposed deterioration and deviation.

As an outstanding rank of authority in various Islamic narratives, religious matters and philosophical fields, the late Ayatullah Khomeini

uprooted the 2500 year old monarchy in Iran and also shook the towers of tyranny and infidelity throughout the world. The background of the Islamic movement pioneered by Imam (R.A.) was the Shah's attempt to eliminate and to annihilate the world off true Islam as prescribed by the glorious Qur'an.

During his 15 years in exile, late Ayatullah Khomeini successfully led the Iranian Muslim revolutionaries and unlike many revolutions which are fought with arms, the Iranian revolution was essentially won by '*Faith over might*'. The late Khomeini's countless addresses to different groups of citizens, nationalities and leaders of liberation movements world-wide that visited him and his many spiritual speeches, political statements, declarations, letters and decrees on different significant occasions, now remain as an attestation of his great personality was embodied towards serving nobody but Allah (s.w.t.).

Imam Khomeini was known as a strong supporter of the oppressed and in his unwavering position, he used to give lectures on the victory of the under-privileged over those who usurped. He always reminded his congregation of listeners that truth prevails over falsehood.

The great Imam who fought the

revolution armed with only faith and shouts of *Allaho-Akber* (God is the Greatest) stood against the antagonism of the so-called superpowers thereby causing the demise of the despotic Shah regime and bringing to glory, the victory of blood over sword.

Throughout the years after the Islamic victory, Imam Khomeini shed light of hope upon the hearts of his believers and was a guiding light to millions of Muslims and the oppressed at large. He was not only the spiritual leader of Iranian Muslims but assumed responsibility for all Muslims world-wide.

In his position as a politician, the late Ayatullah Khomeini taught his people to be self-sufficient and insisted that all truly independent people, irrespective of their religious beliefs, should unite so as to defend themselves from the discrimination, greed and enmity of the usurpers.

Under his leadership, Iran greatly improvised its political infrastructure and achieved progress in economic, cultural and educational fields. Finally on 4 June, 1989 the Great Leader of the Revolution and the Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran joined the exalted in heaven. He however had laid a strong foundation thereby enabling Iran to achieve its desired progress.

## Toronto's Begum Sadiqa is young at 80

Since 1993, once a week on Tuesday morning, Begum Sadiqa Habit Dharamsi continues to hold sessions on tafsir of the Holy Quran at the Crescent Village in Toronto. She lives in the complex and despite being in her eighties, she actively participates in activities at the Crescent Village.

Begum Sadiqa is a well learned lady fluent in English, Urdu, Arabic, Gujrati and Farsi. She touched many hearts and was highly appreciated for her excellent speech in English during the Opening Ceremony of the Jaffery Islamic Housing Corporation function attended by Federal and Provincial officials.



## Inspirational book on youth behaviours is released

A 100 page book, *Muslim youths at the crossroads; advancing into the 21st century* was released during this year's Eid ul fitr festivities in Toronto.

The book is a result of a pilot study project that was initiated, in Toronto, under the auspices of Nasimco, in October 1993. The study is unique in that it is the first of its kind within our community using current scientific methodologies to measure the perceptions and attitudes of our youths. The objective of the book is to raise awareness and to make the community more cognizant of the challenges and opportunities facing the youths and parents.

An introduction by Dr. Adbulaziz Sachedina, thoughtfully and aptly, describes the challenges of remaining a Muslim in the 21st century. He reflects on the question, "Where shall we begin?", raised by the late Dr. Ali Shari'ati, an activist Muslim thinker of Iran and in more than one way, an authentic voice of the Muslim youth.

The study itself was conducted by a team of five community members each of whom brought a unique perspective and expertise to bear on the project. Nisar Sherali, a teacher with the Milliken Mills High School in Toronto Ontario, educates us about the system where our children's personalities are being moulded. His vantage point as a parent and teacher of both the secular and religious schools and his background and experiences with various cultures gives us a unique insight.

A counsellor with the Ontario District in Toronto, Canada, Sabira Pradhan Alibhai, examines the

psychological development in the teen years, with a view to give us an insight to some of the factors which motivate the youth's behaviour.

A Senior Vice President with Total Research, a leading marketing research firm in New Jersey, USA, Dr. Bashir Dato, played a pivotal role in defining the scope of the study and analysing the results of the survey of the youths.

The resident Alim of Toronto Jamat, Dr. Liyakat Takim, gives his "in the trenches" viewpoint. His experience in dealing with the youths is evident in his apt enumeration of the challenges facing youths and their parents and in his practical suggestions for solutions.

A businessman and an Islamic activist in Los Angeles, USA, Sadik Alloo, initiated, guided and coordinated the project with the help of the entire team.

The book attempts to provoke thoughts towards charting out the future direction of Muslim youths in the west with the intention of obtaining valid data that can be used for instituting methodologies to this effect.

The book concludes with a suggestion on the process of clarifying our collective vision for our youths so as to have a common direction in which the youths, the parents, the leadership and the community as a whole channel our hopes and aspirations into the formulation of concrete action programs designed to facilitate the realisation of that vision.

The book is available at :

Toronto - Mihrab publications - Br. Aliasgher Devjee

London - Alif Publications - Mr. Murtaza Bandali  
Dar es Salaam - Africa Federation Office  
New York - Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an - Mr. Sajjad Khalfan

The price of the book is US \$ 5.00, Canadian \$ 7.00 and in UK SP 3.50. Proceeds will go to the Nasimco Youth Project Funds.

A Youth Perspective Workshop was subsequently held on 6 April, 1996 to discuss the Survey Reports on youths and to fix priorities in correcting the situation. Parents of teenage children were also involved and the same night a special programme was held at the Bayview Centre, Toronto when the community was informed of the work done and strategies fixed. Speakers included Dr. Basheer Dato, Sadik Alloo, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina, Ahmed Bhalloo, Nazir Gulamhusein and Hujjatul Islam Sayed Mohamed Mosawi.

Following the publication of the book a series of eight workshops were conducted at the Bathurst Community Centre in Toronto during the Easter weekend, April 7-8, 1996. The workshops were conducted with a diverse group of people including community leaders, businessmen and professionals, educators, fathers and mothers of youths, young activists and the youths themselves.

About 10 to 15 persons participated in each workshop which was conducted by moderators who followed a prepared topic guide to facilitate discussions.

The final report is expected to contain a list of different action programs, that were suggested for implementation in the workshops.

(continued on page 22)



(...from page 21)

An attempt will be made to prioritize some programs based on their urgency of need.

A distinction will be made between programs that can be implemented in the short term or the long run and those that can be implemented at the local or Jamat level against the regional or NASIMCO level.

Whilst the ultimate goal is to address the needs and wants of youths, some programs may focus on young adults, others on the youths themselves and others will jointly involve adults and youths.

Some high priority programs earmarked for implementation and which can be implemented in the short run involve a mix of local and regional initiatives and are intended for both, the youths and young adults. These include:

#### **Program 1: Portable Islamic Courses**

These courses are expected to adopt a rigorous approach to Islamic studies. They are intended to be crash, weekend courses with each succeeding segment building on the preceding segment and all unified by a common theme. It has been recommended that they be offered on a bi-monthly basis, so six such courses will be prepared for the first year.

The portable courses are intended to supplement the majalis through rigorous analysis to equip youths as well as adults with the wherewithal to become good Muslims and effective advocates of Islam.

#### **Program 2: Effective Parenting**

This would be for both parents and ideally, would involve the development of a programmed course (self-instruction) that draws on western scholarship but embodies

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Islamic moral and ethical values. Instead of focusing solely on youths, this program will also involve parents thereby encouraging mutual observations.

#### **Program 3: Achievement Awards**

This would recognise excellence in such categories as advancement in Islamic knowledge, outstanding academic achievements and selfless community service.

#### **Program 4: Youth Empowerment**

There are number of possibilities that can be pursued ranging from setting aside a few positions for youths on the executive committee of Jamaats or to identify selected responsibilities that youths can be given a mandate to coordinate and implement.

Youth representation and involvement will hopefully transform them into agents who seek to draw other youths to the centres and motivate them towards communal activities.

#### **Program 5: Youth Discussion Group**

The groups will be a continuation of the workshops/focus groups discussions held in connection with the 'Youth Dimension' project. One major difference would be that these groups would be of youths, by youths and for youths. Youths themselves will be responsible for their organisation as well as for the development of an 'agenda'.

Youths were very enthusiastic about their recent experience with the workshops/focus groups. Evidently, this was the first time that an organised form was provided for youths to discuss their vision and needs. Continuation of this form can only create greater awareness of issues and may even provide the impetus for greater

youth involvement in the advancement of their cause.

#### **Program 6: Monitoring and Job Shadowing**

It is felt that career counselling is woefully inadequate at the graduate level. Moreover, it is imperative that some real world experience be injected into decisions about choices that youths have to make.

This program will operate more at the graduate rather than the undergraduate level. Youths who aspire to undertake specific graduate programs will be linked with community graduates in the same fields of specialisation. Graduates will serve as mentors providing guidance on the selection of graduate courses, evolving trends in the field, opportunities for job placement etc. to better prepare youths for the work environment.

After the final report with an extensive list of proposed action programs is prepared, some will be implemented at the regional level and others at the local level. After the action programme for prior implementation is identified, preliminary plans will be drawn and harmonised with broader guidelines.

When preliminary plans are ready, NASIMCO's (and probably other relevant organisations) input will be solicited. These will be incorporated in the revised plans. Some of the programs may have little, if any, budgetary requirements whilst others may require financial assistance.

A key consideration in the evaluation would be the allocation of funds necessary for the development and implementation of the program. Once action points are mobilised, the monitoring of results will provide the necessary data to analyse the new trends.



# IEB reaches out to the Bosnians

The Bosnian Desk of the Islamic Education Board (IEB) under the World Federation has received over 4200 letters from individuals in Bosnia and is now preparing a photo album of the Bosnians who regularly correspond.

The Bosnian Desk report for June, 1996 carries a number of letters from thankful Bosnians who appreciated receiving the book *Onda krenuh pravim putern* (Then I was Guided) by Dr. Muhammad Tejani. The book was specially translated into Bosnian.

The following excerpts from some letters reveal the true appreciation of readers:

"...Especially we are thankful to Dr. Tijani as he opened our eyes and enabled us to understand what has happened after the death of the Prophet (s.a.w.). You know that we are Bosnian Muslims and we had the same opinion about Shias as Tijani had when he met them for the first time. Ten of us have read his book and everyone came to the conclusion that we were not right...."

#### Sefik Hodzic, New Zealand

"...It is a very interesting book for every true Muslim because it searches for truth. I have learnt much about the ashabs of the Prophet (s.a.w.) and ahadis which

were hidden from us or misinterpreted...."

Mirzeta Velispahic, Germany"...I have read 'Then I was Guided' and discovered many unknown things in Islamic history. It gave me inspiration for further studies and research. Now if you can send me a copy of 'Nahjul Balagha - Sermons, letters and sayings of Hadrat Ali ibn Abi Talib' in Bosnian which I would like to read next".

#### Arslanagic Mersudin, Denmark

"...When I was reading this book my skin was shivering and it made me cry. I was crying for those who suffered a great injustice (Ahlulbait a.s.). I always believed that someone has made a mistake and took Islam to wrong direction but I did not have the opportunity to find out the truth. I am admitting that I know very little about Muhammad (s.a.w.) and Imam (a.s.)."

#### Hodzaj Gazmend, Macedonia

The interest shown amongst the Bosnians has encouraged the Islamic Education Board (IEB) to come up with new books, namely 'Muslimanski Zivot 22' in Bosnian 'Hadrat Fatima and Imam Husain a.s.', also in Bosnian, which is

currently being printed.

The book, 'Then I was Guided' has to date been distributed to 1800 Bosnians. A number of other books have been published in Bosnian and subsequently distributed by the IEB. The IEB has also widely distributed the Bosnian translation of the Holy Qur'an and the Nahjul Balagha which were published by the Bosnians themselves.

After the IEB decided to attend to the spiritual needs of the Bosnians who re-discovered their identity as Muslims under poignant circumstances, they were initially helped by a Bosnian woman, Mrs. Aminabai Mohamed Yusuf Walji, with translation work.

In January, 1994 Brother Semiz Seper, a Bosnian from Zenitsa in Bosnia-Herzegovina joined the IEB as Incharge of their Bosnian Desk. Semiz came to learn of the Shia Faith and accepted it whilst in the United Kingdom.

The Da'wah work to introduce the Shia Mazhab to the Bosnians has hence taken off with a gusto. Today there are pockets of Shias among Bosnians in Bosnia-Herzegovina and among Bosnian refugees all over the world. May Allah (s.w.t.) help and guide us to enlighten our Bosnian brothers!

### Muslims hold Idd dinner in Parliament

The Muslims of Toronto, Oshawa, Kingston, Ottawa and Montreal organised the first ever Idd dinner in the Parliament in Toronto on 2 May, 1996. Over 300 Muslims including about 100 politicians congregated in an amiable environment.

### IEB moves to a new location

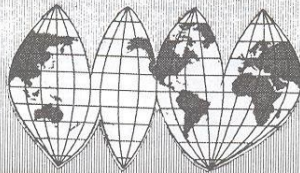
The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation has now moved to a new modern building in Middlesex, UK and those wishing to communicate may write to:

Alhaj Muhsin Jaffer (Chairman)  
Islamic Education Board

Dar al Tabligh, Jackets Lane, Harefield, Middlesex, UB9 6PZ, UK.  
Tel: 01923 823606 Fax: 01923 823132 email: IEB@tableegh.org.uk



## ELECTION



## ROUND-UP

## New York

The New York Jamaat held its elections on 20 April, 1995 during which the following were elected into office:-

Liyaqat Fazel	President
Dr. Shakir Mukhi	Vice President
Hasnain Aziz	Secretary
Mohamed R. Musleem	Secretary
Inayat Habib	Treasurer
Hussein Ismail	Treasurer
Sajjad Mukhi	Mukhi
Mustafa Shivji	Mukhi

The Committee members are:

Mohamed Taki Abdulhussein  
Hasnain Dharsi  
Haider Dinani  
Pyarali Haji  
Maqbool Ladak

The Chair Lady is Sis. Nishat Safdar Khalfan.

## Kampala

At the Annual General Meeting of the Kampala Jamaat held on 24 February, 1996 the following were elected into office:

Shabir Najfi	President
Shiraz P. Walji	Vice President
Hassan Hudda	Hon. Secretary
Mohamed Manji	Treasurer
Shafiq Punjani	Assistant Secretary
Roshan Ali Parpala	Assistant Secretary
Safder Rehmanl	Mukhi
Aarif Karim	Member
Mehboob Nanji	Member
Pyarali Khimji	Member
Yusuf Kermali	Member
Mustafa Kanji	Member
Raza Nasser	Member
Rifat Ali Shaikh	Member
Dr. Moledina	Member
Ebrahim Kassam	Member
Gulam Jamal	Member
Habib Walji	Member
Mohamed Punjani	Member

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## Birmingham

The following were elected into office on 24 March, 1996 during the Annual General Meeting of the Birmingham Jamaat:

Mohamed Bharwani	President
Hussein Merali	Vice President
Raza Ali Virji	Assistant Secretary
Mohsinali Meghjee	Hon. Secretary
Shokatali Dahya	Asst. Treasurer
Abbasali Khoja	Member
Mohamed Fazal	Member
Murtaza Sumar	Member
Pyarali Khimji	Member
Muslim Dharamsi	Member
Mehboob Visram	Member
Raza Abedi	Member
Haider Haji	Trustee
Muslim Khoja	Trustee
Aliunaki Kurji	Trustee
Akil Lalji	Trustee

## British Columbia

At the last Annual General meeting held on 21 April, 1996 the following Executive Committee was elected to serve the Shia Muslim Community of British Columbia for the 1996/97 term:

Jaffer A. Ladak	President
Hussein Bhojani	Vice President
Shaheen Rashid	Secretary
Mohamed Walji	Joint Secretary
Mohamed R.M. Dewji	Treasurer
Hammed Jagani	Joint Treasurer
Firoz Rashid	MRC (Mukhi)
Asger Ladak	Joint MRC

## Montreal

The following were elected into office on 5 May, 1996 during the Annual General Meeting of the Shiane Haidery International Association inc.:

Ahmed Khwaja	President
Razahussein Jeraj	Vice President
Gulamabbas Dhalla	Secretary
Jaffer Bhalloo	Treasurer
Javed I. Qureshi	Member
Hamid Panju	Member
Fayaz Mirza	Member

## Mauritius

The following were elected into office on 28 March, 1996 during the Annual General Meeting of the Mauritius Jamaat:

Haydarally Hasanali Pirbhai	President
Noormohamed A. Cassim	Vice President
Amirali Asser	Secretary
Iqbal Kassamally	Asst. Secretary
Inayat Hasanali Pirbhai	Treasurer
Hassan Y. Moosajee	Asst. Treasurer
Sajad Rajani	Member

NASIMCO  
appointments

The following appointments have been made by the NASIMCO Executive Council in February this year:

Religious Advisor

Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina

Legal Consultant/Advisor

Bashir Versi

Islamic Education Board

Maulana Dr. Liaqat Takim

Medical Advisory Board

Dr. Akberali Panju, Canada  
(Chairman)

Dr. Firoz Panjwani, USA  
Dr. Abbas Moledina, Western Canada

Zainabia Child Sponsorship Scheme  
and Special Projects

Br. Husseinali Chacha Paryani

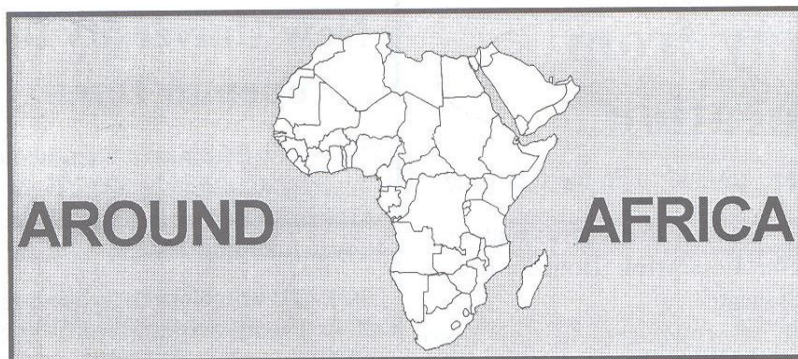
Ladies Council

Sr. Fatima Abdulrasul, Canada  
Sr. Nishat Khalfan, USA

Youth Council

Muntazir Moledina, Canada  
Sadik Alloo, USA





## Youths invited to Nakuru Summer Camp

The Tabligh Sub Committee of the Dar es Salaam Shia Ithnaasheri Jamaat has planned to organise an International Summer Camp in Nakuru, Kenya from 22 December, 1996 to 3 January, 1997.

Unlike the 1995 Summer Camp which was restricted to boys from East Africa only, the 1996 Camp is open to our youths from all over the world. It is expected that boys and girls from East Africa, Europe, Canada, USA, Dubai, Karachi, Bombay and Madagascar aged between 14-20 years will attend.

The primary objectives of the Summer Camp are:

**To provide a friendly atmosphere for learning Islamic issues and manners;**

**To instil in the youths, a habit of good Islamic lifestyle;**

**To raise awareness on religious and other relates issues;**

**To enlighten youths on basic medical issues;**

**To enable youths to develop public speaking skills;**

**To participate and enjoy outdoor and indoor sports;**

**To be briefed on various careers from practicing professionals;**

**To guide youths towards developing social interaction with other people from different backgrounds and cultures;**

**To help youths acquire emotional independence to avoid nostalgia;**

**To help youths develop a habit of self-reliance by doing their own laundry and cleaning and**

**To guide participating youths on observing punctuality by working to deadlines.**

## Criteria for selection of best students

The Best Student of the year awards are open to boys and girls who have appeared for National examinations and Overseas Board Examinations (GCE "O" Level, KCSE, etc. are all acceptable). All applications should follow the guidelines outlined below to stand a good chance of receiving one of the *BEST STUDENT* exemplary awards.

All applications must be handed to their respective Jamaat's Education Board representatives before the stipulated deadline.

### Guidelines for Awards

The best student will be selected by scoring the highest marks overall, as per the breakdown below. Students must strive to score well in all categories, as the top three are normally separated by only a handful of points. All statements must be backed up by relevant supporting documents like copies of certificates or authentic letters of confirmation.

Category	Marks ----	Boys	Girls
1. Performance in Final examinations		50	50
2. General performance and attendance in Madressa		20	20
3. Extra-Curricular (but must be non-sporting) activities like clubs and societies in school as well as within the Jamaat		20	25
4. Sporting activities		<u>10</u>	<u>05</u>
Total		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

When selections are made, special importance will be given to activities and projects which have helped the community, Government or the environment such as membership of wildlife and nature clubs, First Aid and similar health promoting organisations, Expeditions, Charitable organisations (e.g. GCG, Bilal Muslim Mission, Young Rotarian etc), Volunteers Corps, Madressa teacher/administrator or any other activity or project which in one way or another contributes to the development of our community.



## A step away from higher education..

The Education Board has the primary objective of ensuring that students are encouraged to seek further education. The Board invites students who seriously intend to pursue higher studies but are faced with financial bottlenecks to self-search themselves with the following questions:

- Are you about to join a university in 1996/97?

- Do you intend to pursue further education?

- Have you decided on your career plans?

- Have you selected the university/college?

- Is shortage of funds the main issue?

If the answers to all of the above question is "YES", then students

are advised to do the following:

1. Contact the Representative of the Education Board of your Jamaat;
2. Collect the Initial Loan Application Form;
3. Fill-in the Form and ensure that the affidavit has been filled;
4. Send the completed Form to the Secretariat of the Education Board.

For more information on career guidance, selection of universities and anything pertaining to further education do please contact:

**The Hon Secretary,  
Education Board  
P.O. Box 66545,  
Fax: 02 212211/337703/448948  
Nairobi, Kenya.**

## Haydari Madrasah honours students

The annual prize giving day of Haydari Madrasah in Nairobi was held on 18 February 1996, at the Ladies Imambara amidst parents, teachers and Madrasah children.

The programme started with recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Master Mohamed Hasnain Panju, a student of the Haydari Madrasah. The Master of Ceremony, Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, then welcomed guests and introduced the Guest of Honour Mulla Amir Karim who prior to settlement in Canada had served the Madrasah since its inauguration about 18 years ago. He said that Mulla Saheb had been a devoted worker, having served various Madaris in East Africa for over fifty years. In acknowledgement of his services, the Madrasah management had in the month of Ramadhan presented Mulla Karim with a special token

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of appreciation. The presentation was then done by the Chairman of Nairobi Jamaat, Zulfikar Khimji.

Children who performed well in the Madrasah during the year were then presented with gold, silver and bronze certificates by the guest of honour. The girl students received their certificates from the Jamaat's Chairlady, Mrs. Bilquis Karawalli. A total of 101 certificates were presented of which 60 were received by Girls and 41 by boys.

At the same function those who successfully took part in the Quiz Programme and Qur'an Khwani in Ramadhan were also presented with gifts. The Esmail Kassam Quiz trophy was won by the Abu Dhar team captained by Munir Chagpar.

The Programme ended with recitation of Dua followed by refreshments.

## New University to open in Dar

The Vignan Educational Foundation University located along Mbezi Beach in Dar es Salaam has announced plans to open from July, 1996.

The IMTU will follow the syllabus in all its Faculties prescribed by the Academic bodies of the UK, India, Australia, USA and Tanzania. IMTU has offered the following under graduate and post graduate programmes:

### MEDICAL

1. Undergraduate programme (Four and a half years) leading to M.B.B.S which is equivalent to M.D.
2. Dental Surgery (Four years) - leading to B.D.S.) and Bachelor of Pharmacy (B.Pharm).
3. Advanced diploma in Nursing Education (ADNE) and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.Sc. Nursing).

### TECHNICAL

Undergraduate Programme leading to Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.) in the following disciplines:

- A. Computers; B. Electrical and Electronics; C. Mechanical ; D. Communication and E. Civil

### MANAGEMENT COURSES

- A. Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)  
B. Master of Computer Applications (M.C.A.)

For further information contact:

Vignan Educational Foundation,  
C/O. Indian High Commission  
P.O. Box 2684, Dar es Salaam.

All courses will be conducted in English. Hostel facilities will be available for boys and girls separately.

Tel: 255 51 28197/8

Fax: 255 51 46747/46341

Fees for application forms and prospectus: U.S. \$ 50 or T.Shs. 15,000/= . Bankers Draft/Cheque are payable to Vignan Educational Foundation.



# Are parents a thorn in the flesh?

## Youths ponder, think and call for a Junior Council

Many youths from around East Africa participated in the Youths Jamboree held in Nairobi during the Easter holidays to coincide with the Supreme Council Conference.

Youths from Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Mombasa braved the dusty routes to the "Green City Under the Sun" to join their hosts in attending the Education Board meeting, the opening ceremony of the 54th Session of the Supreme Council, the Education Board Quiz and the 1st Model Supreme Council (MSC). The Education Board organised all of the youth activities under their convenors Shabir Alidina and Mohamedarif Suleman.

The quiz, which was conducted by Mohamedarif Suleman, introduced a new range of questions from the living as well as the physical sciences and other fields of education. The pattern of competition, too, was unique from those that have been in use so far. Each Jamaat was represented by five members, all of whom competed individually and separately from the others. The winner of each event was awarded a gold medal, the runner up a silver medal and the third-placed, a bronze medal. The Jamaat with the highest haul of medals was declared the winner of the event.

The following were the results:

**GAME 1**      **GOLD**  
*Hussein Sumar (Dar es Salaam)*  
**SILVER**  
*Shaukat Lakha (Mombasa)*

**BRONZE**  
*Qassin Abbas (Nairobi)*

**GAME 2**      **GOLD**  
*Mohamedraza Khaki (Mombasa)*

**SILVER**  
*Mustafa Dinani (Dar es Salaam)*

**BRONZE**  
*Mohamedabbas Merali (Nairobi)*

**GAME 3**      **GOLD**  
*Mohamed Peera (Dar es Salaam)*

**SILVER**  
*Kazim Pirmohamed (Nairobi)*

**BRONZE**  
*Kumail Bashir (Arusha)*

**GAME 4**      **GOLD**  
*Murtaza Akber (Dar es Salaam)*

**SILVER**  
*Abbas Bandali (Nairobi)*

**BRONZE**  
*Shabbir Sadak (Mombasa)*

**GAME 5**      **GOLD**  
*Gulamabbas Peera (Mombasa)*

**SILVER**  
*Zaheerabbas Kassam (Nairobi)*

**BRONZE**  
*Abbas Bashir (Arusha)*

With the above results, Dar es Salaam were declared the overall winners followed by Mombasa, Nairobi and Arusha.

The most interesting event was the Model Supreme Council (MSC). The event, the concept of which was borrowed from the world-famous Model United Nations (MNU), proved to be an appropriate way of extracting useful ideas and views from the youths. In fact, the Chairman of the event, Mohamedarif Suleman and the Secretary of the Board, Shabir Alidina both felt that the

performance was indeed commendable taking into consideration that this was only the inaugural year for the MSC.

Each Jamaat had to field three delegates - a main speaker, a subsidiary speaker, and an observer. They were each presented with a motion by the Board which they had to defend. Deliberations were then allowed and eventually the motion was put to vote.

Hosts Nairobi, comprising of Ali Hassanali, Rizwan Janmohamed and Munir Chagpar spoke on "The Youth Crisis is the Elders' Doing". In their presentation and subsequent deliberations, the delegates came up with the following resolutions (proposed resolution numbers 2 and 3 were defeated in the voting stage):

1. Parents should discuss intimate subjects with their children. There is a communication gap at present;
2. There is discrimination against girls when organising activities. They are not much involved;
3. It is very necessary to allow the free interaction of our boys and girls;
4. Elders are not setting good examples;
5. Similar to the qualities of an Imam e Jamaat, a leadership code is necessary. Anyone not falling in this category should not be allowed to lead;
6. Maulanas are confusing our minds;
7. Western materialism should be used as tools to achieve better lives;

(continued on page...28)



## ...Youths put on their thinking caps

[...continued from page 27]

8. We should do away with rituals having no Islamic correlation and those that are a pure waste of resources; and
9. We must encourage a general spirit of education and innovation amongst the youths.

With the exception of the two proposed resolutions that were squashed, the youths were in consensus that the youth crisis was the parents' doing (There was a unanimous 4 - 0 vote to this effect).

Arusha, who were apparently confused on matters relating to procedure, presented a high voltage paper on "**Madressas are highly successful**". Unfortunately, because of lack of resolutions, the discussion was abandoned prematurely. However, some of their points were:

1. Madressas set the base for further learning.
2. One of the reasons why our community is united is because of the Madressas.
3. Madressas give multiple education.

When it came to Dar es Salaam, who spoke on the motion "**The Education Board of the KSISC is ineffective**", delegates Shabbar Dhalla, Shabbir Hassam and Jabir Rajani spoke on the following:

1. The Board needs to publicise through available media and

through own sources.

2. Inadequate career guidance on the part of the Board.
3. Very few scholarships have been given out in the last 12 years.
4. Khums money should be used partially in funding the Education Trust Fund.
5. Long procedures at the Board kills ambition.
6. There is obvious discrimination against females when awarding scholarships.
7. Career guidance remains to be poor.

Incidentally, this subject was purposely put up by the Board to invigorate thought and to receive feedback. The motion went through unanimously by 4 - 0.

The boys from the Kenya coast, Mombasa were impressive as well, as they eloquently spoke on "**Female Higher Education is a must**". Their resolutions were:

1. Higher number of scholarships should be given to girls.
2. A female Board should be formed to cater for the educational needs of our young women. This motion, too, went through unanimously.

It was resolved unanimously at the end of the session that a permanent Junior Council be formed, whereby youths can involve themselves with pertinent issues and influence decisions affecting them.

### Apologies.....

...to Husein Rashid, the Chairman of the Education Board and even moreso to his wife.

*In the last issue of the Samachar we carried Br. Hussein's profile without details of his family. To put facts right, Hussein is happily married and has three sons. Now, this probably is one apology that Husein could have well done without but surely not his wife. Who says the Samachar is male oriented?*

Editor.

## Africa Federation supports Tanzania Ship Disaster Fund

The Africa Federation donated Tanzania Shillings 12 million to the M.V. Bukoba Disaster Fund which was launched by the Tanzania Government after the ship plying between Bukoba and Mwanza on Lake Victoria capsized on 21 May, 1996 with about 900 passengers on board.

The Fund was launched by the Tanzania Government to assist survivors and to compensate the families of those who died in this maritime tragedy, the like of which has never occurred in East Africa. It is estimated that about 600 people died in the catastrophe.

The money was presented by the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani to the Tanzania Prime Minister, Frederick Sumaye at the Prime Minister's office. The Mwanza Jamaat too was actively involved in moral and financial support during rescue operations.

The community was also represented at a special religious ceremony organised at the Dar es Salaam National Stadium by the Tanzania Government to pray for the souls of the deceased. Communities of all the major denominations were represented at this ceremony which drew a large congregation which included many Government leaders and heads of diplomatic missions. For the K.S.I. Jamaat of Dar es Salaam, Syed Mohammed Naqvi prayed and sought recompense and forgiveness for the deceased from the Almighty.

Two members of the community, Mohamed Pyarali Rajabali Visram(40) of Mwanza and Areef Kassamali Jaffer Khimji (26) of Dar es Salaam died in the ill-fated vessel. May Allah (s.w.t.) rest the soul of the two deceased along with all those who died in the tragedy in eternal peace. Amen.



## Chairman attends Madagascar annual meeting

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani along with Hussein Alibhai Walji, Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat and Dr. Asgher Moledina, Chairman of Kampala Jamaat travelled to Antananarivo, Madagascar to attend the annual meeting of the Conseil Regional Des Khojas Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaats De L' Ocean Indien which was held from 22 to 24 March, 1996.

Other dignitaries from overseas who attended the meeting were Hujjatul Islam Sayyid Murtaza Kashmiri, the special representative of our Marja Ayatullah Al-Ozema As-Sayyid Ali Husseini Seestani, Gulamali Dhanji of India and Sayyid Mir Taher Ali of Imamia Mission, Hyderabad.

During the run of the meeting, the opening ceremony of the new wing of the Ebrahim Haji Memorial Musafirkhana was performed jointly by Sayyid Kashmiri and the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani.

The new wing of the Musafirkhana has 15 rooms, each of which is fully furnished and has attached bathrooms. The rooms have been donated by various mo'mineen there.

## Supreme Council warns on misallocation and misuse of funds

The Africa Federation has reminded the public at large that it is only the Federation which can authorise individuals or institutions to collect funds.

In a circular issued in May this year, the Federation advised members that the financial needs of the Community have risen particularly in the fields of housing, education, commercial loans, medical and welfare assistance. The increase in operational costs has resulted because of spiralling inflation and because of the community's expanding population which has resulted in more demands for basic or essential amenities.

The Federation has rightly cautioned members to sincerely and devotedly safeguard the interest of their own Organisation rather than making individual or joint payments to unauthorised personnel or groups. Payments made to the Federation for Khums (the collection for which the Chairman, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani possesses a valid Ijaza from the Marja-e-Taqlid) or for any other purpose are braced with a guarantee of being utilised appropriately with donors also having the facility of knowing where and how their funds are actually spent.

The Federation has warned that paying to unofficial individuals or groups has a further disadvantage in that funds could be misappropriated or be used for a cause contradicting our priorities or principles.

The same circular states that resources of Constituent Jamaats of the Federation should be used, preferably for the benefit of members of their own Jamaats before being expended elsewhere.

**Have any reservations? I wonder why. Nevertheless the next time you want to donate and are uncertain, talk to the Africa Federation Secretariat. They will be keen to advise you without any compulsions, not because of personal gain or glory but because they care for the Federation and its members. Had it not been for such transparency and their untiring efforts to preserve and uplift religious, moral and living standards of members and of the country's population at large, would the Africa Federation have survived the 50 years?**

Editor

## THREE THINGS....

- Three things to govern --- temper, tongue and conduct;
- Three things to commend --- thrift, industry and promptness;
- Three things to despise --- cruelty, arrogance and ingratitude;
- Three things to cultivate --- courage, affection and gentleness;
- Three things to wish for --- health, good friends and contentment;
- Three things to admire --- dignity, gracefulness and intellectual power;
- Three things to give -- alms to the needy, comfort to the sad or sick and appreciation to the worthy.



# Historical Zanzibar mosque for reconstruction

The Mabuluu Mosque (Msikiti Mabuluu) was a very famous mosque in Zanzibar especially renowned for its adorable site and simple architectural design. With the water from the Indian Ocean splashing against three of its sides and the high tides always being below the mosque floor, the mosque was like a peninsula. This is now only history in the minds of those who had actually seen the mosque.

The mosque was built of lime, stone and red soil by the side of Holis Road (now Kamuzu road). The old water pipe still continues to supply water to the mosque which has now to be reconstructed.

The mosque was built in 1880 by one Gulamhussein Mohamed Walli Pardhan. It is estimated that the mosque could not accommodate more than 30 people, the users mostly being passers-by, especially those from the northern districts of Zanzibar who came to town on their errands.

In 1920, there was a plan to demolish the mosque for the expansion of the main road but fortunately it was saved. The mosque was eventually demolished in 1966.

Many people, muslims and non-muslims have shown interest in reconstructing the mosque at the same site. The President of Zanzibar, Dr. Salmin Amour, considering the importance of the issue, set up a sub-committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Kadhi of Zanzibar with the following obligations:

- \* to prepare a site plan for the mosque portraying the original sentiments and to accommodate about 300 people;
- \* to estimate construction costs;
- \* to co-ordinate the efforts of all those who have shown interest in building this mosque or contributing to the building of the mosque;
- \* to collect funds from donors and to then complete construction.

The new mosque is to be extended by 10 metres from its present position so as to allow any road extensions in future. Those wishing to have more details can contact:

**Mwarab Khalfan,**  
P. O. Box 1131, Zanzibar  
Tel. (054) 31567 or (054) 32185.



FRONT ELEVATION OF THE PROPOSED MOSQUE

## Notebook .....

### Arusha hosts Teachers seminar

The Yadgare Murtazawi Madressa in Arusha organised a Teacher's training Programme on 9 and 10 March 1996. The workshop, which was conducted by Dr. M.S. Rahim from London, also drew participants from Nairobi.

### Mulla Asgher visits the Nairobi Haydari Madrasah

The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer accompanied by his Vice President Manzoorali Kanani and the Chairman of Nairobi Jamat, Zulfikarali Khimji visited the Haydari Madrasah on 22 March 1996 after Maghrebein prayers. Mulla Saheb addressed the children about the importance of acquiring religious education and advised them to take maximum advantage of the madrasah.

He also advised the teachers to avoid frustration and to discharge their duties with full dedication, reminding them that their good work would be duly recompensed by Almighty Allah.

### Haydari Madrasah adopts different 'Exams' approach

Due to the limited number of teaching days in a year, the Haydari Madrasah has resolved to discontinue with the system of having two tests and annual exams. Henceforth the Madrasah Management has decided to have one test in July and the final exams in November.

### New Islamic Organisation formed in Mauritius

A new independent body, the Ahle Bait (A.S.) Propagation Organisation has been formed in Port Louis, Mauritius with the main objectives of propagating Islam in line with the teachings of Ahle Bait (A.S.). The new Organisation intends to import a variety of books for display in a library which will also be open to our Ehle sunnat brothers.

At a General Assembly of this new organisation held on Sunday 14 April 1996, the constitution was adopted. For the period 1996-1998, the Organisation is made up of the following members:

Raza Hussain Kassamally Esmael  
Rajabally Gulam Husen  
Shabbir Husein Rajani  
Goolam Husein Kassamally Esmael  
Sajjadhusain Rajani  
Hassan Abbas Adamjee  
Hassen Moosajee

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Asst. Secretary  
Treasurer  
Member  
Member



# Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Rajeeon

## Marhum Ahmad Abdulkarim Gulamhussein



Turmoil in Somalia that led to the evacuation of our entire community in 1991 will ever remain embodied in our memories. With it the name of **late Ahmed Abdulkarim Gulamhussein**, Vice President of Mogadishu Jamaat will be fondly remembered for his active role in moments of crisis.

Haji Ahmed passed away in Nairobi on 13 December, 1995 where he had gone to, from Mombasa, for medical treatment. Born in Merca, Somalia in 1936, he acquired his primary education in Merca Government School where the medium of education was in Italian and Arabic. From his father, Mulla Haji Abdulkarim Gulamhussein he studied Gujarati and Diniyat.

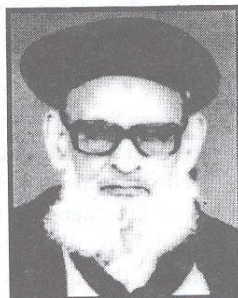
In 1950, Haji Ahmed opened a tailoring and textile shop in Merca and in 1955, he moved over to Mogadishu to open a similar business which he ran until the Somalia evacuation in 1991.

From 1984 till 1991, Haji Ahmed served as Vice President of Mogadishu Jamaat. He was a silent social worker, known for his humility and smiling face and was always frank and firm in his opinions.

## Marhum Akber Fazal Dhirani

**Late Akber Fazal Dhirani** passed away in Dar es Salaam on 25 March, 1996. He was an active social worker and served the community in various capacities. He was the Hon. Treasurer of the Supreme Council from 1983-1986 and worked for Bilal Muslim Mission as well as Mehfil-e-Murtaza, Karachi. He was also the administrator of Murtaza School in Karachi.

Marhum was amicable and humorous by nature and will be remembered for his selflessness and dedication. May Allah (s.w.t.) rest his soul in eternal peace.



## Hujjatul Islam Maulana Syed Aqa Haider

shock and words fail to express the deep grief felt by the Community around the world. His passing away has indeed cast a cloud of gloom and sorrow over the entire Shia Ithnaasheri Community.

The news of his death, which occurred when the 54th Council Session was being held in Nairobi, hushed participants and immediately a Surah-e-Fateha was recited for the deceased who provided guidance to members on so many religious issues.

Maulana Syed Aqa Haider was born at Gagsona near Meerut. He obtained his earlier religious education at Babul Ilm, Nawgavan (UP) under the able tutorship of Maulana Syed Sibre Nabi Saheb. Later for higher religious education, the late Aqa Haider went to Nazmia Arabic College in Lucknow. Here he studied under such great scholars as Marhoom Janab Najmul Millat and Marhoom Janab Syed Zuhoor Hassan.

The late Aqa Haider was an active teacher in India and he was recognised as being amongst the leading Ulema there. He rendered services to Babul Ilm for 26 years before travelling to East Africa in 1958. His first appointment was in Tanga after which he provided illustrious services to the Dar es Salaam Jamaat for many years. Then he was transferred to Mombasa where he served for many years until his retirement due to old age.

The late Aqa Haider was a man of *Taqwa*. Despite his erudition and profound knowledge, he maintained a modest personality and an amiable disposition. Moreover, as a truly God-fearing person, he minced no words on religious verdicts. He also led congregational prayers and 'Namaz-e-Mayyit', recited 'Nikah' and performed 'Istakhara'.

May Allah (s.w.t.) rest his soul in eternal peace.

## Marhum Hassanali Nathoo

**Late Hassanali Nathoo** of Zanzibar passed away in Dar es Salaam on 13 April, 1996.

He is well known for his services to the Zanzibar Jamaats. At the time of his death, he was the President of the K.S.I. Kuwwatul Islam Jamaat of Zanzibar where he handled religious and social functions.

The sad news of the passing away of **Hujjatul Islam wal Muslimeen, Maulana Syed Aqa Haider** on 7 April, 1996 in Mombasa was received with deep

Haji Ahmed played a pivotal role when a delegation from the Supreme Council of Africa Federation led by Haji Habib Mulji visited Somalia in 1990.

A deeply religious person, Haji Ahmed was a Haafize Qur'an and in absence of the Resident Alim, he was among the few Community members who led congregational prayers- *Namaze Jamaat*, in Mogadishu and later in Mombasa.

His presence in Majalis, sitting in front raptuously and attentively listening to the Zakir on the Mimbar provided reassurance to Zakirs. According to Maulana Shahid Raza, resident Alim of Mombasa Jamaat, the sight of Haji Ahmed in Majalises always encouraged him and other Zakirs.

Haji Ahmed leaves behind a widow and four children who all reside in Mombasa. Mulla Mahmoud, one son of Haji Ahmed, is also a well known Zakir. May Allah (s.w.t.) rest the soul of the deceased in eternal peace.

## Marhum Mahmoud Nasser Rattansi

**Late Mahmoud Nasser Rattansi** died in London in April, 1996 after a long illness. He was born and studied in Dar es Salaam where he served as Jamaat President for one term. In the 1940s he proceeded to Beirut and London where he qualified as a lawyer.

He was active in politics in Tanganyika's pre-independence period and after that was an elected Member of Parliament for TANU. He also served for many years as the Country's Ambassador to the Hague and was a good cricketer. May Allah (s.w.t.) rest his soul in eternal peace.



# Nairobi Council Session sets heart on Communal progress

The 54th Supreme Council Meeting was held at the Lavington Mosque in Nairobi, Kenya from 5 to 7 April, 1996. The Conference was attended by over 100 participants amongst whom included the Presidents and Councillors from many constituent Jamaats plus local and overseas invitees. The overseas invitees included Mulla Asgher M.M. Jaffer, President of the World Federation along with other guests from Pakistan, India, Europe, Dubai and the USA.

For the first time, the meeting commenced in the afternoon so as to enable deliberations to be completed well in time for the participants to return home. The Supreme Council Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani who is currently serving his third term, however reserved his key-note address for the night session which officially marked the opening of the meeting.

For the first time in the history of the Supreme Council, ladies participated and actively took part in the deliberations of the session.

Following the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, the Chairman of Nairobi Jamaat, Zulfikar Khimji welcomed participants to Nairobi, saying that preparations for the Session were essentially handled by a young organising committee under the Chairmanship of Mohamed Merali.

The Council Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani then took to the mike to deliver his key-note address. He thanked the congregation, particularly the overseas invitees, for gracing the occasion with their presence and then acknowledged the contributions made to the community by various members who had passed away during the course of the year since the last meeting.

The Chairman then accentuated on the fact that the Community maintains a fine relationship with our Marja Ayatullah Al-Ozema Sayyed Ali Al-

Husayni As-Seestani who, he said, keenly follows the activities and progress of our community.

He then touched on the subject of economic upliftment, a subject which was later also tabled for discussion. He said that in wake of the changing times, when the world is making progress by leaps and bounds, the time has come for community members to seriously consider branching out from traditional businesses to more refined and professional business infra-structures.

He said that in the current age of scientific and technological advancements, it is imperative to seek knowledge to excel in one's business and said that amidst serious competition one needs to be ardently involved in the quest for money with due consideration to Islamic values and culture. He said that traditional businesses like that of shopkeepers are and will become even more vulnerable to competition.

He said that community members in East Africa, especially in Kenya and Tanzania are facing a serious problem with increased rents. He said the increases can be countered by building more properties and pointed out that in East Africa about 700 to 800 houses are needed to alleviate the housing problem.

He said housing schemes in Karachi, under the Zainabia Trust and in India through the World Federation have in the past been undertaken with success with some financiers even coming from East Africa. He proposed that a building scheme be launched in East Africa to be undertaken in phases over a period of between five to ten years.

The Chairman then reiterated his Eid message to the community which called for '*simplicity*' and '*education*'. He said that with the steep increase in the cost of living, many community members are lumbered with financial

problems and economic hardships to an extent that they even experience difficulties in affording basic amenities.

In wake of this situation he decried the tendency amongst some members to be unnecessarily extravagant especially during occasions like engagements and marriages. He said such extravagance also contradicted Islamic teachings which prescribe simplicity and frugality.

On education, he commended the efforts of the Education Board in encouraging youths towards higher education. He was also appreciative on the fact that many Jamaats in Africa and around the world are encouraging youths towards seeking higher education. On funds for education, he said the establishment of the Foundation Fund would ease pressure in soliciting finance to sponsor youths seeking higher education.

Mohamedbhai then expressed satisfaction at the performance of Madrasahs describing the situation as encouraging. He said that to encourage efficiency the tabligh section has been divided to cater for gents and ladies separately.

The Chairman however expressed concern on the timings of Madrasahs saying that timings should not interfere with the students' school homework time because 'burning the candle at both ends' would exhaust the students energies and hamper overall progress.

On tabligh, he said that the campaign to build Shia Centres is progressing well and referred to new centres near Mombo, Arusha, Kigoma and Dar es Salaam. He said the fact that these centres are run by the indigenous population would help in consolidating and spreading our Faith.

He then drew the attention of member Jamaats on the suggestion to form

(continued on page 33)



(...from page 32)

independent arbitration committees to resolve discords and dissensions.

The Chairman also revisited the Dubai Sports Festival and congratulated Dubai Jamaat for hosting the event successfully despite the large number of participants from around the world. He said in addition to the sports festival it was encouraging to see youths involved in mind-boggling debates or quiz competitions and in similar other productive activities.

The Chairman expressed delight on the first time participation of ladies in the Council session and called upon them to air their views and opinions with zeal and ebullience.

Mohamedbhai then talked of the role of elders in the community. He appealed to them to share their wealth of experience with the community and identified three areas where they can be of assistance. These are:

- 1) to assist in sorting out differences in opinion amongst community groups or members;
- 2) to assist in match-making, especially for those above the prime marriage age and
- 3) to help in sorting out rifts in marriages, especially in Jamaats where there are no Marriage reconciliation boards.

The Chairman appealed to members to take the activities of the community more at heart and to be more involved, saying that "everybody has a role to play." He also emphasised on the need for continuous harmony amongst regional federations and organisations.

The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher then presented the Huseini Medal to Husseinbhai Daya Premji of Moshi for his exemplary contribution and involvement in improving housing facilities (including shops and a sports complex) in Moshi.

The Supreme Council Chairman then pinned the other Huseini medal to Bwana Ali Hussein Sheriff of Arusha for his untiring efforts in spreading and propagating Islam. His involvement has been extensive from Jamaat to

## ...The 54th Council Session

Council level. He has been involved in madrasahs, the Bilal Muslim Mission activities and along with reciting majlises has also delivered many religious and contemporary moral-building sermons at different Jamaats in three languages. Bwana Ali has also been actively involved towards promoting Educational standards within the community and in the establishment and subsequent support of Shia centres.

Both recipients thanked the Federation for the award which they said would inspire them further towards serving the community. Bwana Ali said that what always encouraged him to serve the community is the constant and sincere leadership which has filtered into constituent jamaats. He said the fact that our leaders give so much of guidance and sacrifice to see that the community is united, is an inspiration to one and all to serve the community vehemently.

The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher then addressed the gathering. He conveyed greetings from the Marja, Ayatullah Seestani who he said, had high respect for the Khoja Shia Ithna-asheris world-wide. He called on members to be loyal and faithful to him.

After congratulating the winners of the Husieni medals for their exemplary efforts to serve the community, Mulla emphasised on the need for unity, which he said has been the hallmark behind the success of our community world-wide. He emphasised that differences in opinion are bound to arise in any 'thinking' and 'aggressive' community but such differences should not lead to divisions.

He said the changing times has led to an unprecedented dispersal and diaspora by members who are now spread all over the world. He said that when the WF was established in 1976, it was not then comprehended that it would grow and transcend geographic and communal boundaries spreading out to countries like Thailand, Russia, Iraq, Iran, India and Pakistan amongst others.

Referring to the example of the Ottoman Empire, he said that history has proved that many organisations which

grow fast, tend to go weak at the centre. In the case of the WF he said that a constant fear lurched in his mind that in the WF's ardent zeal to expand, he would lose sight of that community, the Khoja Shia Ithna asheris, that gave birth to the WF and continue to nurse and nurture it. He said that whenever he begun to or was led to lose sight of the centre, it was the Africa Federation which reminded him of the centre that had to be looked at and preserved.

Without mincing words, Mulla said that the Khoja Shia Ithna-asheris should be controlled by Khojas despite the fact that our service is open to society at large. He referred to an extract from the book "Facing Mount Kenya" written by Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta which mentions of a rainy day when an elephant sought shelter in a hut belonging to a rabbit. The rabbit, in good faith, allowed the elephant to put its trunk in the house but by morning time the elephant was in the house and the rabbit out!

He said that despite the adverse political situations in many countries, the community has continued to seek and achieve better living standards for its members. He said our strong infrastructure has and will live for the people and that even when times are bad, the courage of the community to serve will not wane.

Dignitaries from overseas were then welcomed to speak a few words and amongst those who spoke were Baker Visram, the Secretary of Madagascar Jamat, Sibtain Panjwani who represented the European Council of Jamats, Anver Rajpar, President of Mehfile Murtaza in Karachi, Umedali Merchant, President of Mumbai Jamat, Mir Mirza, President of Hyderabad Jamat and Mohsin Dhalla from Boston, USA.

During the Session, religious (tabligh), social, welfare, educational and general planning issues were discussed with annual reports from various committees then being adopted.

The yearly audited accounts and budget were also approved at the Session.

(continued on page 34)



The annual reports adopted were:

Secretariat's report

Tabligh Reports

Bilal Muslim Mission - Tanzania

Bilal Muslim Mission - Kenya

Settlement Welfare Board - Dar es Salaam

Education Board - Nairobi

Central Health Board - Dar es Salaam

Sociology Committee - Dar es Salaam

Federation Samachar - Dar es Salaam

Census and Statistical Planning Committee (CENSTA) - Dar es Salaam

Sports Council

The discussion on economic upliftment was discussed at length and it was agreed that a committee of dedicated professionals conversant with the subject be appointed to chart out an action plan.

On the resolution by Moshi Jamat calling for a college to be built in Tanzania to save on costs for sending students overseas, it was agreed that a committee of educational experts would look into the viability of establishing a college to cater for higher education.

The Sportsman of the Year award was won by Abbas Akram of Nairobi whilst Asif Karim was presented with a special award to acknowledge his representing Kenya in the Cricket World Cup. Asif is a past recipient of the Sportsman of the Year trophy.

The independence of the communal media either through the establishment of an independent newspaper or in the form of a Community magazine by the Supreme Council was felt premature. It was left for individuals to take this up.

The hosts put their hearts out to make the event a successful and memorable one whilst Hyundai Motors and Crown Bureau de Change also hosted dinners for participants. The organising committee consisted of: Mohamed Merali (Chairman), Muslim Khimji (Secretary and reception), Zahid Dato (Reception), Iqbal Kalyan (Finance), Salim Dato and Bashir Kalyan (Catering), Amiral Khimji (N.J.S.C.), Inayat Firdousi (Transport), Mohamed Kassamali (Accommodation), Fazleabbas Chandoo (Volunteers), Ebrahim Fidahusein (Musafir Khana) and Dr. N. Moledina (Medical).

In all it was a memorable session.

**Federation Samachar**

## Education Board meeting gets down to brass tacks

The Annual Meeting of the Education Board of the Supreme Council [EBS] was held in Nairobi on 5 April, 1996. The meeting was well attended and amongst the dignitaries present were Mulla Asgherali Jaffer, President of the World Federation, Mohamed Dhirani, President of the Africa Federation, Sayid Mourtadha Mourtadha of the Al Rasul Al Akram Islamic Centre, Sayyid Kashmiri, the Representative of Ayatullah Seestani, Mir Taher Ali Khan, President of Imam Zamana Mission and Mohammed Soleimani, the Deputy Ambassador of Iran in Kenya.

After recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Mulla Mohamed Kassamali, the Chairman of Nairobi Jamat, Zulfikar Khimji welcomed the participants to the meeting and commended the Education Board for its efforts towards promoting education within the community.

The Chairman of the Education Board, Husein Rashid, after thanking the Supreme Council for the co-operation afforded to his Board, said that the information sought on loan application forms was previously inadequate and new loan application forms have now been designed. On funds, he said that whilst there is a shortage of funds to cater for new applications repayments from past students has been poor. He suggested that the Council Secretariat take over the defaulters files for following up.

He said the EBS also felt that there is inadequate career guidance for students and that female education still received lesser importance. To this effect he said the EBS will arrange a 4 - 6 week crash course for Career Guidance Counsellors and will advertise for a Careers Counsellor in Kenya. He also called upon Jamats to organise seminars to find out the requirements of the Community especially on the issue of female participation.

He said the EBS is encouraging students to undertake courses locally where they are available and is also working on a project of introducing an education insurance scheme for the benefit of the community.

He thanked all donors and the organising committee of the 54th Council Session for arrangements made, especially for students from Arusha, Dar es Salaam and Mombasa.

The Supreme Council Chairman, Mohammed Dhirani expressed satisfaction

with the efforts of the Education Board but was discontent on the fact that his appeal for 50 scholarships raised during the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Council in Dar es Salaam last year, has so far drawn only 14 donors and another two from the World Federation. He said that he may be compelled to embark on a tour to raise more funds.

The Chairman said that the Education Foundation Fund has been created and would hopefully ensure regular income for the financial needs of students. He said that the EBS insurance project would also assist towards this Fund.

He also stressed on the importance of keeping an updated census of students and to improve career guidance and called upon the EBS to seek grants and scholarships from international organisations whilst discouraging students from attending disreputable colleges.

Finally he requested that Madressa timings be appraised and if need be, to be changed to enable students pursue both secular and religious education harmoniously.

The World Federation (WF) President, Mulla Asgherali Jaffer opined that the choice of career/course by our students is not satisfactory and required an indepth follow-up by the EBS.

He said that the WF had in the past awarded direct scholarships to 2 or 3 girls to undertake specific courses in the UK but confirmed that direct scholarship/loan to students from Africa will not continue in the future.

He stressed on the importance of courses on information science & technology and expressed surprise that no feedback was received from the main jamats on Career Materials sent by the WF in 1992/93

To avoid problems for students, he requested the KSISC to offer loans to cover full tuition fees. He also emphasised that adequate securities for repayment be kept from families and guarantors and reiterated that girls be given a fair chance to pursue higher education whilst maintaining their hijab.

At the end of the meeting the Supreme Council agreed to take over the defaulter's files from the EBS thereby leaving the Board with the primary task of boosting educational standards in the community.



# Imam Husain's Martyrdom

*--marking Muharram and drawing lessons*

*"And reckon not those who are killed in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive and are provided sustenance from their Lord; rejoicing in what Allah has given them out of His grace ..."*

3/169,170.

As is customary, Muslims in general and Shia Muslims in particular commemorate the tragedy of Karbala - the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) on 10 Muharram 61 A.H./680 A.D.

This year, as in previous years, our Jamaats world-wide commemorated the tragedy by organising majalis, duas, prayers, lectures and debates whilst some Jamaats, especially the larger ones, organised processions on the eve of Ashura. The Ashura processions, when organised well, help to raise awareness amongst the public about how, why and when the martyrdom took place and the lessons to be derived therefrom.

In Dar es Salaam, the Boy Scouts Group once again put on public display a miniature representation of the battleground which drew the attention of many onlookers. Those who had questions were given apt answers and with tapes of the Holy Quran being played in the background, the model successfully portrayed the mournful occasion.

On Ashura day some brothers donated blood to hospitals, others indulged in charitable work whilst some visited and comforted the sick. Yet others abstained from food till late afternoon whilst others recited amaals.

The revolution of Imam Husain (a.s.) is the only revolution in the history of Islam whose memory is

still as alive and fresh to the Muslims in the present time as it was to Muslims in the past. It has enriched consciousness by its slogans, ideas, morality and noble aims whilst other revolutions, however successful at the outset, are eventually consigned to the oblivious.

To this effect the Holy Qur'an refers, "... then as for the scum, it passes away as a worthless thing, and as for that which benefits people, it tarries in the earth; thus Allah sets forth parables". 13/17.

To appreciate fully the ultimate sacrifice of Imam Husain (a.s.), one should construe the Kerbala event in the context of the concept of martyrdom. Like all other Islamic concepts which are inter-related, martyrdom can only be understood in the light of the doctrine of tawhid (monotheism), meaning the full submission to the will of Allah (s.w.t.). Thus Imam Husain (a.s.) willingly sacrificed his life for the cause of truth for the pleasure of Allah (s.w.t.).

The Imam was unrelenting in his resolve to proceed to Kufa despite all odds. He did not try to mobilise any military support and did not heed to warnings from relatives and friends not to embark on his mission even after he knew of the slaying of his emissary to Kufa, his cousin, Muslim bin Aqil.

Fully aware of the situation and the consequences, Imam Husain (a.s.) had a strategy to bring about a revolution that would eternally arouse the sentiments of the Muslim community which would also always inspire them towards

the right path. In the final analysis, he was aware that a victory achieved through military strength and might would be transient whilst a victory achieved through suffering and sacrifice would be everlasting for it would leave an indelible imprint on man's consciousness.

Today there is a vast effort to liberate man from both, the internal and the external forces of oppression. Since Imam Hussain's message transcends all barriers of religion, race and colour for it is a universal expression of freedom with his heritage being our contribution to man's emancipation.

His words at the time of calamity and adversity still echo, *"I look upon death as but felicity (of martyrdom) and I regard life amongst oppressors and transgressors as nothing but an agony and torture. By God, I will never give you my hand like a man who has been defeated; nor will I flee like a slave."*

As Muslims we owe it to our Imam to inculcate traits of his behaviour in our daily lives. Let us not be petty-minded and be carried away with worldly enticements, possessions or fame. Let us be strong-minded and well disciplined people who as the followers of Imam Husain (a.s.) live constructive lives well upholding his name and his sacrifice for the cause of Islam and Allah (s.w.t.).

By doing so we will help safeguard, preserve and propagate the huge sacrifice of the martyrs of Kerbala to eternity.



# Al Muntazir Junior School opens in Dar es Salaam

The Al Muntazir Junior School under the K.S.I. Central Board of Education (CBE) was officially opened in Dar es Salaam by the Tanzania Minister for Education, Professor Juma Kapuya on 17 May, 1996.

The Al Muntazir Junior School was previously operating at the Daya Walji Madrasah premises since 1992. Operations have now been moved to the new and modern school which overlooks the Indian Ocean in Dar es Salaam.

The school has a capacity of accomodating about 600 students in 23 classrooms and currently employs 49 teachers and auxiliaries. It has two science laboratories, one library, one clinic, one art room, one computer room plus an administrative section.

The new school, the construction of which took 30 months, is the third educational institution under the umbrella of the CBE. The others are the Union Nursery School which was opened in 1956 and has over 500 students and the Al Muntazir Islamic Seminary which has about 800 students.

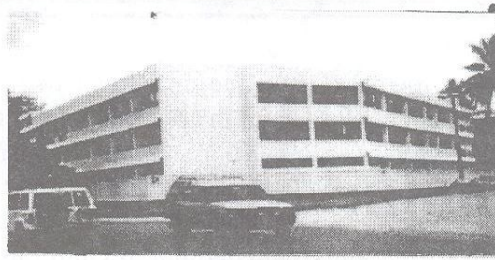
The opening ceremony which was graced by the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani and the Iranian Ambassador to Tanzania, begun with a recitation of the Surah-e Fateha and its translation by two female students. This was followed by a recital of the national anthem by students.

A female student, Tanvire Fatima then expressed on behalf of all students, their gratitude to those involved in the building of the school and their satisfaction from studying in the new school.

In his welcome speech, the CBE Education Secretary, Mohsin Nathani said that the CBE is devoted towards spreading education in Tanzania. He said the three schools under it housed over 2000 students, 160 teachers and some 60 auxiliaries.

Nathani said the school's primary objective is to provide a broad and balanced instruction that will provide a spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and

*Federation Samachar*



*A front view of the new Al Muntazir Junior School*

physical development of pupils. He said the school will also vie to prepare pupils to be good citizens well versed to face the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

He said the main subject of the school will be the 'pupil' and that the school will try to provide quality learning at affordable prices with no discrimination of colour, tribe or religion.

The President of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Asgher Bharwani expressed satisfaction on the completion of the school and hoped it would contribute to the country's efforts to promote literacy and ease congestion in other schools. He also expressed gratitude to the pioneer



The Late Haji Suleman Daya Walji (pictured) bought the property with a house in the 1930s with all income therefrom being spent for the cause of the needy and to organise one meal at the mosque each year.

The heirs of the family subsequently decided to entrust the Dar es Salaam Jamaat with the management of the property. The Jamat thereafter resolved to construct a school on the plot. This is where the Al Muntazir Junior School is located today. The original house structure still lies adjacent to the new school.

of the school, Aliraza Rajani and the magnanimous donors plus the heirs of the late Daya Walji family who allocated the plot for this school.

After a martial arts presentation by students, Minister Kapuya thanked the K.S.I. community for investing in education, the promotion of which, he said, is amongst the Government's priorities. He also insinuated a fine gesture by offering one seat to a student from the school for participation in the International Youth Camp to be held in Korea later this year.

Finally, the Chairman of the CBE, Akber Hameer presented a vote of thanks following which the Minister was shown around the school.

## STOP PRESS

### Nairobi Elections

The Nairobi Jamat elections on 8 June, 1996 instilled the following into office:

Akberali Karawalli	Chairman
Abdulrazak Khalfan	Vice Chairman
Onali Nanji	Hon. Secretary
Abbasali Nanji	Asst. Secretary
Nazir Kalyan	Treasurer
Iqbal Kalyan	Asst. Treasurer
Mohamedraza Dato	Member
Shabbir Pirmohamed	Member
Shabbir Merali	Member
Asif Sheikh	Member
Abbas Chagpar	Member
Sajjad Kanji	Member

### Strong foundation for Foundation Fund

Following a visit by the Supreme Council Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani to Nairobi in the first week of July, 1996 a total of US \$ 300,000 has been pledged for the Foundation Fund launched by the Supreme Council (see Council Session coverage on page 32).

To set the ball rolling, Nairobi based philanthropist, Naushad Merali pledged in US \$ 100,000. The additional \$ 200,000 has been pledged by other prominent donors.



## Islamic 'Fundamentalism' should not be viewed negatively

Islam is a misunderstood religion not only by non-Muslims but also by Muslims. The Prophet of Islam was asked to bring peace and unity to the feuding jahiliya Arabs of pre-Islamic days and thus the Message of Allah was recorded in the one and only Holy Quran without any differing versions. Yet today there are serious differences on interpretation and Muslims are divided sometimes into warring sects.

People who are merely literate in Arabic cannot understand the language of the Quran, or at least the whole of it. Explanations must be made by *ulema* who understand the language of the Quran and are knowledgeable of the circumstances under which they were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). The Quran is comprehensive and provides guidance for all things at all times with justice and avoidance of injustice being stressed in numerous verses. However if individual verses are taken in isolation, teachings can become distorted. Similarly the hadiths that are passed through the years are sometimes misinterpreted from their true essence.

Sometimes, the pronouncement of religious authorities at a given time and in a given situation are mere opinions, or *ijtihad*, based on their wide knowledge of Islam and their understanding of the problem or situation. But these are the opinions of human individuals and they too can be wrong. Muslim *ulema* when asked to make a ruling must understand not just the injunctions of Islam but the very complex nature of the subject at large. The most learned *ulema* cannot possibly know everything. They must rely on the expertise of others. Even then they may reject simply because they cannot understand or because they are dogmatic. And of course one group may reach quite different conclusions from another on the same subject. Both cannot be right, although both can be wrong.

The *ulema* are admittedly indispensable

to understanding Islam. Even those layman who understand Arabic and the language of the Quran need them. For non-Arab Muslims, they must also be linguists in order to explain the Quran verbally or in written form. Such translations of the Quran and Hadith invariably contain bracketed words which help to interpret the particular verse but which are not part of it. The choice for words reflects the particular *ulema's* understanding. It may also reflect the views and opinions of that *ulema*.

Society at the time of the Prophet was given to feuding and incessant wars. Those given to these excesses were said to be *muta'assibun* or fanatical. Islam condemned this and the prophet preached against it, promoting unity;

*"And hold fast all together to the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves, And remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you, for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you are brethren".* (Chapter 3:103).

After the Prophet passed away, tribal loyalties returned. That there is a misunderstanding among Muslims regarding the teaching of Islam on relations with non-Muslims is even more obvious. The Quran clearly stated that Christians are the friends of Muslims. Indeed, when the first few converts to Islam were persecuted by the idol-worshippers, they were advised by the prophet to seek refuge in Christian Abyssinia. The King there protected the Muslim refugees so well that attempts to extradite them failed.

If Muslims frequently misunderstand certain teachings, the misunderstanding among non-Muslims is worse. The clash between Muslims and Christians occurred quite early when Byzantium was still a great empire and stood in the way of the spread of Islam. But Christian Europe really worked up feelings against Islam during the

crusades. The perpetuity of this anti-Muslim feeling and the consequent violence against the Muslims can be described as a feud going on for centuries. Nothing good that Muslims do, particularly in their relations with non-Muslims, is recognised. Thus the fact that Christians and Jews could practise their religion in Muslim Spain was hardly ever mentioned in European history books. The fact that the Christian reconquest of Spain led to the expulsion of Muslims and Jews, or forced conversion or execution, has never been condemned. Similarly the fact that Jews actually preferred migrating to Muslim North Africa rather than stay on in Christian Spain is regarded as of no significance. In the Balkans, the mainly Christian slaves preferred Turkish rule and actually helped the Turks defeat the Byzantines. For the most part, they were not converted to Islam but remained Christian, testifying to the liberalism of the Turks towards non-Muslims.

The West today continues to misunderstand Islam. Forgetting that Christianity too had experienced extra aberrations as exemplified by the Spanish Inquisition and the burning of witches in Europe and America, the West considers aberrations by a minority of Muslims to truly manifest Islam. There have been terrorist acts perpetrated by Muslims but then terrorism has also been perpetrated by non-Muslims.

The immediate reaction after the Oklahoma bombing was that it was another Muslim terrorist act. When this was discovered to be untrue the word "terrorism" was ignored in further reports on the bombing. Similarly the bitter fighting in Northern Ireland involves religious differences between two Christian sects but at no time have the bombings, killings and maimings been termed Christian Terrorism.

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Again there is the brutality and genocide of the Serbs in Bosnia where tens of thousands of Muslims have been raped, straved, tortured and massacred. The Bosnian Serbs openly declared that they were carrying out "ethnic cleansing" to prevent the setting up of a Muslim nation in Europe and yet their massacres were never classified as Terrorism. Instead, European forces willingly handed over safe-havens for Muslims to the Serbs. If Muslim Bosnians had committed the atrocities, they would be regarded as "Muslim fanatics or fundamentalists." Apparently the West now naturally assumes that terrorism is confined to Muslims only.

Fundamentalism is equated with extremism. Yet if the teachings of Islam are studied, it is clear that the best Muslims are "fundamentalists" because the fundamentals of Islam are based on peace. Ironically the people who the West usually describes as fundamentalists are the very ones neglecting the fundamentals of Islam. Most have seemingly reverted to *jahiliya* ways of extreme loyalty to their groups, to *taassub*. When non-believers condemn all Muslims as terrorists, they are simply pushing good Muslims into the arms of the deviationists.

Today entire nations are being isolated, blockaded and punished without serious validity and many in the west have developed such antagonism against Islam because no serious attempts have been made to understand true Islam.

Malaysia is a country with a Muslim majority and the Government is Muslim dominated. Although they have a sufficient majority to rule the country on their own, they have chosen to share power with non-Muslim minorities. In 1969, race riots broke out, resulting in some 200 people, mostly non-Muslims, being killed. An emergency was declared and Muslim Malaysians took over the Government.

The Western press declared that democracy was dead in Malaysia and  
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wrote off any progress there. Today, Malaysia, still under a Muslim-dominated Government, is peaceful, stable and prosperous, growing economically at 8% per annum. The Muslims of Malaysia are not terrorists. Indeed, they have with non-Muslims created a united and progressive nation. The official religion is Islam but Buddhist, Hindu and Taoist temples and Christian churches are to be seen everywhere. Religious festivals of the different faiths are celebrated and Non-Muslims there do not regard Muslims as terrorists or for that matter, Islam as a violent creed.

The Malaysia example and similar ones elsewhere are sadly condoned by analysts. Hence the prejudice against Islam and Muslims remains. On the other hand Muslims must also ensure that interpretations from the Quran and genuine hadiths are well publicised and interpreted to non-Muslims in the context of present day situations.

The introduction of internal reforms has been dominated by the repeated call to return to the 'original' ('fundamentalism') teachings of Islam in the Qur'an and the Prophet's exemplary conduct, the Sunna. The proponents of these reforms firmly believe that the earthly power and success of the first generation of Muslims were due to the strict adherence to the pure faith, the fundamentals of Islam. Consequently, to regain their authentic Muslim life-style, they must implement the ideals prescribed by the Qur'an and the early community, the "Ummah". In some sense, their religious 'fundamentalism' is puritanical (advocating purity of religious belief and practice) and has a considerable following among numerous sectors of the Muslim brotherhood, "ikhwan almuslimin", all over the Muslim world.

True Islamic 'fundamentalism' can be radical and activist thereby involving a creative interpretation of religious ideas and engaging in educational and political activities designed to implement an Islamic society through an Islamic state. Such states would show tolerance to non-Muslim ways of life but would harbour a strong opposition to the wholesale adoption of unIslamic

ways which are also sinful.

In the aftermath of the downfall of communism, it is this activist 'fundamentalism', with its oppositional role to the secular Muslim governments in the oil-rich Middle East, that has led Western academic and journalistic circles to brand Islam as a threat to Western liberal values and socio-political systems. The fear and hysteria-literature that has appeared since the victory of the 1978-79 Iranian revolution has depicted 'political Islam' as a dangerous development for the international order and the only remaining threat to the western political and economic interests world-wide.

Instead of promoting cross-cultural communication through building bridges of understanding between the West and the Islamic World, Western academicians and journalists have unfortunately lost another opportunity to help create better understanding among peoples of this 'global village', who are in search of their true identity as being in relation to the Being.

Islamic 'fundamentalism', with its activist and even radical approach to the problems of Muslim societies is, among other things, engaged in restoring the violated justice for the average human being in the cultures where the only venue open for expressing the miserable condition of the people is religion. In the final analysis, it is very unlikely that Islamic or any other 'fundamentalism' could turn into a threat to modern international order.

What actually could trigger the cultural war is the arrogant human self-righteousness which is so rampant in the negative analysis of the phenomenon. Ultimately, it is the inability to overcome the indifference generated by the position of power, whether secularly or religiously welded, that would endanger the well being of entire humanity.

There is no convincing argument to suggest that re-discovering one's religious identity by returning to one's fundamental beliefs is harmful. And, for that reason, I do not believe that Islamic 'fundamentalism' should only be viewed negatively.



# Tanzanians, beware of *lupus*!

Recently a number of people in our community have been diagnosed as suffering from Lupus. There have been a few deaths too and the number of patients with Lupus seems to be increasing. Whether the increase is a real one or whether it is due to the fact that more people are diagnosed, is a conjecture. The affliction so far in our community is more common in people from Tanzania. In UK alone, 30,000 people have the disease.

Lupus is a rheumatic disease which can attack anyone. But it is much more likely to affect young women. It can be a very serious disease and sometimes fatal. However, majority of the cases lead fairly normal lives for a normal period of time if the disease is diagnosed and treated early enough.

**What is LUPUS (S.L.E.)?** - Lupus (Latin for wolf) is the name doctors in the past gave to various rashes on the cheeks and nose. It systematically affects various parts of the body, including the internal organs, as well as usually producing a mild rash or flush on the face. Erythematosus simply means red. Hence S.L.E. stands for *Systemic Lupus Erythematosus*.

The disease was thought to be rare until, in 1948, a new blood test was discovered. This made it possible for doctors to diagnose the condition in patients who just had odd aches and pains and no obvious sign of the disease. This discovery was the "LE cell test".

**Causes** - No one knows what causes lupus, though it is evident that genetic, hormonal, environmental and other factors are involved

There is no easy way of finding out who is likely to develop it.

Something goes wrong with the immune system which normally protects the body against harmful agents. Auto-antibodies (a form of protein which bind to the body's own tissues) are produced and circulate in the blood. They are associated with damage to the body. If they end up in the skin, various rashes occur. Alternatively they can cause harm if they stick to the walls of blood vessels and can upset the function of the kidney, lungs, joints and occasionally the brain.

Fortunately, the organs of the body that may be damaged have enormous powers of healing and when inflammation is caused by these antibodies, the tissues may heal without any permanent damage.

Fortunately, the organs of the body that may be damaged have enormous powers of healing and when inflammation is caused by these antibodies, the tissues may heal without any permanent damage.

**The symptoms** - Women patients outnumber men by 9:1. It can occur at any age but is rare before puberty or after the menopause. It usually starts in the teens or twenties.

The disease can begin acutely and make its victim very ill or start so gradually that it is not diagnosed for many years. Occasionally it may appear as a mild illness and then disappear completely. It can be present under many disguises and is really a great mimic since it can so closely resemble other diseases. This explains why doctors can easily make mistakes

in diagnosis or even miss it completely until the patient has had lupus for several years.

Lupus tends to wax and wane, so that most victims will probably have intervals without symptoms lasting months or even years. During an attack of the disease, the commonest complaints are of flu-like symptoms - with fever, tiredness, headaches and muscle and joint pains. Rashes are common, so too is depression during this phase of the disease. In less severe cases, these complaints may hardly be noticed and the sufferer might not even need to go to the doctor.

**The Skin** - Almost any type of rash can occur. Allergies are common (a penicillin allergy, for instance, can appear before lupus has been diagnosed). About half the patients have a pinkish rash on the cheeks whilst a few have the typical butterfly-shaped rash over the nose and cheeks. A pinkish spotted rash around the fingers and toes or on the elbows may be due to inflammation in small blood vessels. Sometimes the circulation is affected for a short while - making the fingers go numb and dead white and then purple - on exposure to cold.

**The Hair** - If you suffer from lupus, you may lose some hair when the disease is active. The hair usually grows back after the attack is brought under control, though it may take several months to do so - long after you are otherwise better.

**The Joints** - You will probably find that you suffer from aches and pains and in a severe attack, muscles, ligaments and joints all over the body may be affected.

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**Blood Vessels** - The inflammation is widespread because the damaging antibodies may affect many blood vessels in the body. Veins too may be involved leading to thrombophlebitis.

**Heart and Lungs:** The linings of the heart and lungs - the pericardium and pleura - are often affected. When this happens pericarditis or pleurisy results; you may suffer sharp pains in the lower part of the chest, usually around the sides and the back, when taking a deep breath. If this takes place around the heart you may experience pains which are worse in certain positions. Fluid can sometimes develop in the pleura or around the heart in the pericardium. Fortunately these problems respond rapidly to treatment without the heart or lung being damaged.

**Brain & Nervous System:** Occasionally the nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves may be affected by lupus. There, as in its other forms it may mimic a wide variety of other ailments. It can, therefore, cause symptoms such as depression or headaches and, less frequently, fits or paralysis. The important point is that all these symptoms usually respond to treatment.

**Kidney:** The kidney is damaged in three main ways: it becomes 'leaky' and protein is found in the urine; the blood pressure may rise and (only in severe cases) chemical impurities which are normally excreted in the urine stay and accumulate in the blood.

**Pregnancy** - Many women with lupus have successful pregnancies. But because lupus is common in young women the question of the disease's effect on pregnancy arises

Patients are often advised by their doctor against becoming pregnant and this may be necessary if the disease is active and difficult to control. However, if the disease is not active and you are generally feeling well, there are usually no difficulties.

Lupus is not a disease that is 'passed on' from mother to baby, so it is realistic to expect a normal healthy child in most cases. Two abnormalities may however be seen in the new born though both are unusual. The first is a rash which may appear at birth or a few days afterwards, but generally lasts only a short while. The second, however, is more serious and results in a slow pulse because the electrical impulse passing from the upper chambers of the heart, the atria, to the lower chambers, the ventricles, is in some way blocked. This is known as congenital heart block and the baby invariably needs a heart pacemaker inserted surgically after birth, as the condition is usually permanent.

**LUPUS in Childhood** - It is rare for lupus to start for the first time after 40 years of age. When this does appear to happen the patient will often reveal, with hindsight, symptoms going back many years. Lupus becomes milder and even disappears with increasing age, though the reason for this is unknown. Only a few have an active disease after 50 years.

**Treatment of LUPUS** - There is no cure for lupus. The aim of treatment is to relieve symptoms such as pain in order to help one lead a normal life; and also to try and stop the inflammation so that a remission (a period free from disease) takes place.

You may not need to restrict any of your activities, especially if you are feeling well. Work, interests and hobbies often take the mind off

the disease and help to ward off depression.

The question of diet is often raised by lupus patients and there is no simple answer at present. It is important to avoid getting overweight especially if there is pain in the joints of your legs. Evidence from research suggests that diets which are supplemented by fish oils and relatively low in total fat may be beneficial.

Sunlight (ultraviolet light) sometimes makes the disease flare up or even seems to start it off. If the sun does make things worse, there are commercially available creams which filter UV light and they provide some protection. But it is usually best to avoid direct sunlight altogether.

**Helping the disease subside** - The healing power of nature is a great blessing and this often causes periods of freedom. Some drugs help the process but they may not relieve pain immediately and it may take several weeks before their benefit is noticed.

Anti-malarials have been used for many years, though no-one knows why tablets used to treat malaria also help lupus. They might also help anyone with moderately active lupus to avoid steroids. However they do have some side-effects and may even affect the eyes - so this has to be borne in mind. A regular check-up with an eye specialist is important but with the doses used today, risks are very slight.

Steroids have much improved the outlook for lupus sufferers. Prednisolone is the most commonly used and dosage varies according to the activity of the disease. Everyone has steroids in the blood, indeed we would not be alive without them. But taken in

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## Circumcision lessens AIDS risk

Two international pioneers in AIDS research have said that widespread male circumcision would go a long way to protect the world from the spread of AIDS.

The two researchers, Dr. Frank Plummer and his colleague Dr. Allan Ronalds head the microbiology department at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

The researchers have based their conclusions on the work they have done in Africa, where a collaborative research project with Kenya's University of Nairobi has begun unlocking the AIDS mystery.

Research teams led by Plummer and Belgian Dr. Peter Piot (who discovered the deadly Ebola virus in Zaire in 1976 and now leads the UN AIDS program) dug out many pieces to the puzzle of how HIV is transmitted, how it locks into male and female genitalia and how it grows.

For men, research indicates that an intact foreskin plays a big role in

contracting HIV. It was previously thought that HIV enters one's body through the urethra but this has been proved to be wrong.

It is now recognised that the AIDS virus accesses the body through the mucus membrane or skin of the penis.

Dr. Ronald theorises the uncircumcised penis, with its warm, moist conditions, incubates the virus thereby protecting it until it can find a way in.

He believes that universal circumcision would give wider health benefits to boys, noting that those not circumcised get about 15 times as many bladder and kidney infections.

He says that the American Pediatric Association has begun to cautiously endorse circumcision again, after actively discouraging it.

Another principal discovery of the Kenyan research was that sexually transmitted diseases can

be welcoming hosts to HIV. It noted that in a Nairobi slum, HIV-positive rates climbed to 90 per cent in the early 1990s. Prostitutes with a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases are dying faster from AIDS than others.

Dr. Ronald describes the inflamed lesions sexually transmitted diseases create on genitalia as "little virus factories" for HIV. He said that this finding was pivotal to AIDS research noting that others have tinkered with the mechanics of how this happens "but no one has really added to it since."

Summing up he said that while a healthy, disease-free woman isn't very susceptible to HIV (the estimated guesstimate is that the virus is contracted in one in 100 sexual encounters with a partner in the early stages of HIV infection), prostitutes are at high risk because sexually transmitted diseases are prevalent.

## ....beware of *LUPUS*

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bigger doses they also have a powerful effect in reducing inflammation. When the time comes for them to be stopped, your doctor will tell you how to reduce the dosage gradually. Many people taking steroids develop a round or 'moon' face but this disappears when the dose is reduced or stopped. Also some acne sufferers find the treatment makes their condition worse and often a harmless bruising of the skin develops.

Nowadays, side-effects are unusual because the dose used is smaller than before. You may be under the impression that, once started, steroids are 'for life'. This is not so---- especially in the case of lupus, a disease which waxes and wanes.

**Major Immuno Suppressive Treatment** - For people with severe lupus affecting the heart, lungs, platelets, red cells, kidneys or brain it is often found that steroids alone cannot control the disease. In

these circumstances a variety of other drugs known as immuno suppressives are used because they have a major 'damping-down' effect on the cells of the immune system. The most commonly used are azathioprine and cyclophosphamide. The drug can also be given by mouth. Both of these drugs, and some others, may be very helpful for patients with severe disease. However, regular blood counts are essential as these drugs are potentially damaging to the bone marrow which produces the blood cells.



# Women, HIV and AIDS

Research shows that the risk of becoming infected with HIV during unprotected vaginal intercourse is as much as 2-4 times higher for women than men. Women are also more vulnerable to other sexually transmitted diseases.

As compared with men, women have a bigger surface area of mucosa exposed during intercourse to their partner's sexual secretions. (In women, the genital mucosa is the thin lining of the vagina and cervix).

And semen infected with HIV typically contains a higher concentration of virus than a woman's sexual secretions. This makes male-to-female transmission more conducive than female-to-men. Younger women are at an even greater biological risk to contract the virus because their physiologically immature cervix and scant vaginal secretions put up less of a barrier to HIV. Again, there is evidence that women become more vulnerable after the menopause.

In some parts of the world, men prefer sex when herbs are inserted to dry and tighten the vagina before intercourse. These substances can damage the delicate vaginal lining and make it easier for HIV to gain entry to the woman's body.

Tearing and bleeding during intercourse whether from 'rough sex', rape or prior genital mutilation (female circumcision) also multiplies the risk of HIV infections. Throughout the world, women run a similar risk from unprotected anal intercourse which is unhygienic but is resorted to because it preserves a

woman's virginity and avoids the risk of pregnancy. This form of sex often tears the delicate tissues and affords easy entry to the virus. (in his book "Marriage and Morals in Islam", Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi dwells on the subject of anal intercourse by quoting various fatwas and ahadith. In conclusion, he strongly advises against anal intercourse by quoting the sayings of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq and Imam 'Ali ar-Riza who say: "Woman is a means of your pleasure, therefore do not harm her."-----Ed.)

An untreated STD in either partner is another high risk factor which multiplies the risk of HIV transmission by 300-400%. Between half and four-fifths of STD cases in women go unrecognised because the sores or other signs are absent or hard to see and because women, if they are monogamous, do not suspect they are at risk.

Vulnerability does not however mean total unprotection. Experiences from the past decade proves that both men and women can be helped to avoid HIV. Infection rates have been lowered by screening blood for transfusion, by frank information about how HIV can spread, by clear prevention messages urging abstinence, fidelity or safer sex, by condom promotion, by needle exchange programmes for drug users and by encouraging and enabling people to get prompt care for STDs.

However, for millions of women, many of these services are inaccessible and because of their socio-economic circumstances whereby they are fearful of abandonment or violence on the part of their male

partners, they have little or no control over how and when they have sex and hence remain vulnerable to the risk of becoming infected with HIV.

Millions of young girls are brought up with little understanding of their reproductive system or the mechanics of HIV/STD transmission and prevention. Even when human sexuality is taught at school, girls are at a disadvantage because, especially in developing countries, very few carry on studying upto higher grades.

At the same time many girls are taught to leave the initiative and decision making in sex to males, whose needs and demands are expected to dominate. Male predominance should however have its limit and girls should be advised not to leave themselves totally vulnerable.

Discrimination, be it artificial or genuine, against girls and women in getting access to schooling, training and employment opportunities reinforces their economic dependence on men. The reliance may be on a husband or a stable partner, a few steady male partners who have fathered the children or for women in prostitution, a succession of clients.

Indeed, for girls and women in many cultures, sex is the "currency" in which they are expected to pay for life's opportunities, from a passing grade in school to getting a decent job or sometimes, even a loan. Islamic teachings allow a woman to have only one

(continued on page 43)



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husband and hence this greatly helps in reducing their vulnerability.

The question arises when a woman in a stable relationship, who is economically dependent on her husband, finds out or suspects he has HIV. If she refuses him sex or asks him to use condoms, she would be breaking the traditional silence expected from her. The use of condoms may offer a partial solution but it is no secret that many men react with anger or even violence when asked to use condoms. A further dilemma is that condoms are incompatible with pregnancy.

Couples wanting children need to know their HIV status and, if both are uninfected, they must agree to remain faithful or refrain from unsafe extra-marital affairs. The obstacles that do arise are an unwillingness to discuss these issues openly and lack of voluntary HIV testing and counselling services.

Many women are wrongly brought up to accept ill health as mere "women's troubles" when as a matter of fact they should be seeing a doctor for their ailments. As a result STDs, which increases a woman's biological vulnerability to HIV, often go untreated even when symptomatic.

Moreover because sexually transmitted infections carry a heavy social stigma (less so for men), women tend to avoid STD clinics for fear of being recognised.

And the health workers to whom women do have access, in primary health or maternal and child health clinics, are often unsympathetic, judgemental and unprepared to diagnose and treat STDs.

Prostitution constitutes another setting in which women have little power to protect themselves from HIV. Girls forced or sold into sex work, even before puberty, are generally unaware of the AIDS risk and unable to run away or take protective action.

The lucrative sale of girl children, even by parents, is reported to be on the rise in many parts of the world. Not all prostitution is forced. While for some women it is a choice, many turn to occasional or steady sex as an alternative to dire poverty, exchanging sex for the basic necessities of life for themselves and their children.

Often, these are women whose lives have been disrupted by war, of divorcees or widows who because of inequitable laws and customs have lost their property as well as their husband's earning power.

In many ways Islam provides a fine protection against the HIV virus by legalising only marital sex. Adultery and homo-sexuality are categorised as being very sinful and these are the two main causes of the spread of the HIV virus. However because the virus can even be contracted through a legal spouse, it is incumbent upon all to take necessary precautions because so far there is no cure for AIDS.

## Visiting the bereaved family

by Shazia Damji, Toronto

My grandfather, the late Alhaj Hassanali Daya recently passed away in Dar es Salaam and I thought it might be helpful if I were to republish one of my earlier articles.

When a death occurs, it is a difficult time for the immediate family of the deceased. This is unfortunately one of the experiences in life that is unavoidable. Relatives, friends and acquaintances of the deceased usually visit the bereaved family to offer comfort. To help make this time more bearable for the family, I would like to suggest a few points to keep in mind, when visiting the bereaved family:

- a) Check beforehand to ensure that the visiting time is convenient to the family.
- b) Bring fateha to show that you care, and so that the bereaved family does not have to provide refreshments.
- c) Sit down quietly in case others before are reciting Qur'an or duas, and do the same instead of chatting or talking loudly. This will demonstrate your respect.
- d) Stay a reasonable amount of time, unless you are very close to the family. Remember, this is not a social visit.
- e) Visit the family soon after bereavement, and not days later. Their life has to return to normal and visitors for days on end will not help.

I hope that the above tips are helpful and kept in mind when visiting the bereaved family. I would like to end by saying that my Late grandfather was a great man, and I would appreciate it if Sura-e-Fateha could be recited for him.



# ALITERACY -- THE STATE OF BEING UNINTERESTED TO READ

A new type of reading problem is sweeping our world. It is called aliteracy which means, being able to read but not interested in doing so. "You have to work to read and that is no fun" complained one 12 year-old girl.

Many adults are aliterate too. The United States, for example, boasts a 97 percent literacy rate; yet, about half of American adults seldom read books or magazines! Clearly, reading ability is not always matched by reading desire. This is true even among well educated persons who prefer TV to books.

Statistics in the USA reveal that by the age of 65, the average American spends nine years of his life watching TV! Since the rewards of reading are so often sacrificed to the flickering screen, it would be well to consider the following.

## READING STIMULATES IMAGINATION

Television does your thinking for you. Everything is spelt out; facial expression, voice inflections and scenery. With reading, however, you select the cast, set the stage and direct the action.

## READING DEVELOPS VERBAL SKILLS

Reading requires and develops verbal skills; it is inextricably linked with speech and writing. There is no question that your success as a student depends enormously on your vocabulary, both in what you can understand as you read and in how you reason as you write. The best way to build up a good vocabulary is to read extensively.

## READING PROMOTES PATIENCE

More than a thousand images may flash across the TV screen in just

one hour, leaving little time for the viewer to reflect on what he is seeing.

This technique literally programs a short attention span. Not surprisingly, some studies link excessive TV watching to impulsive decision making and restlessness - in both, children and adults.

When reading, sentences, paragraphs and pages unfold slowly, in sequence and according to a logic that is far from intuitive.

At one's own pace, the reader must interpret, evaluate and reflect upon what is on a page. Reading is thus a complex decoding process that demands and develops patience.

## A BALANCED VIEW

Despite the benefits of reading, it must be admitted that television has its merits too. It can surpass reading in conveying certain types of information. A fascinating TV presentation can even stimulate interest in reading.

It is reported that TV shows dramatising children's literature and science influence children to seek out books on those and related topics. The printed page and television are two different media. Each has inherent strengths and limitations. Each can be used or abused. Excessive reading to the point of isolating oneself can be just as detrimental as excessive TV watching. However reading is often sighted in favour of visual diversion and yet we are shifting from a culture of readers to one of watchers.

This is especially noticed among youths. As a result, many of them grow up aliterate and later suffer the consequences. Therefore, how can parents help their children to develop a desire to read?

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP SET AN EXAMPLE

If parents spend much time watching TV, their children are like to follow suit. On the other hand, if one's kids see their parents happily curled up with a good book, they will get the idea that you not only preach reading but also practice it as well. Even better, some parents keep many books available and read aloud to their children. In doing so, they create a warm bond that is sadly lacking in many families today.

## MAKE READING ENJOYABLE

If a child naturally likes to read, half the battle of learning is won. So make reading a pleasurable experience for your child by limiting television time. Second, create an atmosphere that is conducive to reading; quiet times and areas, such as a personal library with good lighting encourages reading. Third, do not force reading. Make the materials and opportunities to read available but let the child develop the desire. Some parents begin reading to their children at an early age. This can be beneficial. Some experts say that by the age of three, a child understands most of the language he will use in ordinary adult conversation even though he cannot yet fluently express these words.

Children begin to learn to understand a language earlier and at a more rapid rate than they learn to use it orally. The most vital reading material available is God's word. Do we not all need the guidance of the Almighty at all times and especially during our troubled times? By inculcating in a child the habit of reading short stories and parables one actually moulds a child's mind to honest thinking and is that not the best gift one can give to a child?



# ISLAMIC 'FUNDAMENTALISM':

## A MISNOMER?

*One of the latest terms introduced by the Western political analysts to interpret the destabilizing socio-political upheavals in the Third World Muslim societies is "fundamentalism". The term, initially coined with a positive connotation in the Christian context, now unfortunately implies a strong negative connotation in most contemporary academic and journalistic usage.*

Looking back at the history of the term 'fundamentalism' in Protestant Christianity, it was originally applied in the early part of this century to describe the fundamental religious demands of the conservative group within the American Protestant Church. Included among the fundamentals was the strict adherence to traditional teachings of the Christian scripture, untainted by modern liberal ideologies like secularism and rationalism.

In relation to the Muslim world, it is not inconceivable therefore, to use a similar label for those whose religious movements include a call to return to the fundamental teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunna. While there is little problem in adopting 'fundamentalism' as a designation for current Islamic movements, it is the pejorative connotation in Western academic and journalistic circles that presents a serious difficulty in understanding the true nature of the Islamic case.

In the Western cultural context, especially the white Protestant American one, 'fundamentalism'

implies something totally different from the religious orientation of Muslim societies. The incongruence of applying the term for the Islamic movements around the globe can be observed by the difficulty in finding an equivalent term for 'fundamentalism' in any Islamic language that would simply convey a similar religious attitude for Muslims living under modern conditions.

Nevertheless, the lack of an equivalent for 'fundamentalism' in the Islamic languages does not mean that attitudes and aspirations similar to those found among other 'fundamentalism' groups are absent among religious minded Muslims.

There is little doubt that the religious revival in many parts of the world today is inspired by reaction to facets of the global processes of modernization and secularization of the twentieth century. Among the many terms introduced by the Western academicians to describe these aspects of reaction to modernism, i.e. 'conservatism,' or 'traditionalism', I find the use of 'fundamentalism' duly emptied of its specific cultural and historical contents in America Protestantism.

However, properly divested of its negative connotation in Western political analysis, the term 'fundamentalism' is a far more intelligible designation for all the religiously motivated movements in this century for the purposes of promoting a vision of a divinely ordained society based on 'fundamental' religious principles.

Although I prefer the label 'Islamic activism' for what the Western observers call 'fundamentalism', I shall continue to employ the latter with quotation marks in this essay.

Muslim 'fundamentalism' of modern times stems from the acute awareness that something is wrong between the religion that God has appointed and the historical development of the world that God controls.

The contradiction between the Islamic ideal of a just and equitable society, and the existing reality of political and social injustices in Muslim societies, makes it imperative to search for the causes that have contributed to the prevailing unfavorable conditions. In some cases the injustices seem to be perpetuated by the direct or indirect Western intervention or interference in the affairs of the Muslim world, whereas in others, it is the corrupt government that is seen to be abusing the trust of the community.

In response to this, Islamic 'fundamentalism' has endeavoured to strike a balance between the divine promise of earthly success to the Muslims and their current adverse situation by moving in two directions: First, by actively resisting alien domination of any form over the Islamic character of Muslim societies; and second, by introducing reforms to prevent further disintegration of

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(...from page 45)

Islamic religious life under the impact of imported modernism.

The introduction of internal reforms has been dominated by the repeated call to return to the 'original' ('fundamentalism') teachings of Islam in the Qur'an and the Prophet's exemplary conduct, the Sunna. The proponents of these reforms firmly believe that the earthly power and success of the first generation of Muslims were due to the strict adherence to the pure faith, the fundamentals of Islam. Consequently, to regain their authentic Muslim life-style, they must implement the ideals prescribed by the Qur'an, and the early community, the "Ummah".

In some sense, their religious 'fundamentalism' is puritanical (advocating purity of religious belief and practice) and has a considerable following among numerous sectors of the Muslim brotherhood, "ikhwan almuslimin", all over the Muslim world.

The direction requiring resisting the alien intrusion represents confrontation with culturally alien phenomenon which has caused a serious break in the cultural continuity of the Muslim community. This means that for the Muslims 'fundamentalism', it is much more a matter of radically restructuring their societies by openly refusing to go along with current fads identified as 'cultural imperialism' of the West. It also means however, that an Islamic alternative to the consciously imported or externally imposed socio-political systems over the Muslims be provided.

The proponents of this form of response have also had to fall back to the original Islam, with emphasis

on the social and political concerns as the most distinctive feature of Islam as a religion. Their 'fundamentalism' is radical and activist involving creative interpretation of religious ideas and engaging in educational and political activities designed to implement their vision of an Islamic society.

This latter form of Islamic "fundamentalism", with its call for the establishment of an Islamic state which would bring all public law into conformity with the Shari'a, has also involved a very strong opposition to the wholesale adoption of the non-Muslim ways in Muslim states.

In the aftermath of the downfall of communism, it is this activist 'fundamentalism', with its oppositional role to the secular Muslim governments in the oil-rich Middle East, that has led Western academic and journalistic circles to brand it as a threat to Western liberal values and socio-political systems. The fear and hysteria literature that has appeared since the victory of the 1978-79 Iranian revolution has depicted 'political Islam' as a dangerous development for the international order and the only remaining threat to the western political and economic interests worldwide.

Instead of promoting cross-cultural communication through building bridges of understanding between the West and the Islamic World,

Western academicians and journalists have unfortunately lost another opportunity to help create better understanding among peoples of this 'global village', who are in search of their true identity as being in relation to the Being.

Islamic 'fundamentalism', with its activist and even radical approach to the problems of Muslim societies is, among other things, engaged in restoring the violated justice for the average human being in the cultures where the only venue open for expressing the miserable condition of the people is religion. In the final analysis, it is very unlikely that Islamic or any other 'fundamentalism' could turn into a threat to modern international order.

What actually could trigger the cultural war is the arrogant human self-righteousness which is so rampant in the negative analysis of the phenomenon. Ultimately, it is the inability to overcome the indifference generated by the position of power, whether secularly or religiously welded, that would endanger the well being of the entire humanity.

There is no convincing argument to suggest that re-discovering one's religious identity by returning to one's fundamental beliefs is harmful. And, for that reason, I do not believe that Islamic 'fundamentalism' should only be viewed negatively.

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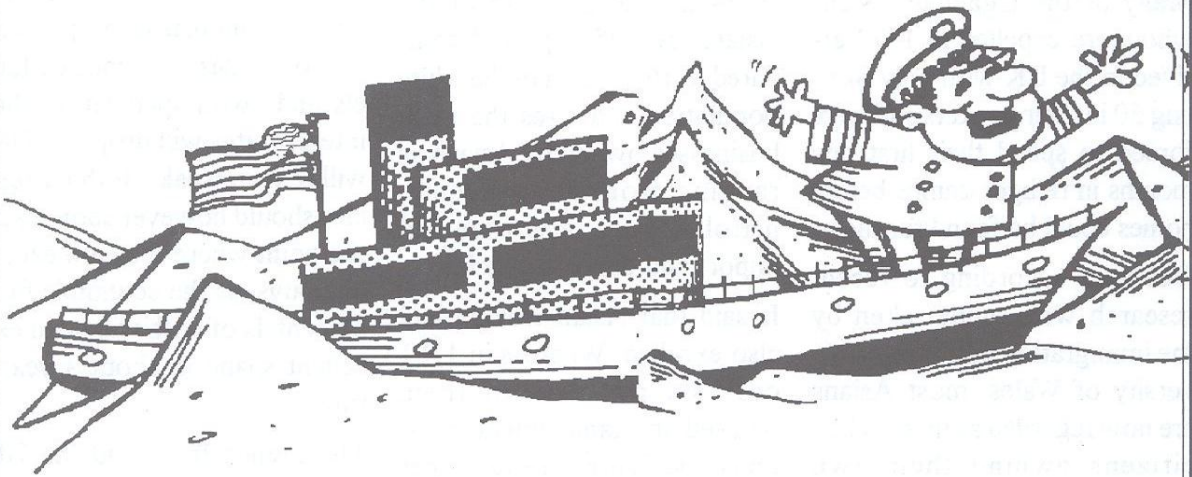
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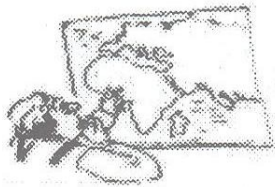


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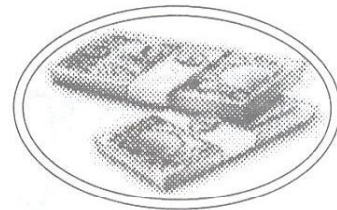





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### Slowly but surely Ugandan Asians strongly establish themselves in Britain

According to researchers from the University of Wales in Cardiff, UK the 29,500 Ugandan Asians expelled by President Idi Amin are now regarded as paragons of the business community in the UK.

Many of the Ugandan Asians who were expelled in 1972 arrived in the UK with only Sterling 50 in their pockets and were forced to spend their first few months in refugee camps before homes could be found for them.

However according to recent research work undertaken by the immigration unit at the University of Wales, most Asians are now regarded as model class citizens owning their own homes. One of them, Manubhia Madhvani whose wealth is listed as sterling 125 million is now among the 500 richest men in Britain and is also actively involved in the rehabilitation of the new Uganda.

The report says that many Asians have done well primarily because as refugees they were highly motivated and were eager to regain the social status they had in Uganda. It says that many of the Asians had been professionally qualified but were prepared to take any job and

subsequently they pooled family resources to buy businesses.

As a consequence of this hard work, proportionately far more former Ugandan Asians are now self employed than amongst the white community in the UK. It states that 26 per cent of the Asians are self employed compared to 16 per cent of the white population and cites the main businesses owned by Asians as ranging from news agents, petrol stations, insurance and import and export agencies.

It said that Asian women had also excelled. Whereas in 1981 only six per cent of them worked in management positions, the figure rose to 24 per cent some ten years later.

The same report states that even where the refugees had not done particularly well, they sought to educate their children, seeking qualifications as an insurance against insecurity. As a result more than 50 per cent of children have become professionally qualified including many lawyers, accountants, dentists and doctors.

The research summed the transformation as not a rags to riches case but rather to a comfortable middle class existence.

The US dollar firmed against traditionally strong rival currencies but is not expected strengthen much further until the US presidential election in November.

The biggest falls were taken by the Deutschmark and the Swiss franc. Germany's economy seems to be clear of recession now but industrial output has yet to increase to required levels and with speculation that interest rates will drop, the DM will remain weak. Both currencies should however soon reach the point where they are excellent buys, as the economic fundamentals of both will be in excellent shape in about a year's time.

The French franc and the UK pound sterling appear to be reasonably good prospects against the dollar in the US election year and with the Japanese economy growing faster than that of the United States, the yen should be an exciting currency to watch. It is possible that the 100-110 trading range against the dollar will be breached within 1996, with something like a return to the strengths of last year. However many would like the rate to stay just where it has been for months, as this has allowed Japanese competitiveness to be restored.





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

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

**Answer:** This rite is un-Islamic, and should be discarded.

**Question:** Why shouldn't sex education be introduced in schools? I was faced once with a tough question. A person asked me if masturbation was not a good way to release tension which otherwise would result in a sexual intercourse with the opposite sex. He showed me an article which appeared in an American newspaper. The article says at least twice a week one should masturbate if he wants to lead a comfortable life without heart attack. The article was by a professor in one of the American Universities.

**Answer:** Masturbation is Haram in Islam. In one medical encyclopaedia, it is written that masturbation becomes harmful "only when it exceeds the limit, and then medical treatment becomes necessary".

Two of the harmful effects of exceeding the limit (which have not been mentioned in that book) are as follows:-

First, the base of penis becomes thinner compared to the rest of the organ; the penis becomes curved to the right or left, (if left hand is used then to the left and vice-versa). Secondly, the will-power gradually weakens, and even if the person concerned wants to leave

that habit, he cannot. It is habit-forming and in view of this, the pious admonitions of the psychologists "not to exceed the limit" loses all its weight.

Many people say that masturbation is "a natural" thing. Why? Because, some young bulls or other animals have been observed to indulge in it.

If we accept this "logic" as valid, we will have to sanction many other things also. For example, marriage between brother and sister, between mother and son. And why marriage at all? Sexual intercourse without any "religious sanction" has been practised in the animal world since time immemorial. Therefore, it is "natural" And therefore, it should be allowed and advocated! What kind of logic is this?

Others go so far as to declare that there is no difference between masturbation and normal sexual intercourse. They apparently forget that in normal sexual intercourse all the senses contribute to the stimulation and orgasm: Man and woman see and feel their partner, say endearing words to each other and hear stimulating words and sound and likewise the senses of smell and taste are utilised. And penetration of the male organ inside the female ultimately leads to the final excitement and orgasm.

But in masturbation the only source of stimulation is imagination, in which no other sense takes any part. The whole burden is loaded upon the mind and thus, while normal sexual intercourse results in happiness and joy, masturbation creates depression. (I am not talking about physical fatigue which is a normal thing but about emotional and psychological effects). Hence masturbation is not "a normal and harmless thing".

So far as "sex education" is concerned,

Islam expects elders to teach the youngsters everything concerning Janabat, monthly course, child birth etc. and about the Nikah and all that it involves. In the Indian society, this subject is "taboo"; while in Arabia and other Islamic places, women openly ask about the so-called "secret" Masael.

**Question:** From the age of 13 to the age of 14 I have masturbated almost daily. Now I am trying to control, but I fail every time. About a months ago, I had succeeded in stopping to masturbate for two weeks. But nowadays I seem to fail and have started again.

The result of this is that I have become very thin and weak. And the worst result is that my beliefs in religion are fading away.

I would be very pleased, if you would find me an alternative to leave masturbation. I think I can leave masturbation if I visited a prostitute once in two weeks, though I have not yet visited a prostitute. But I don't know whether visiting a prostitute once in two weeks is better and has less sin than masturbating almost daily.

**Answer:** The best way to get rid of your habit (which you have mentioned) is to strengthen your will power. Unless you firmly decide not to indulge in this anymore, you will not be able to leave this habit.

Also try not to remain alone at any time. If you are in company of others you will not get a chance to do it. Concentrate more on religious things and also adopt some hobby, like football, etc. which will provide you an outlet for energies of your body. But, for God's sake, never think of going to prostitutes. It will ruin you, not only in the life-hereafter but in this world also. Apart from financial ruin, you may get venereal diseases as syphilis and gonorrhoea (and surely now there is AIDS), which will affect the health of your children for generations to come; and "zina" (having sexual relations with a woman other than wife) is more sinful than masturbation.



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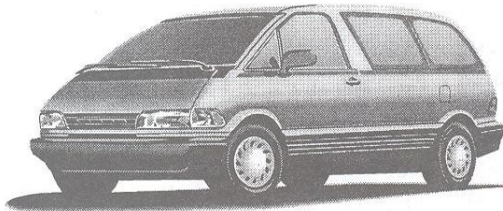
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# Understanding the Surah Al-Fatiha

By Mohamedhusein Kermalli, Dar es Salaam

Surah Al-Fatiha, also known as AL-HAMD which means High Praise, is the most outstanding and all-embracing opening chapter of the Holy Quran. It contains in essence, the main thrust of the Holy Book. Made up of seven verses, its importance can be assessed from the fact that it is the only Surah which was revealed twice - first in Makkah and then in Madinah. It is the most often recited Surah revealed as a form of prayer for Muslims. Its recitation in "Salat" is obligatory as no "Salat" is complete without the recitation of this Surah. Moreover Muslims recite the Surah for the "Ithale Thawab" in mosques, imambargahs, mehfiles, cemeteries, apart from homes and at many other socio-religious functions and meetings. In fact during a normal span of life, we recite the Surah habitually tens of thousands of times but, unfortunately, with a very little or no understanding of what it contains and the important message it conveys.

Brief though it is, to facilitate constant recitation, the Surah is all-inclusive in its comprehensive meaning of what is to follow in the rest of the Holy Book. Therefore, it has also been named "Ummul Kitab" which means the "Essence of the Holy Book".

It provides an insight and preamble to the flow of verses in the Holy Book. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to understand the meaning and grasp the message contained in it. Mere recitation in Arabic without understanding is not meaningful. Appreciation of the meaning of the verses and what

they convey not only earns greater rewards from Allah (s.w.t.) but also creates an impact on our thoughts, raising us spiritually and bringing us nearer to Allah (s.w.t.).

The Surah aims at conditioning us to an Islamic way of life. The first verse (*Bismillahi Rahmanir Rahim*) which also forms the first verse in all the rest of the Surahs (except Surah 9), teaches us that before we start any work we must do so in the name of Allah (s.w.t.) and reminds us of His Mercy and Grace. The philosophy behind it is that Islam creates at the very outset love and attachment to Allah (s.w.t.) and dependence on His Divine Mercy and Beneficence.

The next verse begins with the fundamental glorification of Allah (s.w.t.). The word "Hamd" in Arabic has a wide meaning. It does not only mean praise but also thanks, gratitude and indebtedness. The word "Rabb" - Lord, Nourisher, has also a deeper meaning. The role of "Rabb" starts as early as the Will to create a being and, when created, to nourish it with love, care vigilance and devotion, providing all that the being needs for its growth and development.

The word "Aalameen" - worlds - also needs explanation. The concept of multiple worlds has now been amply proved by scientists and astronomers mapping the universe during the three year project due for completion this year. They say that the basic features of space are similar everywhere which means that the prospect of life existing is equal across the universe...

...indeed the universe is extremely uniform....and life is likely to exist everywhere. Islam said this over 1400 years ago!

The next verse contains the most comprehensive attributes of Allah- "Ar-Rahman" and "Ar-Rahim". "Ar-Rahman" relates to a general, all-embracing, all-penetrating, all pervading universal Mercy which surrounds all the creation. While "Ar-Rahim" applies to that aspect of the Divine Mercy which relates specifically to the believers. One of the exclusive features of Islam is that it reforms humanity by creating love of God and attachment only to Him as against man's mythical gods who are held as the most dreadful rulers of peoples' destinies.

By introducing man to the true concept of One God (*Tawhid*) as the only Supreme, the Beneficent and the Merciful Lord of the universe, Islam has removed man from the hold of numerous demi-god and goddesses. Instead, Islam presented man to the prime attributes of One God from whom every human being sees, experiences and feels the Grace and Mercy.

The third verse refers to the Day of Judgment on which Allah (s.w.t.) as Master of that Day will judge His creation. The Justice done by Allah (s.w.t.) even though in accordance with the strict application of the Law to reward every being according to what he earned, will naturally be tampered with His Mercy. Man, however, must be

(continued on page 52)



**Surah Al-Fatiha --- the opening chapter of the Holy Quran]**

(...from page 51)

alert and careful in expectation of the prescribed strict justice but at the same time, he should keep himself hopefully attached to Allah (s.w.t.) with expectation of His Divine Mercy.

The fourth verse teaches us to worship Allah (s.w.t.) alone, to seek help from Him only and to commit ourselves to serve Him in words, actions and thoughts. This generates a spirit of dedication to our only Real Master, Allah (s.w.t.) thereby inculcating a feeling of total dependence, obedience and submission to Him.

The fifth verse takes a form of prayer to Allah (s.w.t.) to guide us always to the Right Path leading to physical, mental, moral and spiritual upliftment. We need this continuous guidance at all times and in all walks of life. This necessity of continuous guidance gives rise to the need for attachment to Divinely guided persons whose lives serve as models for us

to emulate.

This is also the essence of the succeeding sixth verse which defines the right Path as that of those persons on whom Allah (s.w.t.) has Bestowed His Bounties in raising their mental, moral and spiritual perfection, free from any sin, slip or error. Such persons are identified by their personal purity and piety.

One of the unique characteristics of the Holy Quran is that it does not give the name of persons under these circumstances but only describes their personal qualities. This puts our free choice to test. However, the Quran gives clear guidance for identifying such persons who should be taken as guides after the Prophet (2:177, 5:55, 10:35, 33:33).

The seventh and the last verse is also a prayer to Allah (s.w.t.) for us not to be misguided to the path of those people who are worthy of Allah's Wrath because of their deeds and who have strayed from

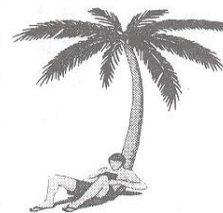
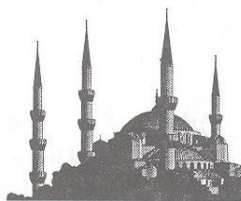
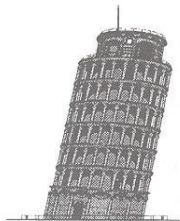
the Right Path due to transgression.

The Quran is not silent on who are the transgressors and they have been identified at several places in this Holy Book. Briefly, the transgressors are those who have deviated from the Right Path by allowing themselves to come under the "Satanic influences" by harbouring un-Islamic attitudes and practices under the semblance of secularism, apart from those who are open enemies of Islam.

This is the summary of the broad picture Surah Al-Fatiha presents. Indeed, Imam Ali (a.s.) is reported to have said that if he was to write a full commentary on this Surah, the load of his writing would be such as would need seventy camels to carry it.

Finally it is important that we recite this Surah with an understanding of its significance and meaning so that we can reap the benefit of its recitation, which indeed are manifold.

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# Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

## God's existence is beyond doubt

It amazes me that some people still express doubt on the existence of God. They ask to see miracles to prove His existence and question on how the bones of the dead can be resurrected. They presume that because nobody returns after dying, what happens after death is an uncertainty as is the very existence of God.

What they fail to see is that life, right from the time of one's birth up to the time when one finally passes away, is by itself a miracle. A miracle which many of us do not see because we take things for granted despite the fact that many of our duas remind us of the qualities of the Supreme Creator. For example, the Surah Yasin reminds us that if God could create us from only a drop of sperm, we would be open disputants if we still harbour doubts on His ability to revive us after death.

God has created hundreds of species of animals in this world, all in perfectly adaptable pairs, whereby procreation through copulation will continue. Be it a human being, chicken, spider or an elephant, the biological make-up of the male and female delineates perfection whereby they are adapted and drawn to procreate.

For those asking to see miracles, did the sky come into being on its own and what about the oceans and

seas which feed and clean billions daily? What about the sun which illuminates the world and the moon which waxes and wanes by itself or the stars which are haphazardly distributed in the skies? Is it a coincidence that the greatest trees and the varieties of fruits grew from tiny seeds which fell on the ground and the planets just popped up and that the whole world with climates suitable for people to survive in, is just a magical abracadabra and that there is no God?

To whom but God can we attribute something as incomprehensible as the universe and all the wonderful things in it. The different colours of the skies, the rainbow, the thousand variety of plants, natural calamities and the sudden stopping of our heartbeats, further attest the presence of the Almighty.

Let's take our own anatomies. We have been given a different face, two hands, two feet and five fingers (no more, no less) plus many similar additions to our body when in our mothers' wombs. In the womb we received natural support, upon birth our mothers naturally nourished us with body milk and the same pattern, just as night follows day and the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, applies for all born before us and who will be born.

In our body, the brain thinks and reacts (the happiness we experience, the crushed spirits that depress us, the love we feel...etc.), the heart beats, the stomach digests, blood circulates, the eyes see, the ears hear, the teeth bite and we have so many other body parts and organs like the kidneys, liver, pancreas, gall-bladder, each of which has a function. The body, with its many parts, is so complex that we have doctors who specialise on certain parts only and despite years of medical research and advancements, ailments eventually lead to death.

Despite these miracles and surely there are many more, others remain hesitant to believe in God. They don't need the sanctity of mosques and they don't need the power of prayers because they intend to achieve in life only by their own efforts until suddenly life for them will end and ultimately they will have to face and accept the Creator.

The world has many religions and whilst each has its own teachings and beliefs, they surely are unanimous about the fact that the biggest sinner and one for whom hell is certainly destined, is an infidel. How sad it is to pass through one's worldly life without having to share the ecstasy of loving and being loved by God. And how unfortunate it is that when we alienate ourselves from Him in this temporary world, we are actually preparing ourselves to be forsaken by Him in the life hereafter.

Surely God is all-forgiving. For those who have erred, salvation comes through sincere penitence followed by a rejuvenated lifestyle which always keeps the Almighty in mind. The recalcitrant have some time, maybe hours. Now is the time to reform!



# When Preachers' speeches leave us speechless!

This is a continuation of the attempt in the series of this column to reach certain preachers who are engaged in the cause of Islam.

There often are times when genuine and sincere questions on the subject of preaching arise, begging for answers and fading away ignored only to arise again and again with a similar fate.

There has been a common trend for Islamic preachers to be seen and heard in the Imambara preaching to the followers of Islam, in the name of Islam on many "Islamic" subjects without however doing appropriate justice to the core of Islam and the Creator of the Universe, namely Allah (s.w.t.).

We can hardly expect our preachers to be ignorant of the emphatic Quranic verse: "*And I have not created the Jinn and Man but to serve Me*". And we can also hardly ascribe the insufficient coverage of Tauhid and other attributes of our Lord in our preachings, to preachers' deficiency in the ma'rifat (gnosticism) about Islam.

We hear less and less, if at all, on the core of Islam and even in exceptional situations when we do hear on the subject, there is an apparent lack of expertise and enthusiasm unlike deliveries

made on other subjects, as if true conviction is lacking!

Nahjul Balagha is a testimony to the fact that Hazrat Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) took great pain to preach and explain again and again the attributes of Allah (s.w.t.) in his famous sermons.

Hazrat Imam Husain (a.s.) sacrificed his life and those of his kith and kin to save Islam from the subversion that was designed and contemplated by Yezid. His martyrdom was to enable Islam to be saved in its purity so that it could be preached and propagated with the same purity as revealed to the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). Tauhid is central to this purity.

The attributes of Allah (s.w.t.) are central to Islam and in our present age and indeed at all times, we surely need to hear about the many aspects of Islam that are being preached to us but with the inclusion and surely not with the exclusion of what is central to Islam.

Perhaps it is not realised that we as the followers of Islam can grasp more effectively all that is preached on the various commonly touched subjects only if we have also grasped the spiritual perception of the Creator in the Quranic light and His purpose of creation.

Those with *IRFAN* about Islam are as conscious about the presence of the Creator in every moment of their lives as they are of the fact that they are 'alive'. His presence is always on their mind and is therefore reflected time and again in their preachings.

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**The Editor invites Preachers to defend themselves or to provide further light on this subject. Readers are also invited to present their opinions and suggestions to this effect.**

**Editor**

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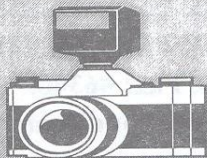
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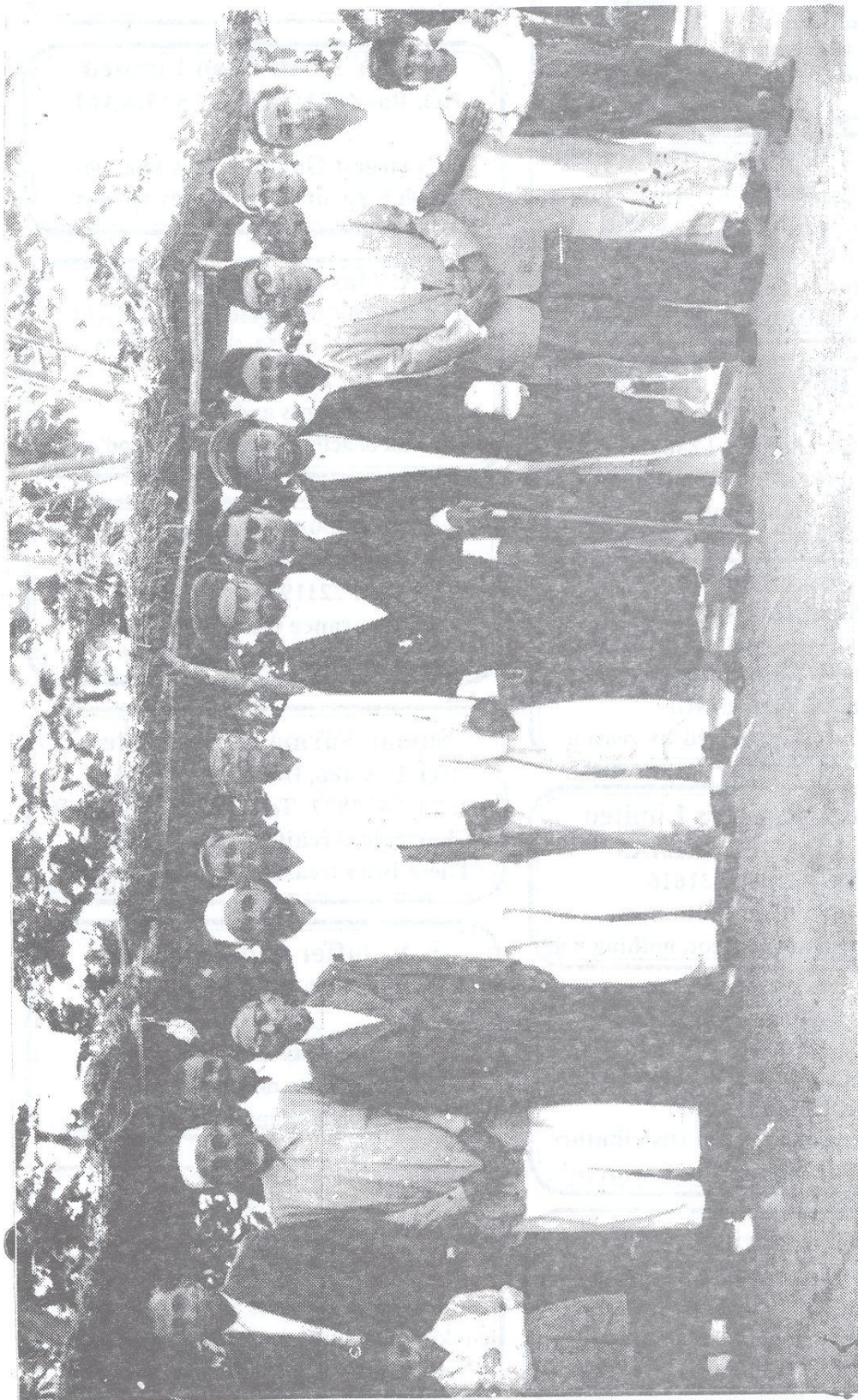
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# Down Memory Lane



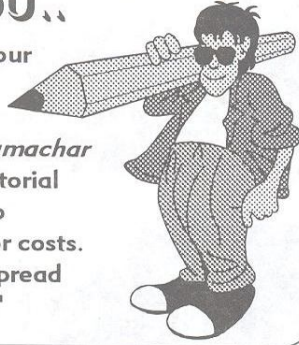
Members of the Executive Committee of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Lindi Jamaat seen welcoming Maulana Seyyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi as new Resident Aalim whilst bidding farewell to Maulana Seyyid Abbas who had presided as Resident Aalim for about nine years. The picture was taken at the Lindi Airport in 1958 or 1960.

Standing from right to left:  
Hussein J. Dhanji,  
Fidahussein H.M. Khaki,  
Gulamabbas Jusab,  
Ebrahim Esmail,  
Maulana Seyyid Abbas,  
Yusufali A. Pirmohamed,  
Maulana Seyyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi,  
Fazal Ladha Dinani,  
Abdulrasul Nanji, Mulla M.P. Daya,  
Rashid Versi, Hassanali Esmail, Mulla Abdulhussein Mulji, unknown.



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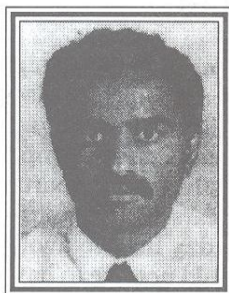
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## Asif Karim and his cherishable memories fom the World Cup



When Asif Karim travelled with the Kenya team to participate in the Cricket World Cup played in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka it was in anticipation that it would provide him and the team the golden opportunity of playing against the world's best playing cricket nations. They looked forward to meeting and playing players whose styles and strategies they had tried to personate so as to advance their own games.

The Kenya team performed well in each of their games and in what pundits referred to as the '*mother of all upsets*' the minnows laid low two-time champions and eventual semi-finalists, West Indies.

The Kenya team finished fifth in a six team group, namely Sri Lanka, Australia, India, West Indies, Zimbabwe and themselves. Had the Kenyan team beaten Zimbabwe, a team they had been favoured to beat, they could have been in contention with a chance to qualify for the quarter-finals.

Asif Karim (32) has been an active sportsman since childhood. He has played for Jaffery Sports Club and the Kenya national team for over 16 years and has also represented Kenya in the Davis Cup tennis tournament.

Due to his sporting abilities he was awarded a four year Tennis Scholarship to the USA where he also did his BBA in Insurance from the Howard University.

*Federation Samachar*

In 1994, he was declared Kenya's Sportsman of the Year in cricket and at the World Cup he was the Vice Captain of the Kenya team. He achieved commendable bowling figures in the competition, being declared as the fifth most economic bowler. Various renowned players from other teams commended his articulate bowling and he along with other players in the team became instant celebrities after Kenya beat the West Indies.

Asif told the *Samachar* that players of the Kenyan team were beset by many fans craving for autographs and said this even prevailed on days when the team went out for shopping.

Asif says that participating in the tournament taught him and the team many lessons. He says East Africa has the potential to provide a formidable challenge to the world but for this to happen a proper infrastructure is required with good playing grounds. He lauded the community's new Lavington cricket ground as a step in the right direction.

Whilst acknowledging the contribution of the team manager and some senior players, Asif said that most players in the team excelled because of their personal inspiration. He said that to promote

the game in Kenya and East Africa, there is a need for adequate co-ordination to restructure the organisation of the game. He said that players should also be offered better incentives.

He also felt that playing with other countries more frequently would help to promote standards and increase awareness of the game in the region. To this effect he acclaimed the decision by the Kenya Cricket Association (KCA) to host the Four-country cricket tournament in Nairobi in September, 1996 which will include world champions, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, South Africa and hosts Kenya. He said that awareness would also be catalysed by participation of indigenous players and through fine media coverage.

At community level, he expressed willingness to share his experiences with players from different clubs in the region. He said, if invited, he would be happy to visit places like Dar es Salaam, where cricket is the main sport of the community, to coach players on different aspects of the game.

Asif is currently the Chairman of Aristocrats Insurance Brokers and Aristocrats Forex Bureau Ltd. He is the son of Yusuf Karim, a recipient of the Supreme Council Abul Fazl Trophy in 1965 and is married with 2 children.



**Asif Karim talking to the Editor of *Federation Samachar*, Munir Daya in Nairobi during the run of the Council Session.**



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