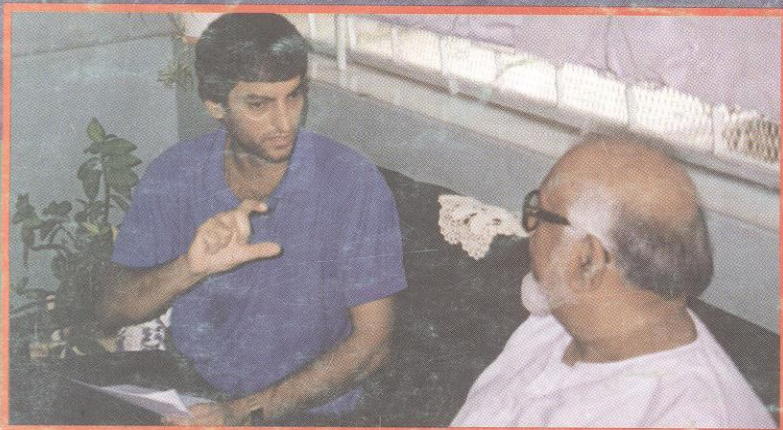


5
Zilkaad 1416 A.H./March 1996

Federation Samachar



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FEDERATION SAMACHAR

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March, 1996.



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Gulam Sajan, Toronto

COVER PICTURE

Teachers and students at Nakuru
Camp. Story on page 13.

From the Editor's Desk

We need to be serious about AIDS

The number of people infected with AIDS and those who have tested positive for the HIV virus is increasing at an alarming rate. It is estimated that between 15 to 20 million people around the world carry the virus and forecasts project even more alarming figures. The highest progressive rate has been in Africa and with the virus continuously changing form and status, no antidote has been found whilst vaccines offer only a temporary but expensive remedy. Most of the victims will be breadwinners or spouses in the prime of their lives and their affliction will greatly disrupt families.

AIDS is an epidemic disease that destroys the body's immune system and leads to an appalling death. It is estimated that about 90% of victims obtain the virus through illicit homosexual and heterosexual relationships whilst others get it through illegal drug use by using infected intravenous needles or through infected blood transfusion or medical contact. The risk with blood transfusions is that about 2-3% of HIV screened blood can change from a HIV negative to a positive status after an incubation period of between six months to two years.

The AIDS virus is spreading like wildfire. Previously we were complacent, believing that our community could not be afflicted since we uphold moral values and are sincere believers. We also condoned the fact that in addition to illicit sexual behaviour, the AIDS virus can also be contracted through negligence or by mistake.

However AIDS cases have recently cropped up, some members have died and now we have an increasing number of carriers thereby proving that our community is equally vulnerable to the virus. Having been afflicted we now need to take aggressive precautions or else we will have an increasing number of HIV carriers who in due course will face certain death.

Some measures are relatively easily to implement. These include organising sex education [according to Islamic Sharia] programmes for the youths and elderly in schools, madrasahs, mosques etc. These programmes can enlighten on issues like moral sex, the safe use of condoms, safe circumcision, care when visiting dentists, caution on having one's ears or nose pricked or at acupuncture clinics and at barbers. The need to avoid blood transfusion unless it is absolutely necessary can similarly be stressed upon.

Other more radical measures that we need to encourage is for boys and girls to ensure that their potential spouse is tested before they get married. Legally, tests cannot be done prior to consent of the person involved but with the vertical transmission [to children] of the virus being very high, it is the best option. This measure is in no way over-demanding when one refers to available statistics. For example in Dar es Salaam, the extent of infection amongst the Asian population was 1 in every 100 in 1990; today it is up to 10 in 100 i.e. 10%. Truly alarming!

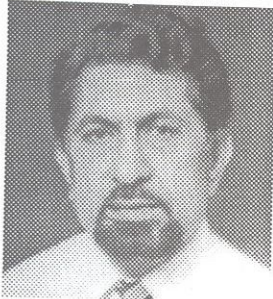
Just like the Islamic Republic of Iran does not issue marriage certificates unless both parties test negative, we should inculcate a system of 'testing' prior to marriage. Such a measure would also help to alert our youths. Moreover we also need to look into Zanjeer mataam. Medical practitioners are unanimous in their opinion that a deep and reasonably large wound would leave one vulnerable to the virus if the wound is exposed to external infected blood. Zanjeer mataam, according to Sharia, is mustahab (not obligatory) but in wake of the AIDS virus does its status not change? We know of many situations whereby we are exempted from waajibats for justified reasons. The sick are exempted from fasting, the less affluent don't have to go for Haj and maybe we should consult our Marja on the zanjeer mataam issue in wake of the AIDS virus.

AIDS has already wiped out many communities. Lets compile statistics, identify causes, enlighten our members on precautions and come up with a concrete system against the virus. Surely, precaution is better than death!

Editor

Chairman stresses on *Simplicity* and *Education* in Eid message

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani, delivered the following message on the occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr in February this year.



"The Holy month of Ramadhan has passed spreading its barakats all around us. We thank the Almighty for his bounties and pray that He may accept our supplications and acts of good nature performed during the holy month and keep us steadfast in our Iman. Ameen.

On this auspicious occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr we all at the Africa Federation wish you and all your families a peaceful and joyous Idd and pray for your happiness.

In this ever changing world, many of our community members are lumbered with various problems - economic hardships being one of the most disturbing. While inflation is spreading like a bush fire, real incomes are decreasing thereby making it difficult to meet normal essential expenses like electricity, water, rent and telephone. On the other hand stiff competition has made earning

more difficult and short-term expectations are worse.

Though the situation calls on us to live on a 'shoe string' budget, we have the tendency to be extravagant in our living especially during occasions like engagements and marriages. While our religion and our Aamma have encouraged simplicity and frugality, we do exactly the opposite, at times only to impress the masses - which at the end is worthless.

This is my humble request to all of you to ponder and take corrective measures before we become a community of 'show offs'.

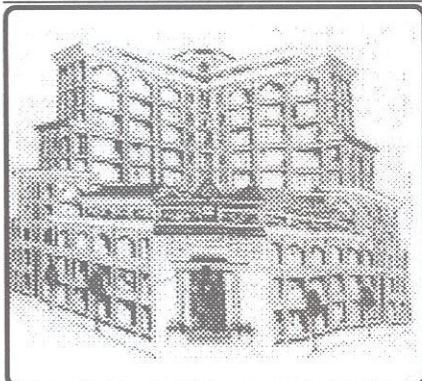
Education is and would remain the most secured insurance against adverse economic upheaval. Gone are the days when secondary education by itself was adequate. Islam which encourages education from Cradle to Grave should be taken more seriously. We have to progress from the normal secondary education to a University graduate and professional level. The success of our youths, both boys and girls and indeed our future generation lies on the steadfastness on our faith and attaining higher education not only to survive but to prosper and lead.

It is our hope that each individual will seriously consider this message and corrective measures are taken. Mothers can play very important role in this regard.. They can lead the family in economical living and can also watch on the education of the children and give them encouragement. There is a saying that "**The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.**" A mother is more important than hundred teachers.

I am drawing the attention of our community to these two important issues and it is my hope that this may be fully discussed in the next session of the Supreme Council meeting to be held in Nairobi from 5 April, 1996.

Idd is a holy and joyful occasion and it is but natural that we tend to remember with love all our dear and near ones who passed away during the year and before. To all those families who have lost their members, we pray for them to bear the losses and we also pray that Allah (s.w.t.) rest their souls in eternal peace and amongst His chosen ones.

In conclusion let us offer Sura-e-Fateha for all the departed souls."



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Your Letters

Views, opinions or articles should be addressed to:

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

The Samachar and leaders.....

Dear Brother,

I was pleased to read the December 1995 issue of the *Federation Samachar*.

That standard of articles has improved in the magazine, credit of which goes to you and your team. The courage which you and your team have taken in publishing letters and articles is admirable and at the end of the day, the main aim of the magazine should be and is to inform or advise community members of what is happening where and what wrongs, if any, are taking place.

Talking of community leaders, one wonders why it is only now that we at times see fingers being pointed at them. Previously we had no fingers pointed to leaders like Late Ladak, Late Nurmohamed, Late Nasser, Late Ebrahim Sheriff or Late Mohamedali Meghji. Has the quality of leadership now dropped or has the attitude of the community members changed?

A leader should have the quality of being perceptive to those having grievances and should be willing to face questions and criticisms from the public. A

leader not having the ability or patience to face his people should never, in the first place be a leader.

The rule of accountability of public funds and those of the *huqooq* must be taken seriously. Under no circumstances should the community tolerate any leader who misuses funds not only because we would be frivolous to forgive but also because *huqooq* funds do not belong to us and hence we have no right whatsoever to forgive.

Similarly it is wrong to allow any leader to get away with false statements and I hope your team will be bold enough to continue enlightening members of the community world-wide that we are answerable to only God and on the Day of Judgement we will be questioned of our actions (amaal) and will be held liable if we have intentionally overlooked wrong actions undertaken by any of our leaders.

I do hope this letter raises opinions from other members, which I presume your Board will not hesitate to publish in the issues to come.

With salaams and dua.

A.G. Merchant
Middlesex, UK

Dear Brother,

Thank you.....

I do sincerely thank the Editorial Board for including in the *Federation Samachar* news about New York Jamaat as well as other Jamaats around the world. This policy of yours has created world-wide interest in your esteemed paper thereby boosting its stature.

Please find the New York Jamaat Membership directory for your files and keep up with the excellent work. Inshallah Allah (s.w.t.) will reward you for this noble service to the community.

Shul Khalfan
President, New York Jamaat
USA.

Dear Brother,

Did Toronto Forum
clear the air?

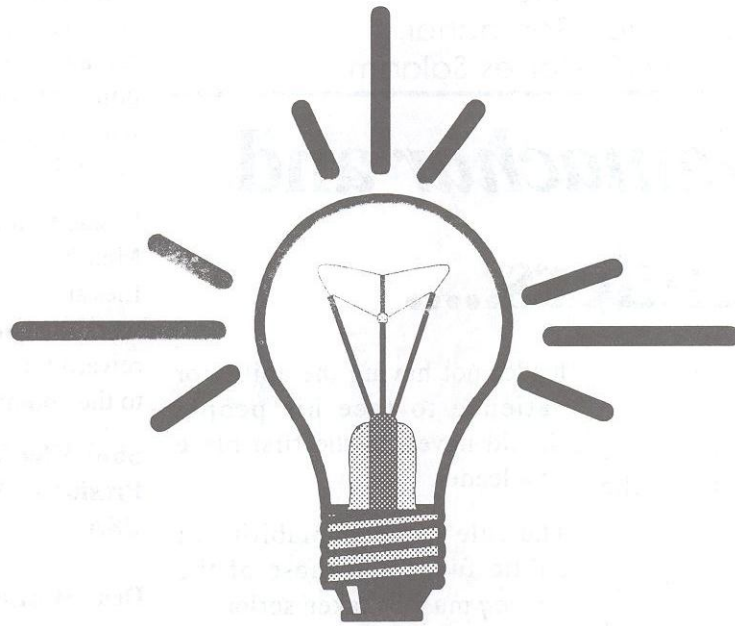
I refer to the news item, 'Toronto Open Forum clears the air' which was carried in the December, 1995 issue of the *Federation Samachar*.

I fail to see what air was cleared, what compromise was reached or what unity can be achieved. After all said and celebrated, the book *Islamic Messianism*, which has been defended without remorse by its author remains untouched and intact for future reference by academicians who will be free to quote from it. Probably a copy will also be given to believers entering Universities.

The author claims the research work undertaken for his book was for academicians and believers are being taken for a ride. This reminds me of a Kiswahili saying, *Papa hukaangwa na mafuta yake*.

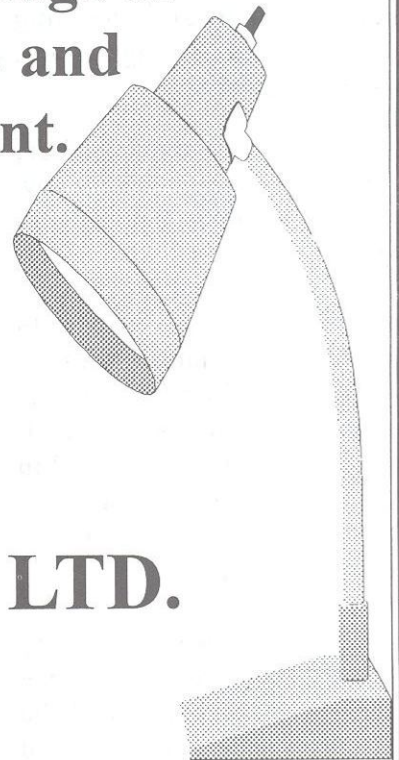
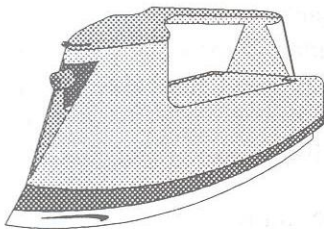
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Your Letters

Dear Brother,

Some inputs...

The following quips may be of interest to your esteemed readers:

Pain is God's megaphone to rouse a deaf world or person;

Ask yourself, "What would God do in this situation?" Then do it.

If you feel low, don't despair. The sun has a sinking spell every night but it comes up every morning;

When beggars ask you for money, buy them something to eat;

Those who indulge in loud or bossy language need to know that you don't need to shout if you use the right words;

The amount of pain people inflict on others is directly proportional to the amount they feel within;

We cannot really love anybody with whom we never laugh; and

Its wise to marry a person with whom you love to talk. As you get older, her or his conversational skills will be as important as any other.

Observer,

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Dear Brother,

That blind support.....

In your editorial of the July, 1995 issue of the *Federation Samachar* you mentioned that leaders are required not to deny information to the community especially if such information is sought on religious or community issues.

I agree that leaders are unjust to the community if they are not open and honest or withhold comments when information or clarifications are sought.

In the December, 1995 issue the *Samachar* carried various letters supporting your views. There was no letter which disagreed with you and the simple reason for this is that there could not be any.

In many cases a strange trend develops at community, political or social circles when leaders do not serve with sincerity. The leaders try to win the confidence of a few important or unimportant personalities and then expect the same personalities to defend them at all times. They expect such

people to defend their mentors (or whatever you call them) on all issues of controversy thereby defying all logical thinking.

We can only pity such supporters for their misplaced personality devotion which is done at the expense of their conscience. Do they not understand that such 'blind' support often means supporting the untruth and that this would be at the cost of forsaking their own salvation from God just because they are out to please delinquent leaders.

Leaders need the support of members and members are expected to uphold the efforts of their leaders. However when leaders flout their responsibilities, they should be expected to clarify or amend themselves or else risk losing support from their members. Blind support is not justified under any circumstances.

Reader,

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Muslim food that includes meat that is not halal..

Recently I came across some information which alerted on the limitations of food we can eat when travelling by air. As the *Federation Samachar* is well read in Africa and overseas, this information will be useful to your readers.

When travelling some of us order "Muslim food". This food does not include halal meat as one would expect because according to airline specifications, a "Muslim Meal" contains no pork but does not include meat which is halal.

The "Kosher" meal for Jews is provided in strict accordance to their religion and even has a certificate that the slaughter of the animal has been overseen by a Rabbi.

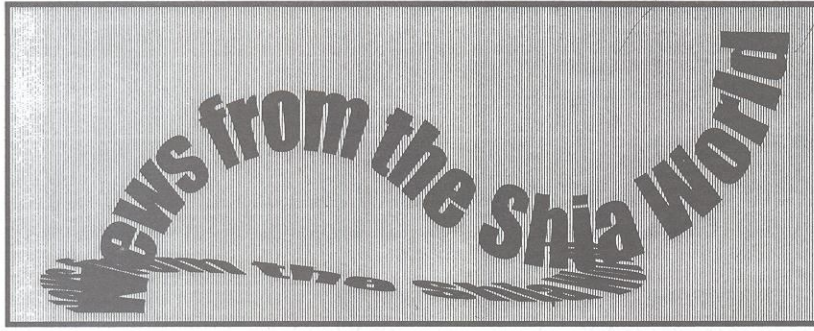
Airline passengers should therefore order Asian Vegetarian meals. This is more spicy than the regular vegetarian meal and contains no meat. It does however have cheese and crackers and for those who are particular about cheese containing pepson/rennet (animal enzyme) they can use butter instead. Most of such meals

are cooked in Airline kitchens and they use no animal fat. Thus they are totally safe for Muslims to eat.

Another alternative is to order fish but then there is no guarantee that the stuffing or accompaniment with the fish is allowable for consumption by Muslims.

Please note that all airlines stopping at Middle East airports or any part of the Muslim world do pick up food consumable to Muslims.

Frequent Traveller,
Toronto, Canada.



New Centre in Qum

The Abu'l Fazlil Abbas Mehfil was officially opened by Ayatullah Jawadi and Mulla Asgherali of the World Federation in December, 1995. Among those present were Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina, Jawad Zarif, a Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran, Maulana Baqri of NY, the Jaffer family and many prominent Ulema and businessmen from Iran.

The building was purchased and extensively renovated and made "wakf" by the G.R. Jaffer family of New York at a cost of about \$ 150,000 in the memory of their beloved parents Marhoom Gulamhusein Rajbali, Rukiabai and sister Kanize-Zainab.

The first floor houses a Mehfil with a capacity of 500 people and on the second floor there are dormitories for 35 KSI Hawza students. The third floor houses an office of the World Federation and provides accommodation to Administrators and trustees.

The Mehfile is located in a prominent area within four minutes walking distance of the "Roza" of Bibi Masuma Qum. The Mehfile's telephone contact is: 98 251 49734.

The Center has been assigned to the World Federation for management while all costs are to be borne by the Jaffer family and the World Federation. The trustees are Hujjatul-Islam Agha Murtaza Ayatullah Jawadi, Mulla Asgherali and Mustafa Jaffer's family.

Guests at Los Angeles mosque

About 20 Christian males and females recently visited the Huseini Imambara, Los Angeles as observers of the Friday prayers. Sheikh Falah led the prayers and gave Friday Khutba on the subject of Nabi Issa as revealed in the Holy Qur'an. The Christian ladies were in full Islamic dress and sat with Muslim ladies. The leader of the guests, Mike Milburn of the Church on Brady of Los Angeles presented a basket of fruits as a sign of goodwill and friendship.

On behalf of Los Angeles Jamaat, Gulamabbas Dhala welcomed the guests and thanked them for the gift. He reciprocated by presenting them with a video Cassette, "Pilgrimage to Mecca", Computer Programs of the English translation of the Holy Qur'an and the 'Nahjul Balagha'. Pyarali Hassanali presented them with copies of the printed English translation of the Holy Qur'an on behalf of Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an (TTQ) of New York. Br. Sadik Alloo represented the Jamaat as a Public Relations Officer.

After the prayers, the guests freely mingled with their hosts in the garden where coffee and pastry was served. The atmosphere was cordial and many exchanged address cards and discussed about Islam and Christianity.

Nahaj-ul-Balagha translated into Hindi

The Nahaj-ul-Balagha, a compilation of the sermons of Imam Ali [a.s.] has now for the first time been translated into Hindi.

The translation has been done on behalf of the Academy of Nahaj-ul-Balagha studies, New Delhi by Azizul Hasan Jaferi who works as an assistant editor at the Publication Division of the Culture House of the Islamic Republic of Iran in New Delhi.

It is reported that the translation has been commended by the press and religious scholars in India and around the world. It is expected to greatly help Hindi-speaking people and scholars to adequately comprehend the ever important sermons of Imam Ali [a.s.].

Cordiality at its best

Soon after the tense Toronto Peace Forum, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina left Washington, DC. for UK on a business visit to the University of Birmingham.

On his way back via London, Mulla Asgherali took him as his guest for an overnight stay at his home. This was a heartening gesture considering that the two had been at different ends during the Forum.

The Forum cleared the air and the leaders proved that problems and issues are there to be resolved rather than being endlessly argued upon.

"Islam is wrongly portrayed" says Egyptian ambassador

Islam is a religion of tolerance and peace but it is often wrongly portrayed in the West, asserted Egyptian Ambassador Merwat Tallawy in a very articulate and eloquent comment on the Islamic position towards women.

In her address to the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, Tallawy reminded the congregation that Islam was the first religion to give dignity and respect to women at a time when the plight of women was abysmal. She said, "Islam spoke of human rights as early as the 14th century, before any Manma Carta was drawn up in Britain. It gave women equality, as well as identity and economic status", she said, drawing loud applause.

She said that Islam gives women an independent identity, irrespective of marital status and that a Muslim woman does not relinquish

her family name after marriage and neither does she have to sacrifice her independent status. She said under Islam, women are allowed to own land unlike many other countries which still do not allow their womenfolk to possess land.

On inheritance, she said that there is a full philosophy on how funds are to be divided amongst women. She said, "A man has other responsibilities. He has to take care of the household and often has to pay for others like a sister or other women in the family. A woman, on the other hand, can do what she likes with what she inherits."

The interpretation of Islam in the West depends on whether it is perceived in a liberal or restricted way, Tallawy pointed out. This, she added, depends on the culture and traditions of various countries.

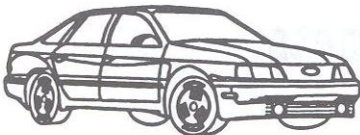
On polygamy, she said that while the Holy Qur'an allowed a man to

have more than one wife, this is recommended only if he is capable of financially providing for them and if he is morally just towards them.

Decrying the tendency to equate Islam with fundamentalism and terrorism, the Egyptian ambassador said, "We Muslims also contribute to the negative image of Islam. We are living in an era of instability and transition, after the end of the Cold War", she reminded the gathering.

"Until things settle down, such fundamentalism and extremism will continue; but remember there are fundamentalists and terrorists in various parts of the world, even in Japan. Islam is both tolerant and just and has tackled a great many scientific issues. It can fit into any society or culture, which is perhaps why the West is worried about Islam", she concluded.

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US leader praises Iran and its Islamic revolution

The American Muslim leader, Louis Farrakhan, when addressing a Revolution Day parade in Tehran on 11 February, 1996 said Iran is now the vanguard of the Islamic Revolution that is sweeping the world. He said the problem in the Muslim world is not America, Israel or the West but the fact that muslims have deviated from the path of the Prophet Muhammad and from the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.

His speech was broadcast live by the Iranian radio and excerpts follow:

"...we thank Allah for all His Prophets and Scriptures. We thank Allah for Musa and the Torah, for Jesus and the Gospel, for Muhammad and the Qur'an. Peace upon those Prophets of Allah.

To President Rafsanjani, to the spiritual leader Ayatollah Khamene'i and to all of the people of Iran and to the entire Muslim world, I am your Muslim brother from the USA. I and my delegation are here to pay tribute to one of the greatest spiritual revolutions in the history of the modern world. To the noble brothers and sisters of Iran, we want you to know that we are very proud that Islam is established in Iran and you have a truly Islamic Republic." [there was a vociferous chant of "God is Great" amongst the listeners].

He said, "... Iran was taken away from the purity of the faith of Islam so that there was a time

that we were ashamed of the faith of Allah. But Allah, Pure and Great, raised up Imam Khomeini to lead Iran back to the straight path of God. Iran is now the vanguard of an Islamic Revolution that is sweeping the earth. You must not despair

"My dear brothers and sisters of Iran, you have a lot to be proud of. Before the revolution there were only 52 magazines. Since the revolution there are now 798 magazines and periodicals in Iran. Before the revolution there were no elections in Iran but now you have had 17 elections since the revolution. Before the revolution there was only room for 175,000 students in Iran but now your capacity is 1.4 million students. Before the revolution you imported 24 billion dollars in imports and now you have reduced your imports to 14 billion dollars which means that Iran is becoming self-sufficient."

because it appears that enemies are all around this marvellous revolution. You must not get weak or weary in your vanguard position because you, Iran, are forging the way for others to bear witness to the Quranic verse that: There is no God but Allah and Mohamed is his prophet.

And so, my dear brothers and sisters, I will leave you with a verse from the holy Qur'an: O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah as it ought to be kept until you die....and hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited and remember

Allah's favour to you when you were enemies, then he united your hearts, so by his favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire when Allah saved you from it. Thus Allah has made clear His message.

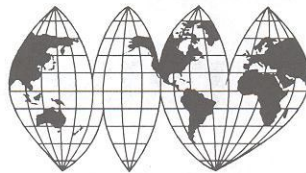
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"Your leadership has stopped the influx of degenerate television to Iran. It is not that they wish to deprive you of what the outside world offers but your leadership does not want to see a righteous mind polluted or corrupted with the filth and degeneracy of a world that is on its way out."

that Iran is now becoming self-sufficient. Before the revolution, Iran imported eight million tonnes of wheat and now Iran imports no wheat because it grows enough to feed her own population and can export the surplus to others.

(continued on page 15)

ELECTION



ROUND-UP

The K.S.I. Muslim Community of London



Dr. Sadiq Rahim



Anwerali Jagani

The Office Bearers on the current Executive Committee of the K.S.I. Muslim Community of London are:

President

Dr. Mohamed Sadiq Rahim

Vice President

Anwerali Jagani

Hon. Treasurer

Mohamedali Dharamsi

Asst. Hon. Treasurer

Abdul Nurmohamed

Hon. Secretary

Fazal Tharoo

Hon. Asst. Secretary

Mohamed Lalji

The committee members are Murtaza Ebrahim, Mehdi Fazal, Mohamedhusein Manek, Husein J. Merali, Hussein H. Rehemtulla and Azad A. Walji. The trustees are Ramzan Dhanji, Zulfikar Hamir, Mohamed Nazarali and Akberali Sabur.

Allentown

The following Executive Committee members were elected at the Allentown Annual General meeting held on 20 January, 1996 for a term of two years.

Ebrahim Karim	President
Nisar Rahim	Vice President
Asgar M. Bhallo	Hon. Secretary
Irfan M. Dinani	Hon. Asst. Secretary
Mohamed Khaku	Mukhi
Munir Jaffer	Member
Munis Bhallo	Trustee
Kazim Dharsi	Trustee
Abbas Saleh Issa	Trustee

The Jamaat trustees have been elected for a term of 5 years.

Kinshasa

The following executive Committee members have been elected to run the Kinshasa Jamaat for the 1996 to 1997 term:

Hassan Alibhai	President
Abdulla Afzal	Hon. Secretary
Mohd Reza Nanji	Hon. Treasurer
Ali Reza Bawa	Member
Rizwan M. Remtullah	Member

Kigoma

The current office bearers of the Kigoma Jamaat elected into office in November, 1995 are:

Asgharali Remtullah	President
Arifali Jaffer	Vice President
Mushtaq Rajabali	Hon. Secretary
Ahmad Najafi	Joint Secretary
Hussein Remtullah	Mukhi
Mohamed Jagani	Member
Mohammad Allahrakhia	Member

Chairman nominates

Councillors for 1995/97 period

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani nominated the following Councillors for the period 1995/97 as per clause 21(d) of the constitution:

The nominated Councillors from Dar es Salaam are:

Habib Mulji - Immediate Past Chairman of the Federation;
Hussein Rashid, Chairman of the Education Board;
Roshan Fazal, Chairman of the Setwel Board;
Aunali Khalfan, Chairman of the Central Health Board;
Munir Daya, Editor, *Federation Samachar*;
Pyarali Shivji, Hon. Secretary, Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

The other nominated councillors are:

Abbas A. Jaffer, Chairman, Tabligh Committee, Mombasa;
Abbas Nasser, Chairman, Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya, Mombasa;
Ali H. Sheriff, Co-ordinator, Shia Centre, Bilal Muslim Mission, Arusha;
Ramzan M. Nanji, Trustee of the Africa Federation, Vice Chairman of the Setwel Board, Chairman of the Nairobi Bilal Muslim Mission of Nairobi and
Asaf Gulamhussein, Liaison Officer of Mombasa Jamaat with the Supreme Council, Mombasa.



Nakuru Camp a success

The Tabligh Sub-committee of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat organised a two week summer camp at Nakuru, Kenya in December, 1995 thereby providing an opportunity to our youths to spend their holidays in a religious but lively atmosphere.

The Chairman of the Tabligh Sub-committee, Dr. Shiraz Datoos with his Secretary, Mehboob Somji coordinated with Nairobi based Alirazabhai Mulla Nanji, Maalim Mujahid Sheriff and Mulla Mohamed Kassamali [all of whom are trustees of the Rasul-al-Akram Academy], to organise the Camp. The Administrator-in-charge at the Camp was Dr. Shiraz Datoos.

The Camp was held at the Rasul-al-Akram Academy in Nakuru, located about 100 miles from Nairobi. In all, 32 boys aged between 14 to 19 years participated of whom 19 came from Dar es Salaam, 16 from Nairobi, 6 from Mombasa and 1 from Mwanza.

Five instructors were chosen by the organisers to lecture the campers and the objective was to have an informal environment whereby students could freely mix with their mentors. The five instructors were Sheikh Shabbir Maysami, a religious Scholar and Administrator in Az-Zahra Academy in Qum, Iran, Dr. Murtaza Alidina, a Religious Scholar and Lecturer in Islamic

Studies at the Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary in Dar es Salaam, Dr. Mahmood Datoos, a university lecturer in Civil Engineering in London, Dr. Dilawer Padhani and Dr. Mohsin Shariff, both medical doctors in Dar es Salaam.

The formal opening of the Session was held on 17 December, 1995 in the presence of dignitaries from Nairobi and on the same day formal sessions commenced.

There was some shyness amongst students in the first few days but the ice was soon broken and a sense of unison soon developed.

The religious topics that were covered included Quran recitation and commentary, Islamic beliefs,

ideology, personalities and history, jurisprudence, death and the Hereafter plus sexual morality. The lectures also tried to emphasise on how religious laws apply to lifestyles.

Medical topics included smoking, AIDS, sexual morality and behaviour and its effect on physical, mental and psychological well-being.

Other topics included public speaking techniques, role of the media, careers guidance and computers. Quiz sessions, dramas and debates were also held along with sports like swimming, volleyball, football, table-tennis and cricket.

Three outdoor sessions were organised whereby students left the Camp. There was an afternoon trip to Nakuru town, a boat trip on Lake Bogoria to see marine life and wild birds plus a visit to Baringo Game Reserve. On return to Nairobi, the students also visited two shopping malls there.

The Camp hoped for a development of self discipline and confidence in an environment where punctuality had to be

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The Organisers and Instructors of the Nakuru Camp pictured from left to right are Dr. Mahmood Datoos, Dr. Dilawer Padhani, Dr. Murtaza Alidina, Dr. Shiraz Datoos, Sheikh Shabbir Maysami and Dr. Mohsin Sheriff.

....Nakuru Tabligh Camp a success

(from page 13)

observed, facilities had to be shared, personal hygiene had to be maintained and where campers had to do their own cleaning, washing and ironing.

Lecturer Murtaza Alidina, inculcated in the youths a sense of understanding on what is actually meant by a meaningful life and explained why things prohibited by Allah [s.w.t.] are not meant to create inconveniences but are for our own good.

He said that youths often claim that religious laws make life dull and meaningless without realising that such laws enhance discipline in their lives for a better and prosperous present and future.

He told the youths that religion not only involves following a set of rituals and traditions but is a complete code of life and that they are expected to follow Islamic ethics at all times and not only when they enter a mosque or madrasah.

He said that the youths should try and develop a character (way of life) as that of the Ahlul Bayt and as prescribed by Sharia.

A lecturer from Qum, Sheikh Shabbir Maisami, informed the youths on the Islamic Ideology of *Usul e Din* whilst Dr. Mahmood Datto from the UK. dwelt on the subject of Islamic history.

He said that the future would appear vague if one forgot, ignored or refused to derive lessons from the past. He made participants realise the richness of our Islamic History thereby inciting love of these personalities whose sacrifices and tolerance have guided us to this day.

For a healthy mind, a healthy body is necessary. To this effect Dr. Mohsin Sheriff and Dr. Dilawer Padhani from Dar es Salaam candidly talked on current health issues and on Moral (and immoral) practices prevalent amongst youths.

In addition to the 'Self Discipline and Self Development' sessions, many other exciting and interesting extra curricular activities were also held.

One of the primary objectives of the Camp was to promote brotherhood amongst the participants. This objective was achieved. The two weeks Camp was held in a cordial atmosphere and at the end there was a sad farewell amongst students and instructors.

The students produced a contact list of all campers so as to keep in touch with their new colleagues and they also produced a souvenir magazine, highlighting all the activities at the camp. They also called for more regular hosting of such camps by the Tabligh Sub Committee.

Of particular help in organising the session was a young and dynamic Nairobi scholar, Sheikh Mujahid Sheriff, who organised facilities enjoyed by the participants at Nakuru and who also arranged their transit stay in Nairobi. In Arusha, Br. Hamid Sheriff made the transit stay a comfortable one.

After the success of the Nakuru Camp, the organisers plan to have a similar Camp at Nakuru in December, 1996. It is also planned to have a Camp for girls in Nairobi under the supervision of ladies. Meanwhile a video report of the Camp has been released by the Tabligh Sub-Committee of Dar es Salaam.

Dar hosts I'tikaaf

The Tabligh Sub-Committee of the the KSI Jamaat of Dar es Salaam organised the fourth I'tikaaf in Dar es salaam which spanned over three days from 2 February, 1996 (12th Ramadhan) to 4 February, 1996 (14 Ramadhan). In all 10 elders and 40 youths participated. The unique feature that marked this year's session was the attendance of 20 African Shias whose presence helped to promote Islamic brotherhood.

I'tikaaf means attaching or binding oneself to a Mosque for at least three days, fasting by day and praying and reading the Holy Qur'an by night. It includes eating and sleeping in the Mosque and one can only go outside the Mosque for a call of nature or to perform ablution or to take a bath.

In the Qur'an there are two instances where Allah (s.w.t.) mentions I'tikaaf. These are:

1] *"Purify My House for those who visit it, and for those who do I'tikaaf in it and for those who bow down on their knees in worship."* (2:125, the Cow); and

2] *"Have no dealings with your wife at night while you are doing I'tikaaf."* (2:187).

In Dar es Salaam, the first I'tikaaf was held in Ramadhan 1413 (March, 1993) and has since been regularly organised in Ramadhan.

This year's I'tikaaf was well organised and informative. The youths cleaned the mosque, listened to lectures and undertook group projects.

(...from page 11)

There can be no freedom without responsibility. If America wants the world to be democratic, Iran has had 17 elections, many for President, many for members of parliament. This is a theocracy but it is also a democracy.

Your leadership has stopped the influx of degenerate television to Iran. It is not that they wish to deprive you of what the outside world offers but your leadership does not want to see a righteous mind polluted or corrupted with the filth and degeneracy of a world that is on its way out.

In conclusion there are two points I wish to make on the mourning of Hazrat Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam: Ali was the executor of the will of the Prophet. It is not accidental that Iran loves Ali so much. For now Allah has called upon Iran to execute the will of Prophet Mohamed, the will of God and the will of the Qur'an.

As your brother, I personally love Imam Khomeini. I visited his tomb this morning and laid a wreath. And I say to you, beloved Iran and to the entire Muslim world: speak not of those who are slain or who die in the way of God, that they are dead because they are alive but you understand not. The soil of Iran is soaked with the blood of martyrs. The martyrs have not died in vain. Keep the revolution alive. Imam Khomeini lives. He lives in you. He lives in every believer in Islam. Long live Iran. Long live the Muslim world. Long live the struggle for true independence. Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar. God is Great."

Chairman makes brisk visit to Moshi, Arusha and Mombasa

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani made a brisk visit to Moshi, Arusha and Mombasa to discuss community affairs. On January 18, 1996 he flew to Moshi where in the early afternoon he visited elders of Moshi including the Past Federation Chairman, Murabbi Mohamedali Sheriff. In the evening he was the Guest of Honour at the foundation laying ceremony for the proposed five storey Al-Qaim Building which is expected to house six shops and 10 flats. At the same time Hujjatul Islam Sayid Saeed Akhtar Rizwi performed the opening of the adjacent A-Zahra building.

Later he visited the Sameer Squash Centre at the Jaffery Sports Club and then proceeded to the Mt. Kilimanjaro School, an English medium primary school founded by the Asian communities and parents of Moshi.

After Evening prayers, Mohamedbhai delivered a key-note speech at the Moshi Imambara which was followed by a dinner. Prior to the Chairman's address, the President of Moshi Jamaat, Alhaj Kassam Kermali Sheriff thanked Mohamedbhai, Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizwi and Fidahusseinhai Hameer for visiting Moshi.

The Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani called on community members there to invest in projects with high returns in order to maintain an edge over competitors thereby ensuring economic progress. He congratulated the Chairman of the Building Board and Moshi Jamaat for venturing into the new building projects at very competitive costs and said the new buildings would uplift the stature of the Community in Moshi by providing better shelter to our brothers.

The Chairman called on the Community to invest more in properties and noted that after 35 years of independence there is a dire need to re-evaluate the Community's participation in the local economy. "For how long", he asked, "are we going to be traders, importers and distributors of goods?" He said profit margins in business have dipped and it is time that we think on 'macro' terms if we are to survive.

The Chairman also stressed on higher education and praised Moshi youths for taking education seriously. He said many youths from Moshi who pursued further education are now well settled world-wide.

He informed the gathering that his appeal to raise 50 scholarships during the Golden Jubilee celebration raised 16 scholarships worth US \$ 18,000 each, some of which have been granted. He said the Council is looking into the possibility of Education Insurance and on investing in securities or treasury bills to generate money to finance students. Finally he assured that all Khums money is well spent and is being fully accounted for to our Marja.

From Moshi, the Chairman travelled to Arusha where he discussed Council issues with leaders. The next stop was in Nairobi where the Jamaat leader, Zulfikar Khimji briefed him on progress of arrangements made by the Jamaat to host the Council meeting in April, 1996.

In Mombasa, he met the trustees to discuss on the development of trust properties. The Council trustee, Yusuf Dato arranged a sumptuous dinner in honour of the Chairman with over 80 guests present. The Chairman addressed this gathering with a speech pre-emptive of his main address at the Supreme Council session.

Shedding more light on the Board Chairmen

The Chairmen of the various Boards under the umbrella of the Africa Federation are profiled here.



Name: Roshan A. Fazal [Chairman, Setwel Board]

Age: 59

Qualifications: Holding a Diploma in Food Manufacturing.

Business or working capacity: Director, Small Scale Food Industries.

Past Community or other social service: Served as Councillor representing Bukoba and Dar es Salaam for about 25 years; served as a member of the Managing Committee for Bukoba and Dar es Salaam Jamaat for about 30 years; served as Chairman for Bukoba Ithna-Asheri Union for 9 years and as trustee for 6 years; served as Chairman of various sub-committees of Dar es Salaam Jamaat and the Supreme Council.

Also a Founder Member of the Dar es Salaam Golden Crescent Group; served as Governor of the Golden Crescent Group in 1986/1987; Chairman of Tanganyika Territorial Council for 12 years; Member of Lions Club for 22 years and served as Chairman of the Lions Club in 1984/1985.

Family: Married with one daughter, two sons and five grandchildren.

Sports involvement (if any): First Elected Tanzania Chairman of Bukoba Gymkhana Club and served for 5 years. Loves watching cricket and motor rallies.



Name: Aunali Khalfan [Chairman, Central Health]

Age: 45

Business or working capacity: Aviation Manager plus Chief Product Quality Inspector and Accredited Safety Auditor, BP Tanzania Limited.

Past Community or other social service:- Served as a volunteer since 1969 and was the founder member of the Ithnaasheri Union Volunteer Corps in 1976. Has been the Chairman of the IUVC for the last three terms. Currently is also the Hon. Secretary of the Ithna asheri Union.

In 1990, was elected on the Managing Committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat and was entrusted the portfolio of Education and later was given the Medical portfolio.

Family: Married with three sons.

Sports involvement (if any): Has been involved in organising several sports tournaments and is an ardent supporter of Union Sports Club.



Name: Munir Hassanali Daya [Editor, *Federation Samachar*]

Age: 38

Qualifications: Holding an accounting diploma and completed Foundation Exams of the Association of Certified Accountants (ACCA). Now pursuing a diploma in journalism.

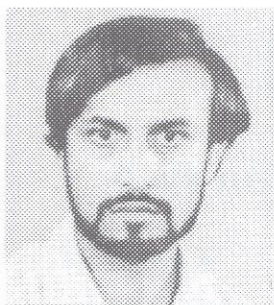
Business or working capacity: Managing Director of Rentokil Tanzania Limited. Liaison Rep. for Detia Degesch. Freelance journalist having weekly columns in the Tanzania *Sunday News* and *Business Times*. Former Tanzania columnist for the Kenya *Sunday Nation* and Mombasa *Coastweek*.

Past Community or other social service: Initially an associate Editor and then the Editor of the *Samachar* over the past 12 years. Has also served as Squash Secretary, Dar Gymkhana Club and Squash Captain for Union Sports Club.

Family details: married with 2 boys

Sports involvement: Represented Tanzania in squash for six years. Won inaugural Supreme Council squash individual event and captained the victorious Dar Union Sports Club squash team for the 1984, 1985 and 1986 Council tournaments. Also a regular swimmer.

.....Shedding more light on the Board Chairmen



Name: Husein Aliasghar Rashid [Chairman, Education Board]

Age: 42

Qualifications: BSc. in Civil Engineering (Honours) from University of Nairobi

Business or working capacity: Project Manager. Head of Water Supply and Sanitation Department at Norconsult, an international consulting firm. Has 20 years experience on water supply, sanitary and civil work projects in Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and Uganda. Experience includes external evaluations, feasibility studies, planning, design, preparation and evaluation of tenders, construction supervision and contract administration.

Past Community or other social service: Commenced community work in 1982.

Between 1982 and 1993 helped towards the setting up and running of the Haidery Library in Nairobi. Was Hon Secretary of Nairobi Jamaat for one year from 1983 to 1984 and a member of the managing committee from 1984 to 1985.

Was an Engineering Supervisor for Nairobi Jamaat for the Madrasah and Musafekhana extensions and also assisted in the supervision of the construction of Madressa-Rasul Al-Akram and of the laying out of the water supply systems to various institutions of the Bilal Muslim Mission in Nairobi. Is an Engineering Supervisor on behalf of Nairobi Jamaat for the ongoing Lavington Complex which houses a Mosque, Imambara and Madressa.

Joint Secretary of the International Rehabilitation Board of the World Federation and Chairman of the Education Board of the Africa Federation.

A visit to the Commissioner of Prisons....

On the invitation of the Commissioner of Prisons, Alhaj J.H. Mangara, a delegation from the Bilal Muslim Mission in Tanzania visited him on 24 January, 1996 at his Kivukoni Front office in Dar es Salaam.

The visiting group included Chief Missionary, Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizwi, Fidahussein Hameer (Trustee and Member), Murtaza Jivraj (Member) and Mohamed Said Kiaratu of Kibaha who initially enabled the Mission to spread tabligh work to the prisons.

The visit to the Commissioner came in wake of the permission given to the Bilal Muslim Mission to teach religion on weekends and to distribute Islamic books to

Muslim prisoners in Dar es Salaam and Coast Region.

There are nine prisons in the Coast Region. The Mission has so far extended its services to four prisons because the other five prisons are at more distant places like

Mafia and Utete.

The Commissioner expressed appreciation to the visiting team for the services being rendered to the prisoners and reassured them of his co-operation in raising morals and spiritual values amongst prisoners.



Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizwi signs the visitors book in the presence of Fidahussein Hameer, Murtaza Jivraj and Mohamed Said Kiaratu.

Dubai hosts memorable sports festival

Pearl of the Gulf makes it a pearl of an event

The Jaffery Sports Club contingent from Dubai which participated for the first time in the Supreme Council Sports Festival held in Nairobi in 1994 went with a proposal to be the next hosts. Many then wondered if Dubai, participating in this major tournament for the first time, would be able to host the next sporting gala and if it was right to move the venue away from the traditional venues in East Africa.

The objective was to have a jamboree for our sportsmen and did it really matter if the venue was out of Africa? Rational prevailed and Dubai were given an opportunity to host the event and surely the Pearl of the Gulf [*Lu'lu Al Khaleejieh*], as it is called, made it a pearl of an event.

The 7th Sports Festival was held in Dubai from 22 December to 29 December with teams from Allentown, Arusha, Birmingham, Bombay, Dar es Salaam, Kampala, Karachi, London, Mombasa, Moshi, Nairobi, New York, Toronto and the hosts taking part. The hosts fielded two teams in all the five sports that were contested, namely cricket, squash, tennis, football and volleyball.

In football, besides the two Dubai teams, Karachi, Dar es Salaam, Mombasa and Birmingham took part. In cricket, a total of nine teams participated. Besides the two Dubai teams, the other teams were Karachi, Nairobi, Arusha, London, Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Bombay.

Volleyball had the maximum number of participants with eleven teams contesting for honours. Teams came from as far as North America and along with the two Dubai teams, other participants were Mombasa, Arusha, Moshi, Birmingham, New York, London, Allentown, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi.

Tennis was contested by the two host teams, Mombasa, Nairobi, London and Dar es Salaam and in squash 10 teams vied for glories. Besides the two host teams, Nairobi, London, Moshi, Kampala, Dar es Salaam, Mombasa, Bombay and Karachi participated.

The tournament began as scheduled on 22 December, 1995 and the official grand opening ceremony was held at the Iranian club on 23 December. After the march past, the Vice Chairman of the Supreme Council, Mohamed Pirbhai addressed the gathering followed by the Chairman of Dubai Jamaat, Hussein Ali Yusufali and the Chief Guest, Mustafa Nasser of Dubai who has been an ardent supporter of Dubai Jafferies for many years. Prior to dinner the Chairman of the Dubai Jaffery Sports Club, Mohamed Raza Somji officially welcomed all participants and said the ultimate objective of the tournament was to foster brotherhood.

On the field, the sporting drama unfolded with teams sparing no effort to clinch glories.

CRICKET

The preliminary group games went well but a few games were interrupted by rain. Karachi and Nairobi qualified from Group A, while Dubai 1 and Dar es Salaam qualified from Group B.

The first semi-final between Dar es Salaam and Nairobi was a close encounter with Nairobi winning by 24 runs. In another very exciting semi-final, Karachi qualified for the final by defeating the hosts. In the final, an excellent century by veteran Asger Bandali of Nairobi Jafferies could not stop the Karachi team from winning. The victors were well pepped by a brilliant innings from Ejaz.

FOOTBALL

The football tournament played at the plush Iranian Club ground under floodlights aroused a lot of interest and games were played in true spirit of the festival.

In the semi-finals, Dubai 1 beat Mombasa convincingly while Dar es Salaam won against Dubai II. The final was a balanced encounter with Dubai 1 ultimately succumbing to Dar es Salaam by 3-1. The two teams earlier had a drawn encounter in the preliminaries.

The Dar es Salaam team displayed excellent team-work with goalkeeper Sibtein Rashid and striker, Nasrullah Mohamed who scored the highest number of goals in the tournament, putting in sparkling performances.

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VOLLEYBALL

With eleven contesting teams, the volleyball tournament was the most exciting event of the festival. There was added excitement with the first time participation of two North America teams.

Matches were played at the Iranian Club ground with spectators sometimes being kept on their toes up to past two in the morning. In Group A, Dubai 1 emerged as winners and were pitted against the strong Allentown team in the semi-final. The Group B winners were Dar es Salaam and they played the Group A runners up, Arusha in the other semi-final.

The Dar es Salaam team convincingly beating Arusha 3/1 and Allentown beat Dubai 1 by a similar margin. In the final defending champions, Dar es Salaam stood up to the occasion and convincingly beat Allentown by 3/0 thereby giving Dar es Salaam its third consecutive victory in volleyball.

SQUASH

The squash tournament was held at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Courts which offered excellent facilities. The tournament was exciting with ten teams participating but the victors could be predicted from the outset because the Karachi team came in with a star studded team with a duo of world ranked professionals, namely Kumail Mahmood and his brother. Dubai 1 and Nairobi qualified for the semi-finals from Group A while in Group B, Dar es Salaam and Karachi qualified. In the semi-finals, Dubai 1 beat Dar es Salaam whilst Karachi romped over Nairobi.

The final saw pre-tournament favourites, Dubai 1 losing to Karachi. The individual event was contested.

TENNIS

The tennis matches were played at the Iranian Club and the Rashid Hospital courts. The tournament was dominated by youngster, Ali Dewji of Dar es Salaam. In the finals, Dar es Salaam convincingly beat Mombasa thereby winning the tennis tournament for the first time. Due to rain interruption and time constraints, the individual event did not take place.

In perspective, the festival was well organised and Dubai Jaffery's spared no effort to make it a success. Special mention should go to the Managing and Festival Support Committees as well as to the team of volunteers, who worked tirelessly to make this festival a great success. They arranged visas and accommodation and provided transport, catering, airline arrangements and the like.

The festival finished with a spectacular prize giving ceremony at the Iranian club auditorium which was followed by dinner at the Iranian club restaurant.

The Supreme Council was represented at the closing ceremony by Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani who told the gathering that the purpose of initiating the Sports Festival was to bring our youths together and to foster friendship and brotherhood. He said that with the world now becoming a global village, it is now more necessary for community members to know and respect each other and said the Sports Festival engendered the establishment of new contacts.

There was also a speech by the Dubai Jaffery Sports Club Chairman and all the winning teams and the runner's up team received trophies. The following special trophies were also awarded.

Football [most goals]: Nasrulla Mohamed, Dar es Salaam Union.

Cricket, best batsman: Ejaz, Karachi Husseini Sports.

Best Disciplined team: Stanmore Ithnaasheri Union.

Most outstanding player of the Festival: Mohammed Ramzan, Dubai Jaffery Sports Club.

Sportsman of the Festival: Mohamed Panju.

The story so far ...

PAST WINNERS OF THE SPORTS FESTIVAL

Cricket

1984	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1985	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1986	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1987	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1989	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1994	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1995	Hussaini S.C. Karachi

Volleyball

1984	Jaffery S.C. Mwanza
1985	Jaffery S.C. Mwanza
1986	Jaffery S.C. Songea
1987	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1989	Jaffery S.C. Songea
1994	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1995	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam

Badminton

1987	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1989	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa

Golf

1985	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1986	Kilimeru Gymkhana Arusha

Squash

1984	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1985	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1986	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1987	Union S.C. Stanmore
1989	Union S.C. Stanmore
1994	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1995	Hussaini S.C. Karachi

Tennis

1984	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1985	Jaffery S.C. Mombasa
1986	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1987	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1989	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1994	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
1995	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam

Football

1987	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1989	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam
1995	Union S.C. Dar es Salaam

Table-tennis

1987	Jaffery S.C. Nairobi
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Education Board provides guidelines...awaits views to consolidate youth training

The first year of operations of the Secretariat of the Education Board from Nairobi is over. During this period, the Secretariat identified numerous problems hindering its functions. The major problems centred on finance and included:

- *Limited response from students who have completed their studies and are expected to have commenced repayment of loans received;*
- *Very little response from the families of these students;*
- *Almost negligible feedback from concerned Jamaats; and*
- *Difficulty in seeking a permanent source of Career - Guidance Counselling for students.*

In order to effectively discharge its duties, the Secretariat of the Education Board sought assistance in the form of suggestions, views or comments from the general membership of individual Jamaats. To this end, detailed circulars with guidelines were despatched to all Jamaats in October 1995, requesting them to organise workshops or seminars for parents as well as students. A feedback was anticipated by the end of January, 1996 but no Jamaat responded nor hosted such a seminar.

The guidelines have now been recirculated to members with an expectation that observations

will be received by **30 June, 1996**. Observations or any further clarifications can be addressed to:

**The Chairman,
Education Board,
P.O. Box 66545,
Nairobi.**

The Circular issued on 23 October, 1995 notioned that just like the Holy Prophet (SAW) always stressed on the importance of education, the Community too has a responsibility of raising awareness amongst our youths on the importance of seeking knowledge.

The Circular called upon Jamaats to assist in compiling information and data pertaining to the education of our children. It said that this information, apart from assisting the Jamaats and the KSISC in programming their future activities, will ensure that the Jamaats play a more active role in the affairs of their students and thus help in the process of decentralising the role of the Education Board.

The same Circular then advised Jamaats to conduct seminars and/or workshops for individuals with members of the Education Board of the respective Jamaats also taking part.

Guidelines were also provided on how to raise information and Jamaats were called upon to submit reports including

information like the number of participants, summary of discussions held and the recommendations made.

The proposed guideline by the Education Board suggested that boys, girls and parents participate in the discussions and it also set out the expected nature of the discussions to be held.

For boys and girls in Form 3 to Form 6, the Board proposed the following questions:

What is the importance of higher education? Is it necessary for those who have decided to join their parents' business to go for higher education and how will it help them?

Should short technical and other courses, some of which may be available locally, be encouraged to students who have not been very successful in their "A" or "O" levels? Are such courses available in your town? A list of preferred courses will be useful.

What are the options available for students when choosing where to undertake their higher education with respect to courses available locally? This should be discussed in view of the fact that a large number of parents are not able to finance their children's education and need assistance from the KSISC as well as other well

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wishers.

Is it important for students to have educational or savings insurance policies from young age to secure availability of funds for higher education?

Are students aware of the existence of the Education Board and what role it can play in assisting students pursue higher education? If participants have any suggestions about improving the Board's activities, these are welcome.

What is the extent of career guidance which is given in secondary/higher schools in your town and how useful is it? Should we have our own career counsellors? Should these counsellors be male or female? Will it help if the career counsellors are from your Jamaat for regular counselling or should an expert carry out the counselling every 6 months or 12 months?

Are students aware of the education facilities in other towns within Eastern Africa, especially those belonging to our Community?

How can inter-jamaat co-operation enhance education awareness in our Community and improve the present services provided by the Board?

Is it necessary for our girls to go for higher education either locally, in the West, East or in Muslim Countries? Reasons for NOT pursuing higher education will be useful. List of preferred courses will also be

useful.

For parents of current students and of those students who have received or are receiving loans, the Board proposed the following questions:

What is the importance of higher education for boys and girls? Is it necessary for those who have decided to join their parents' business (primarily boys) to go for higher education and how will it help them? For girls a list of preferred courses will be useful.

Is it important for parents to have savings or life insurance policies to secure availability of funds for higher education of their children in case of any mishaps eg. untimely death or disability?

Are parents aware of the education facilities in other towns within Eastern Africa especially those belonging to our Community?

How can inter-jamaat co-operation enhance educational awareness in our Community and improve the present services provided by the Board?

How can the Education Board improve its services to the Jamaats? List the type of services prepared by the local Jamaat and Board and how these should be implemented.

Are female parents aware of the existence of the Education Board and what role it can play in assisting their children pursue higher education? Whether participants have suggestions about improving the Board's activities, especially on how

the Board can assist girls to pursue higher education and on how ladies of our community can assist in ensuring that the policies of the Board are taken seriously at Jamaat level?

One of the functions of the Board is to approve interest free educational loans to deserving students. A number of past recipients of loans are not repaying them. Currently about \$ 280,000 is outstanding for collection. What is the best way to collect these amounts? Should the defaulters be taken to courts? How can the Board/KSISC impress upon the defaulters, their families and guarantors to repay the outstanding amounts in order to assist other deserving students liberally?

Since fees of most institutions increase at a rate of 3-5% annually how can the Board ensure that repayments from students who have completed their studies are sufficient to sponsor others?

Instead of relying solely on the goodwill of donors and the repayments from students, what other ways are there for the Board to become self sufficient?

If a short course for training career guidance counsellors from our Community is available overseas, would some members from your Jamaat be interested in undergoing such courses? Would they be willing to pay their own costs and/or contribute towards costs involved in organising such a course?

Universities are full of knowledge; the freshmen bring a little in and the seniors take none away. When this knowledge is applied to daily life, it makes the academician a powerful person.

Bilal Muslim Mission appeals for funds in wake of more projects in Tanzania

Since 1968, the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania has been expanding its activities far and wide. The Mission conducts an Islamic Correspondence Course and has under its control a printing press, the Howza-Ilmiya and the Boarding House. The Mission also conducts tabligh activities in 18 Branches and has embarked on an ambitious programme of building 5 Shia Centres a year.

The Mission has two bi-monthly Journals, 'The Light' which is distributed to all English speaking countries and the Sauti ya Bilal, which is read by Kiswahili speaking people. The Mission's annual recurrent expenditure now runs to the tune of Sh. 50 million and with the expansion of activities is bound to increase further.

The Mission has been receiving whole-hearted financial support from its parent body, the Federation of K.S.I. Ithna asheri Jamaats of Africa. However, with its own projects, the Supreme Council is becoming more pressed for funds and the Mission thus plans to purchase some properties in Tanzania to generate income from rent, which could then go towards its annual recurrent expenditure. The Marja' of our time, Ayatullah Uzama Seyid Ali Sistani D.A., has given his blessings to the Mission to collect US\$ 500,000 of Sehme Imam A.S. for the purpose. The Mission has now located a property in the centre of

Dar es Salaam and plans to procure this by April, 1996.

The property requires a lot of changes and maintenance but when completed, the income therefrom is expected to ease the Missions's financial constraints. Moami'neen are requested to contribute towards this good cause so as to help the Mission in this *Kar-e-Khair* and earn *Sawaabe-Jariya*. Surely all the income will be spent in *Tarwije Deen* and spreading of *Mazhabe Ahlul Bayt A.S.*

Meanwhile in Arusha, there are a number of scattered indigenous Shia groups and it was found pertinent that they should meet at a place where they can perform religious ceremonies and discuss religious, social and educational problems. The Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania has now obtained a plot through a generous donation by Brother Gulamali Esmail Virji of Arusha, who donated a one acre plot in a prime place of the town, Ngarenaro. The market value of this plot is colossal and the Mission now proposes to establish a Shia Centre there.

The Foundation stone laying Ceremony of the mosque at the Arusha Shia Centre was held on 19 January, 1996, by Allamah Sayid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, before a big crowd of Arusha residents and prominent personalities including the Chairman of the Africa Federation Alhaj Mohamed

Dhirani who travelled from Dar-es-Salaam for the occasion with Alhaj Fidahusein Hameer, a founder member of the Mission.

Construction costs are projected to be over 60 million shillings. The Mosque, Ablution area and toilets are estimated to cost T.Shs 18 million whilst the Madrasah for boys and girls will cost a further T.Shs 34 million. The Sheikh's flat is earmarked to cost T.Shs 8.5 million.

The Mission has appealed to generous donors to contribute towards this cause which would also earn them *Sawabe Jari* and *Baquyatu Salehat* because the sole purpose of this centre will be to spread *Madhhabe Ahlul Bayt A.S.*

For further information or remittance for either the Dar es Salaam property, Arusha project or for the establishment of new Shia centres, please contact:

**Bilal Muslim Mission of
Tanzania,
P. O. Box 20033,
Dar es Salaam.**

And/or

**Supreme Council of K.S.I.
Jamaats of Africa,
P.O. Box 7610,
Dar es Salaam.
Wa Billahit Tawfeeq**

Haydari Madrasah excels but seeks parents support

The Haydari Madrasah in Nairobi plays a crucial role in imparting Islamic religious knowledge to children.

The Madrasah is managed by a sub-committee appointed by the Managing committee of Nairobi Jamaat. The convenor, Zahid Datoo who is a member of the Managing Committee of the Jamaat attends monthly meetings to discuss Madrasah issues.

The Madrasah is managed by the following members:-

Aliraza Nanji	Headmaster
Akber Karawalli Dpty.	Headmaster
Zahid Datoo	Convenor
Anver Manji	Hon. Secretary
Zulfikar Nanji	Asst. Hon. Secretary
Abbas Chagpar	Hon. Treasurer
Raza Datoo	Member
Muhammed Kassamali	Member
Hassan M.M. Jaffer	Member
Nazir Kalyan	Member
Onali Nanji	Member

The Madrasah has 22 female and 11 male teachers who devoted time to teach 274 children for a total of 158 days during the year. Without the noble services of these teachers, it would not be possible to run the Madrasah.

In addition to normal classes, various other activities and occasions were held during the course of the year.

There was the Annual Prize Giving Day (covered in the July, 1995 issue of the *Samachar*) when children who performed well were presented with Gold, Silver and Bronze medals by the Guest of Honour, Alhaj Ramzanali Nanji (to the boys) and Mrs. Gulzar Ebrahim (to the girls.) Children who took part in Quran Khwani and in the Quiz competition were

also presented with gifts.

There was also the Open Day which was held over one week to enable parents to visit the Madrasah and discuss progress of their children.

The 'Open' week was held from 23 to 30 October, 1995 but the attendance by Parents was very poor. Of the 250 parents expected to attend, only 117 parents visited which was less than 50% of the envisaged attendance. The Madrasah has appealed to parents to take more interest in their childrens' religious education.

A Teachers Workshop was also organised in the middle of last year wherein possibilities of introducing extra curricular

activities to create interest among Madrasah children were looked into. The proceedings of the Workshop were covered in the December, 1995 issue of *Federation Samachar*.

The Madrasah then organised the Al Zahra Day on 25 November, 1995 at Mauladad Nursery Hall in Nairobi. Children from the age of 3 upwards took part in plays, demonstrations, qasidas, block busters, speeches and other competitions. The youngest speaker at the occasion, Imran Somji, gave a beautiful speech in Kutchi on Bibi Fatema Zehra A.S.

Amongst the distinguished visitors to the Madressa in the last year were Mulla Asgher, the President of the World Federation and Dr. Zahra Mustafavi, the last daughter of Late Ayatullah Khomeini.

From Nairobi...an Eid message

In his Eid message delivered on 21 February, 1996 the Chairman of Nairobi Jamaat, Zulfikar Khimji stressed on unity amongst members.

He acclaimed the introduction of the recitation of duas in English and praised the Madrasah there for their tireless efforts in propagating religious work amongst children. He also expressed happiness on the fact that the Quran Khanni for elders in the holy month of Ramadhan was well organised and well attended and acknowledged the contribution of religious lecturers and Forum organisers, who helped raise religious awareness in the community.

For the future, he said the community needs to ponder on how our future generation can live and be accepted to live with

dignity and self respect and to be seen as useful to their country. He also underlined the importance of professional education for boys and girls.

He said that the Nairobi Jamaat is trying to obtain national identity cards for members, instead of having them queue in Government offices and said that the subject of medical insurance was also being looked into.

On property, he said that it is planned to expediate completion of the first phase of the Lavington project and said that to ensure this, the development committee has been revived. He said collection of funds will no longer be centralised because the original donors for the Mosque, Madrasah and Imambara have promised to fulfil their original pledges.

Informal meeting induces discussions

An Informal Meeting of the Africa Federation, the first of its type, was held at the Dar es Salaam Imambara on 16 December, 1995 prior to the Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation.

After a formal opening through recitation of Qur'anic verses by Mulla Anu of Mombasa, the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani welcomed participants and said that being an informal meeting, an agenda had not been set. He called upon participants to raise issues of communal interest for discussion.

The informal meeting was attended by about 50 people including the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher and overseas delegates who had come over for the Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation.

One issue discussed was on whether Councillors should show more allegiance to their Jamaats or to the Federation. To this effect the Chairman said that Jamaats, as members of the Federation, are bound to protect the interest of the Federation and so are the Councillors.

Another issue discussed was the viability of having an arbitration

committee in each Jamaat to solve disputes between members, with an objective to avoid long, arduous and expensive legal proceedings in the courts of law.

It was noted that some Jamaats, like the Dar es Salaam Jamaat, had actually formed such a committee and with the constitution of the Africa Federation already having a stipulation to this effect, the Chairman advised all Jamaats to form such arbitration committees.

On the issue of Communal progress, the need for sports complexes, schools, hospitals and similar structures was emphasised along with the use of computers.

Mulla Asgher stressed that projects should be undertaken for a purpose rather than for prestige only. He said that the community is not lagging behind in technological developments and cited examples of close circuit televisions, computers, PA Systems and the like which are already being used by Jamaats to an extent whereby ladies can now watch a Zakir live on TV during a Majlis. He said soon a Zakir reciting a Majlis in one town would probably be seen live by members in other towns.

A debate ensued on the issue of participation of ladies in community affairs. Views in favour and against were aired whilst some called for further discussion on the subject through seminars.

The Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani concluded the debate by drawing attention to the fact that he had already raised the issue in his inaugural address. Supporting the idea, he said that the Tabligh Committee of the Supreme Council now, for the first time, has a lady Chairperson and he expressed hope that in the future there would be more lady office bearers in higher Community Organisations.

Other issues discussed were the possibility of raising levies from families to support development schemes, the need for timely marriages amongst youths, wastage during weddings and the feasibility of restructuring the Africa Federation.

Prior to concluding the Meeting, the Chairman advised participants that he had only received 14 scholarships of the 50 requested by him. He finally thanked all participants and volunteers and said that the meeting had served a useful purpose.

Dar hosts WF Meeting

The Fifth Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation was held on 16 December, 1995 at the Dar es Salaam Imambara.

The Meeting was Chaired by the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher M.M. Jaffer with delegates coming from all over the world.

The Meeting scrutinised the performance of the World Federation in the preceding Quarter and perused through Secretariat reports before analysing and adopting the financial statements. The Meeting, amongst other World Federation issues, discussed the progress made towards resettling our Community from Somalia and on the progress made by the newly formed Regional Committee towards restructuring of the World Federation.

The Session was held over half a day beginning in the afternoon.

Nairobi hosts 54th Council Session

The 54th Session of the Supreme Council will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 5 to 8 April, 1996.

Over 100 participants are expected to attend the Session, amongst whom will include the Presidents and Councillors from over 40 Jamaats spread over 11 African countries plus local and overseas invitees.

The Session is an important annual calendar event when religious (tabligh), social, welfare, educational and general planning issues are discussed and when annual reports are received from different committees for adoption. Yearly audited accounts and budgets are also approved during the Session.

TTQ spares no effort to spread the Holy Qur'an

It is sad that many Muslims have forsaken the Holy Qur'an by not making concerted efforts to read and understand it. Rather, the Holy Book is more used to grace religious occasions or is simply recited (rather than understood) during the holy month of Ramadhan.

Previously the argument had been that the Arabic language was not understood but today the Holy Qur'an has been translated into many languages thereby leaving believers with no excuse whatsoever for not trying to understand its contents.

The Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc. (TTQ) based in New York, USA, a non-profit Organisation formed in 1976, effectively distributes the Holy Qur'an and other Islamic books with the primary objective of enabling people, Muslims and non-Muslims, to understand the wealth of knowledge that prevails in its contents.

When the World Trade Centre in the USA was bombed on 26 February, 1993 the Organisation sent copies of the Holy Book to the Governor with a clarification that Islam is a peaceful religion with no room for terrorism. The clarification referred to Qur'anic Verses which denounce the killing of innocent people.

To console the families of those killed in the Oklahoma Bombing on 19 April, 1995, the Organisation distributed the Holy Qur'an to members of the bereaved families with references to passages raising hope, courage and comfort.

The Organisation has sent copies of the Holy Qur'an to many Presidents including Nelson Mandela, F.W. de Klerk, Ronald Reagan,

George Bush, Bill Clinton, Mikhail Gorbachev and His Holiness, Pope John Paul II to coincide with national campaigns, like those against drug abuse or for other occasions. Recently the Organisation sent a copy to the family of the Late Israel Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin after he was assassinated. Most recipients have responded congenially and with gratitude.

The TTQ plays a crucial role towards rehabilitating prisoners in the USA by distributing copies of the Holy Qur'an to them. It also distributes the Qur'an to Mayors, Ambassadors, schools, libraries, universities, book stores, religious institutions and general distributors.

The TTQ continues to publicise and distribute Islamic books and recently it launched an excellent new Edition of the Holy Qur'an with a text in Arabic and a translation with commentary by S.V. Mir Ahmad Ali.

The Organisation spreads the message of Islam by participating in Book Exhibitions and Conventions with 'tableegh' being the primary purpose. It serves all the 52 States in the USA including Hawaii and Alaska and distributes

literature around the world including Australia, China, Russia and ofcourse East Africa.

The Chief Administrator of the TTQ, Aunali Khalfan visited Dar es Salaam in January this year to promote the distribution of religious literature here.

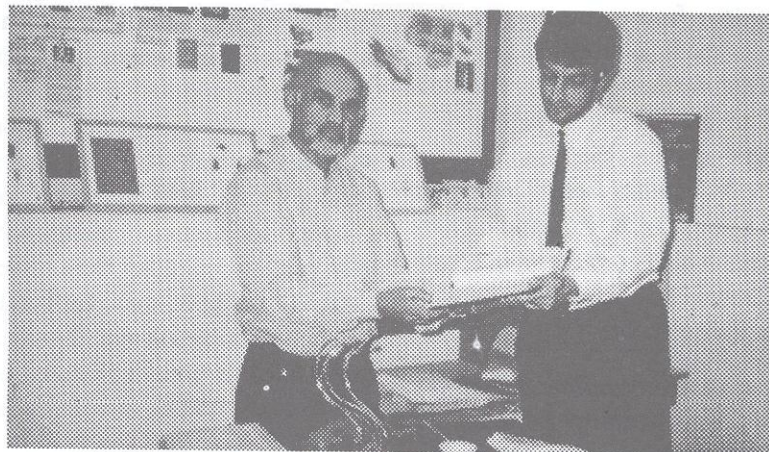
When presenting a copy of the new Edition of the Holy Qur'an to the Editorial Board of the *Federation Samachar*, he emphasised that no effort should be spared in the noble task of spreading the good word. He said Islam is a religion greatly misunderstood primarily because of our limited influence in the world media and said that the best way to counter negative analysis is to aggressively distribute religious literature, not necessarily to convert but to enable people to understand the wealth of knowledge that prevails in Islam.

Those interested in the Holy Qur'an or other Islamic books may write to:

Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an
P.O. Box 731115, Elmhurst,
New York 11373-0115, USA.

Tel: (718) 446-6472

Fax: (718) 446-4370



Chief Administrator of the TTQ, Aunali Khalfan presents the new Edition of the Holy Qur'an to the *Samachar* Editor, Munir Daya.

Mulla Asgher expounds his views

During the Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation held in Dar es Salaam in January, 1996, the Editor of the Federation Samachar, Munir Daya interviewed the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer. The Samachar presents this candid interview.

Daya: The World Federation was registered in 1976. Can you briefly outline the primary services being rendered by the WF. What in your opinion have been the major successes and pit-falls since its establishment?

Mulla: One cannot classify World Federation services into primary and secondary. Our main spheres of service are Tabligh, Relief of poverty and welfare, medical, economic uplift and education. As you are aware, the WF works through the instrumentality of various boards like the Islamic Education Board, Medical Advisory Board, Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme, Career, Education And Training Advisory Board, International Rehabilitation Board etc. it is hardly possible to enumerate our multifarious services in a single interview. However, just to give you a glimpse:

The Medical Advisory Board provides medical advice and facilities to patients coming to the United Kingdom from overseas. It also assists medical students and doctors for further studies. In addition to the extensive Tabligh activities all over the world the Islamic Education Board publishes and sponsors books and pamphlets. It also guides and supports Madressas and helps Jamaats with Ulama and Zakirs.

Under the ever popular Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme we educate and generally try to improve the quality of life for some 9,000 sadaat and non-sadaat boys



Mulla Asgher talks to Samachar Editor, Munir Daya

and girls in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Thailand. We also run schools and other educational projects. In the area of secular education, the Career, Education and Training Advisory Board provides information and guidance on all matters relating to careers, training and higher education.

Alhamdulillah, today 20 years on, the WF is acclaimed as one of the most active and efficient organisations in the Shia Community at large. Rather than using the term pitfalls, I would say that one of the main weaknesses has been the minimal support received in entrenching the World Federation with a substantial Foundation Fund. This would have enabled us to provide a much broader spectrum of services rather than be restricted mainly to specific funds and their restricted usage. This has constrained us both in planning as well as in expanding our horizons.

Daya: From October, 1994 you have been fulfilling a third term as the Chairman of the World Federation.

When taking up office what new action plans did you chart out for implementation? Have these plans been put into action?

Mulla: The 1994 Conference directed that housing projects in Gujarat be given a priority for the second term, that a Foundation Fund (Secretariat) of Sterling Pound 500,000 be set up and that a Working Party be set up to look at restructuring the World Federation and its membership.

To date, we have completed some 500 dwellings of the 800 planned in Gujarat, the Foundation Fund stands at Sterling 350,000 and the Working party has been set up and is in the process of commencing its work.

Daya: The world-wide number of KSI members is reported in WF publications to be 125,000. How credible is the current estimated figure and what has been the criterion for its evaluation? In wake of the importance of accurate population figures when planning for the future, has the WF undertaken any

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co-ordinated census with other regional Federations?

Mulla: Without a formal census one can not assess the exact figure, which could be between 100,000 to 110,000. Every three years, six months prior to our triennial conferences, all members are requested to send in the latest population figures for the purpose of representation at the conference as well as for voting. It is these figures that form the basis of our calculations.

Daya: What are the main benefits that Regional Federations and Jamaats enjoy by being members of the World Federation?

Mulla: The main benefit, as you put, enjoyed by the members of the WF is to remain united in our single purpose of Community development. Next is the right to participate and vote at the Conferences and the Executive Council meetings, thus influencing the policies and workings of the WF. Otherwise, members as well as non members are all beneficiaries of our services - each according to the need and in accordance with resources available to us at the time, be it for construction of Mosques, Imambargahs, Madressas, recruiting of Ulama and provision of Alim grants or any of the other services enumerated earlier.

Daya: As a registered charity in the UK, does the WF have any Government restrictions which encumber normal operations?

Mulla: United Kingdom charity laws in common with Charities Laws elsewhere in the world, allow for propagation of religion, relief of poverty and education. All the activities of the WF are well within the bounds of these criteria and hence we have felt no encumbrance upon our normal operations.

Daya: At the WF Triennial Conference held in October, 1994 various

delegates opined that the manner of operation of the WF and its membership had to be reviewed and that restructuring had to be undertaken. A resolution was passed to appoint a special sub-committee of qualified and experienced persons to examine, evaluate and make recommendations on the institutional, structural, workings, accountability and the effectiveness of the WF and to recommend on changes required. Subsequently why did the WF frame terms of reference for the committee to be appointed when the resolution dictated that the proposed committee would be required to independently engender the line of thinking?

Mulla: Following deliberations at the Conference, the house felt that the mode and manner of the WF including its entire membership required a review to prepare it for the next century. Subsequently, a resolution was carried. If you study the exact text of the resolution, you will find that it does not dictate the Working Party to engender the line of thinking. The thinking had already been done at the Conference, hence the resolution.

Now, in order to give shape to that important resolution, the Executive Council deliberated upon a draft paper prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate and enable the Working Party to commence its work. Indeed this has always been the procedure. Whenever a Conference passes a resolution, the Executive Council becomes responsible for seeing to its implementation. In most cases, the Secretariat would do the necessary groundwork and present its findings to the Executive Council for further deliberation. The terms of reference as drafted by the Secretariat, passed unanimously by the Executive Council after due amendments, are meant to provide general guidelines to the Working party. They in no way encroach upon the independence or the scope of the Working Party which is free to evolve a different method-

ology in implementing its brief. What the paper did was to crystallize the sentiments of the Conference.

Daya: The Executive Council has decided that Regional Committees be appointed for the purpose of restructuring. Does this not contradict the original resolution?

Mulla: Allow me to elucidate. The Conference directed that a Working Party of suitably qualified and experienced persons be formed without specifying where such persons would come from. The Executive Council felt that it would be desirable to have universal representation at the highest level and so directed that the Working Party be composed of the Heads of the Regional Federations or of large Jamaats where there was no regional body. Further, to allow for effective functioning, regional task forces would be appointed by the respective members of the Working Party. For Example, in the case of Africa, Haji Mohammed Dhirani as a member of the Working Party would appoint a task force - of suitably qualified and experienced persons (as per the guideline of the resolution) - for Africa to work under his guidance.

Daya: A Foundation Fund was launched at the WF Conference in 1994 with a target of obtaining sterling 500,000. How successful has the response been and off the cuff would you be able to say about how much has been pledged?

Mulla: As I speak, a sum in excess Sterling Pounds 350,000 has been raised and I am very pleased with the response. Of course, this is only the beginning. To entrench the WF to meet the challenges of time, like providing scholarships, completing resettlement schemes and seeking presence at the UN and in the international Mass Media and many other areas, we require at least Sterling Pounds 10 million for the Foundation Fund.

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Daya: To what purpose will the money from the Foundation Fund be used and and who will monitor on how, when and where the funds are actually spent?

Mulla: The revenue from the investment of this Fund will be towards the General Fund primarily to fund Secretariat operations. The question of monitoring does not arise because every quarter a full income and expenditure is presented to the Executive Council for all our activities. The financial statements also include income derived from the investments. I must also emphasise that the WF is the only organisation of this Community and perhaps even in the wider Shia society, which presents its financial statements quarterly.

Daya: On your current visit to East Africa you have called for a centralisation of funds. Generally major institutions delegate responsibilities as far as is possible because 'good delegation enables good management.' When it comes to a religious institution like ours which has some highly sensitive collections as khums, don't you think that it would be better for the Chairmans of the respective Regional Federations to collect and expend money?

Mulla: Centralisation is all part of delegation, if you care to ponder for a minute. I have said this repeatedly, that let us stop being parochial and desist from thinking along geographical lines. It is through the instrumentality of centralisation that the Africa Federation is what it is today. If Dar es Salaam or Mombasa or Moshi Jamaats had applied such a parochial approach, then Africa Federation would not have been able to function. My call for centralisation embodies the same spirit, now that the Community is spread out in the far corners of the globe. The WF is a manifestation of the need for maintaining our links and provide

a common platform for the Community. Centralisation is the only mode possible to achieve that and maintain our links and unity.

Centralisation, does not, by any stretch of imagination, mean lack of delegation. It means that all the members of the Community, no matter where they are, work in unison with a common goal and pooling our resources so that we ensure that our funds are not squandered by those who are not accountable to us as a Community. And this does not mean that our regional organisations, can not collect and expend the funds. What it means is that our people channel their funds through their respective organisations and as part of the WF, the regional organisations pool those resources at WF level.

Daya: Coming to Khums, can you advise us on how Khums money is disbursed and how decisions are made to this effect? Does the WF constitution prescribe the mode of spending?

Mulla: It is the Sharia that prescribes the mode of spending Khums. As a wakil of the Marja, it is my responsibility to see that the distribution takes place in the correct manner. At the same time, as the President of the World Federation, it is my responsibility to be cognisant of and alive to the needs of the Community so that the distribution is done in accordance with the identified needs, the desirability of the projects and the overall objectives, as determined by the Conference and implemented by the Executive Council.

Daya: Do you agree to the view that leaders should provide information or clarifications on religious and communal issues when this is sought?

Mulla: The answer of course is an emphatic YES and the World Federation is doing better than any other organisation within our fold.

Daya: One of our readers, upon reading an official circular of the WF on the Ijaza given by Ayatullah Gulpaygani to you, feared that it was not properly translated into English. The objective of an Islamic media is to propagate authentic information and to educate readers who raise sincere questions. The *Samachar*, which is not a sensational or commercial media, sent you a copy of the reader's letter for elucidation but we got no response. Would you like to clarify?

Mulla: It has been the practice of the Secretariat to always issue copies of the original Ijazas with the translation for all to see. For those in doubt, let me say the correct protocol should be that such authentication be sought through the respective Jamaats and regional Federations, at equal levels, and not through the correspondence columns of their periodicals.

Daya: How successful was the recent Executive Council meeting in Dar es Salaam? Many of the Councillors for this meeting had to indulge in costly and timely travel. Don't you feel that Europe is geographically better suited for such meetings and that secondary advantages like boosting awareness of the Foundation Fund could also be achieved through private visits?

Mulla: I am extremely happy to have presided over the historic Executive Council meeting here in Dar es Salaam. I am now all the more convinced that from time to time it is important to convey the workings of the World Federation to different parts of the world and the meetings are one ideal forum, much more effective than reams of printed paper! After all, the Executive Council is the working engine of the World Federation.

Whether the meeting is in Europe or elsewhere, there will always be a number of people who will have to travel having to sacrifice both time and money. In the past it has

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been Councilors from Africa, Continental Europe and Northern America who have had to travel and we are thankful to them all for their sacrifice for the service of the Community. To hold our meetings occasionally in different parts of the world may, on the contrary, shift that burden from those who always have to travel.

To add to that, boosting the awareness of the WF can hardly be called a secondary advantage. I consider it crucial and central to the unity and well being of the Community, and now after the meeting, I feel that at least once a year the WF should hold meetings away from the United Kingdom. In my opinion, the input itself from the participants who may not normally attend, is worth the occasional additional travel costs.

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

Mulla: For propagation of Islam, much as we would like to have presence on the mass media, particularly in the West, cost considerations and lack of financial resources prevent us from such an undertaking. However, whenever invited, we do participate in forums, seminars and exhibitions in the schools and other educational institutions. In fact, just recently, the Education Minister in the United Kingdom invited the Chairman of the Islamic Education Board, Muhsinbhai Jaffer to participate in a consultative meeting on the under-achievement of Muslim Children in British Schools. This is an acknowledgment of our profile in that sphere.

Daya: You have your own publication, the *Shia World* which has not been regular. As a parent Federation don't you think that there is a

dire need for a regular and informative periodical to advise and educate members world-wide?

Mulla: Firstly, the *Shia World* is not a magazine, nor has the intention been to publish it at specific intervals. It is a publication that is aimed at disseminating the news and views of the WF and is published as and when the need arises. While I appreciate the need for a regular publication, we are aware of the high costs of maintaining such a publication, particularly in terms of direct distribution in the West. Previous attempts at distributing the *Shia World* through Jamaats, particularly in Europe and Northern America, have not been very effective and we have found that the only effective way is to mail the *Shia World* to every home directly. This is an expensive exercise and at the moment, we can ill-afford the luxury of a regular publication. At best, we can only have two issues a year.

However, on the point of dissemination of information on the projects and activities of the WF, I must state that every quarter, at every Executive Council meeting, extensive reporting takes place, as you may have witnessed yourself here in Dar es Salaam. At each meeting I present a full review of the previous quarter, and the Secretariat presents in-depth reports on various aspect. In addition to the minutes of these meetings, which contain all this information, a press release is also issued after every meeting, highlighting the salient points to make it easy for the various Community journals to report on the activities.

Regrettably very few of our publications have devoted space to this. And for the matter of record, *Federation Samachar* is no exception. I would like to appeal to you as Editor of the *Federation Samachar*, as well as other Jamaats having their own publications,

to carry our press releases to inform the Community. This will go a long way in filling the gap you perceive and would be much more cost effective. This is a good example of how delegation and centralisation go hand in hand.

Daya: Are the Editors of the *Shia World* given independence to exercise objectivity when producing the publication? The objective of an independent media is not to encourage malicious or scandalous issues but to raise healthy discussions and questions on any religious subject affecting any personality. By this definition, is the *Shia World* then truly independent?

Mulla: This seems more of an observation than a question and I do not wish to enter into the semantics of the definition of editorial freedom, independence or the quality or otherwise of journalism of any of our community publications. Confining myself to the *Shia World*, I will say that the *Shia World* is an organ of the World Federation and therefore the questions of objectivity or independence as applied to professional magazines are redundant and out of place. Each issue is compiled by the Secretariat, as guided by the Secretariat and consistently reflects the thinking and ethos of the World Federation and its leadership and raises issues that are of specific concern or direct interest to our Community. It does not indulge in being a general interest magazine nor does it attempt to embark on amateur journalism.

Daya: Talking of the media, one is reminded of the recent Open Forum held in Toronto to discuss the book 'Islam messianism'. In your opinion how successful was this forum?

Mulla: Issues relating to the book 'Islamic Messianism', which has been of some concern to the Community, were discussed in an academic, orderly and friendly manner

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at this forum, which aimed at clarifying the controversy regarding the book and its author. I would say that the Forum was a demonstration of the maturity of the Community in resolving a long outstanding issue.

Daya: The WF played a limited role in financing, rehabilitating and resettling members of our Somalia Jamaat when they were forced to evacuate their homes. Was the WF unprepared or did legal bottlenecks prevent a full fledged support? Should such an incident happen again, would the WF be able to handle the situation more aptly? If so, what have been the lessons?

Mulla: I think the remark that the WF played a limited part is a myth. The WF in conjunction with the Africa Federation and in particular with those who were so actively involved in that magnificent rescue operation and afterwards in the rehabilitation efforts, has been a key player and the International coordinator in the whole exercise along with Nasimco and Mehfile Murtaza as well as the authorities in Europe.

As to the question, was the WF prepared for such an eventuality. Tell me who was? Africa Federation? Our volunteers in Mombasa? - Hindsight, you may have heard - is a wonderful thing. No one could be prepared for such eventualities. Of course there were and are legal bottlenecks but that did not prevent any of our Community organisations to give a fully fledged support. All of us tried to surmount this as best as we could.

God forbid, should such an incident happen again, the WF will deal with it as aptly as it dealt with the Somalia issue - aptly in accordance with the resources at its disposal and with the co-operation of volunteers, philanthropists and our Jamaats all over the world.

As for the lessons, there are many and may Allah (s.w.t.) give us all

Taufeeq to learn them. These have been discussed at many meetings including that of the WF Executive Council which commissioned a paper on the subject. This was produced by Asaf Gulamhussain. I invite you to read that. But one glaring fact is that, in such eventualities, our parochial thinking hinders our efforts at pooling our resources; and rather than accept what we could give from our meagre resources, we fall prey to the game of shifting the blame. If we can learn that lesson we will, Inshallah, be able to be more effective.

Daya: At this stage can you please outline the primary functions of the IRB and its achievements?

Mulla: The function of the International Rehabilitation Board is exactly as it says in the title - International Rehabilitation. As for achievements, it endeavours to play its part in the resettlement of Mumineen from Somalia as successfully as all the others involved. Its next target of registering the WF as a Non Government Organisation at the UN requires substantial funds and subject to availability, it will proceed.

Daya: In today's fast moving world, what in your opinion is more important—education before business or business with limited education?

Mulla: Both education and business are equally important for the Community. However, let us come away from the stereotyped thinking of equating education merely with earning power and money. Let there be a revival of the love of knowledge and of the thinking that education is for the sake of knowledge. Inshallah, success will follow.

Daya: The Editorial of the current issue of the *Samachar* discusses on how much time children should spend in Madressas in wake of increasing emphasis laid down by secular schools on homework. In our opinion we cannot burn a candle at both ends. What is your viewpoint?

The present predicament is because we have tried to tinker with the problem. No matter what we do, we increase the pressure upon the children. The solution lies in establishing our own schools with a curriculum that embrace both - secular as well as religious education as an integrated system. That is the challenge of the present time and the World Federation has offered the services of the Islamic Education Board as well as the Careers Education and Training board in helping all our schools achieve such an aim.

Daya: The Constitutions of our organisations have been drawn with an objective to ensure a set-up which is religiously coherent. Do you still then believe that the leaders of our institutions should have the quality of Taqwa and only those who do so should be given office? How do you adequately define Taqwa — don't you think that determining how religious a person is, is a matter of interpretation?

Mulla: I have always done so and strongly advocate that a fasiq and a fajir should never be entrusted with a position of leadership. But where will we get such leaders, I am asked sometimes. Well, they will not descend upon us from heaven. They will only emerge from a society that is itself steeped deep in Taqwa. For further elucidation I would refer you to the booklet Code Of Leadership published by the World Federation.

Daya: On completion of your existent term, the WF will have a new President. Are you paving way for a successor who has the quality of Taqwa?

Mulla: It is not for me to pave way for a successor but I have trained colleagues like Hasnain Walji, Manzoor Kanani and Ahmad Daya. It is for the Community to decide. The only paving I can do is to heighten the awareness of the requirement of capability coupled with Taqwa.

Caution on self-medication

One has to be careful with self-medication. We've learnt to live with allergies, colds, and flus. Every day we are flooded with advertisements for symptom-relief drugs available without a prescription. Whether your chosen remedy is a cough syrup or an antihistamine, it is important to take it as per specified instructions. When misused, even legal, over-the-counter substances can be harmful.

How often do you read the fine print when you buy a new drug? Did you know that you shouldn't mix Ibuprofen with Aspirin or Acetaminophen?

The combination of drugs is a serious problem. If you take any drug, whether it is prescribed or not, taking another drug may not be safe. Another problem is

over-medicating yourself, that is taking double or triple the recommended dosage simply because the recommended dose seems ineffective.

Many sinus and throat drugs contain alcohol. When you triple the dose, you also triple the intake of alcohol. Like alcohol in liquor, alcohol in cough syrup can impair your reflexes and your judgement.

Even if you don't combine drugs or overdose on medication, the drugs you take may be hazardous. Read that small print on the bottle. If it warns that it may cause drowsiness or loss of concentration, don't disregard this. Consider the specific duties that you plan to undertake and ensure that taking the medicine will not be

dangerous to your physical safety in an office or in a factory. Physical danger isn't the only hazard, drowsiness can cause you to make administrative errors in the office and can even effect the fluency of speech.

Next time you reach for an over-the-counter remedy, stop and read the fine print. If it says not to take the medicine more than three times a day, keep track and stop after the third. If it says not to combine with certain drugs, follow instructions. If you have any questions or concerns, consult your doctor. And if the label says the drugs may have perception-altering side effects, you may need to find a different remedy for the times when you're at work.

Angina differs from heart attack

One should understand the difference between angina and heart attack. Both are different and have different implications. Chest pain or discomfort is caused by both of them. However, angina is not a heart attack. The anginal attack generally lasts less than five minutes and the discomfort is usually reduced with rest and medication. The effects of anginal attack on the heart muscle are reversible leading to no permanent damage.

On the other hand, a heart attack occurs due to total obstruction of a coronary artery supplying blood to the heart. Unlike angina, a heart attack pain typically lasts longer, is more severe and is not relieved by rest and medication. The damage to heart

muscles is thus permanent.

While angina can be classified as an urgency, a heart attack is an emergency. If not attended to in time, the heart attack can cause permanent damage to the heart muscle. If the patient with suspected heart attack reaches a hospital and receives clot dissolving medicine within three to six hours, there is a possibility for the heart attack to be successfully treated and the chances of death from it can be significantly reduced. *Even a simple soluble tablet of Aspirin, if chewed at the time of suspecting a heart attack, can help reduce the chance of death substantially.*

The chances of death are maximum in the first few hours of an

attack and hence, the sooner one seeks medical attention the better.

The warning signals of a heart attack are pain or discomfort in the centre of the chest, not relieved by rest and with or without radiation to left arm or the back or neck. The pain may or may not be associated with sweating, weakness or breathlessness. Sometimes the only manifestation can be a feeling of extreme exhaustion and weakness.

The pain often appears as a discomfort or a feeling of pressure in the chest. The pain is normally diffused and cannot be pin-pointed but if it lasts less than 30 seconds, it is not a heart pain.

Guidance on diseases for Ghushl and Kafan participants

With recent increase in incidences and prevalence of highly infectious and extremely dangerous diseases like Tuberculosis (TB), Hepatitis B (Jaundice), HIV/AIDS and the like, in our community worldwide, it is vital that those involved in giving ghushl and kafan to the dead should take utmost precaution to preclude such diseases from passing on to them.

When one is informed that somebody died of one of these diseases, people would be expected to take preventive measures. However, it is not right to always presume that a person who died of say a heart attack, stroke or cancer did not **also** have one of these very infectious diseases. Hence participants in Ghushl or Kafan should observe standard precautions for all deaths.

Our Aimmah and several ahadiths describe extensive thawaab for those who perform the final funeral rites for the dead. However, for one's safety, the following precaution must be taken when giving ghushl and kafan to all mayyits:-

- 1) Wear a long sleeve shirt or dress;
- 2) Wear a good quality, strong and waterproof surgical gloves upto the elbows;
- 3) Wear trousers or dresses down to the heels;
- 4) Wear a strong waterproof apron from neck to heels; and
- 5) Wear overshoes to cover feet.

TUBERCULOSIS:

This is a very serious, infectious and potentially fatal disease. It can affect any part of the body but usually it affects the lungs. If caught in time, it can be successfully treated with medicines.

PREVENTION:

Immunisation at birth and at the age of 10-14 after checking immune status (if not immune, reimmunisation is needed).

ACTION:

Have Heaf Test: If Negative - you are not immune - you need a BCG Vaccination

If Positive Grade I or II - you are Immune. (No further action needed)

If Positive Grade III - you need further checking in case treatment is necessary.

If Positive Grade IV - you have active TB - you need treatment.

When operating one for TB or when undertaking an operation or post-mortem, masks have to be used.

HEPATITIS B:

This is a very serious and potentially fatal disease. It causes Jaundice. It can be caught by handling infected blood or blood products.

THERE IS NO TREATMENT AVAILABLE. The patient is advised to rest and drink plenty of fluids. Most patients recover after 4-6 weeks and about 10% die.

PREVENTION:

Immunisation with Hepatitis B Vaccine and to ensure that the vaccine has worked by confirmation with blood tests. The precautionary trend should be as follows:

- 1) 1st injection - as soon as possible.
- 2) 2nd injection - 2-4 weeks after first injection.
- 3) 3rd injection - 6-12 months after second injection.

4) Blood test to check antibody levels - 3 months later. If antibody level is:

- 0 - Start from step 1;
- 1-99 - Start from step 3;
- 100-999 - A Booster injection will be needed in 3 years; and if.
- Over 1000 - A Booster injection will be needed in 5 years.

ACTION:

All should have precautionary vaccinations.

HIV/AIDS:

This is a very serious infection and a fatal disease. Once infected, eventual death is certain. It can be caught by handling infected blood products.

PREVENTION:

There is no medicine or vaccine to prevent this disease.

ACTION:

Protect yourself by taking above mentioned precautions.

MENINGITIS, IBOLA VIRUS and other highly infectious diseases:

Please consult doctors before handling mayyit or giving ghushl or kafan. It may be unsafe. Blood stained products (clothes, cotton wool etc.) should be disposed after consultation with doctors.

For further details and leaflets on any of the above diseases, readers can contact the M.A.B. Secretariat in Birmingham.

Jamaats in the meantime should ensure that the required protective gear is made available to members of their Funeral (Ghushl/Kafan) committees.

A DIRE WARNING

by Sayyed Q.M.M. Kamoopuri, Ph. D

Among various views regarding Muslims, an undeniable fact is their unique position in terms of material wealth. Muslims constitute 20% of the world's population i.e. larger than the combined population of the United States, Western Europe and Japan. They rule the land that stretches over three big continents covering an area of more than half of the inhabited world. They control the most strategic land routes, major water-ways and the vast continental air mass over the interior of their territories. They occupy more than 50 seats in the General Assembly Sessions of the United Nations i.e. 1/3rd of that required for a quorum. They also produce 1/15th of the global GNP i.e. three times larger than that of China.

The defence expenditure of Arab nations (not the whole Muslim World) is 50 billion dollars per annum, which is twice the defence budget of China, the largest nation in the World. The Late American President, Richard Nixon once said that "The life-line of the gigantic industrial world is in Muslim hands" referring to the fact that of the world's total Oil Reserves (900 billion barrels), the Middle East has 64% (576 billion barrels) of oil deposits whilst the USA and Canada together have only 32 billion barrels (4%) and the whole of Asia excluding the Middle East and the Asian part of Russia possesses only 4% (36 billion barrels). In OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries), an organisation which controls and regulates the world's oil business,

10 out of 13 members are Muslim countries.

Muslim countries hence move the 'wheels' of the industrial nations. In October, 1973 when oil prices were sharply increased by Arab countries, the result was a paralysing effect on manufacturing industries with the USA, Japan and West Germany being the hardest hit because of their dependence on cheap Arab oil. In Japan, the oil crisis precipitated to the extent that even common commodities like soap and toilet papers were suddenly in scarce supply. Some countries stopped gasoline sales on Sundays and public holidays and almost all aspects of life were in one way or another affected. The most lasting impact of the Oil Crisis was the change in manufacturing patterns of cars. The Americans resorted to Japan to import smaller and more fuel-efficient cars instead of buying their own large and heavy oil consuming automobiles. This was a big blow to American Auto manufacturers, then the world's leading auto market.

Besides oil wealth, Muslim countries also have huge amounts of minerals without which the Industrial world can not survive. Despite all this wealth, the life-line however is in the hands of the Western World simply because resources are not effectively managed.

The West buys raw materials at a very cheap rate and then sells back Industrial products (manufactured from say, oil) at exorbitant prices. Despite the wealth

bestowed on Muslim countries by our Lord, they lack specialised knowledge and have very few qualified personnel to monitor their natural wealth. Illiteracy blocks progress and today we barely have any scientists of international repute. Professor Abdus Salaam is the first and the only scientist from the Muslim world who in recent times has received the world's most prestigious award - The Nobel Prize. He is currently the President of the Third World Academy of Science and Director of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Italy.

The drawback in producing intellectuals has arisen because not one Islamic country has a truly Islamic learning institution committed to acquiring and enhancing scientific knowledge.

Lets now view this at community level. In Dar Es Salaam, we have talents for imports and exports business and similar other methods of acquiring quick money but do we have a declared policy for comprehensive education? The bright intellectuals from schools are left to fend for themselves when seeking further education in academic professions. This attitude has made us almost stagnant for the last many decades and the enemies of Islam take advantage of this and say that Islam is the cause. They tell our youths in their institutions that Islam has nothing to offer to intellectuals which surely is a blatant lie.

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Barely a hundred years after the Prophet's departure, the Muslims under the guidance of infallible Imams made incredible achievements in almost every branch of knowledge. They established institutes of advanced study, they acquired an ascendancy in science and technology that lasted up to around 1450 AD.

Many of us have heard of Jabir ibn-Hayyan (known as Gabber by the West) a student of Imam Jafar Sadiq (A.S.), was one of the greatest chemists of all times and made experimental contributions of the highest order in organic chemistry. Ibn-al-Haitham (Alhazen) 965-1039 AD. was a renowned physicist, recognised by all Western Scientists till today. He enunciated the laws of inertia which later inspired Galileo and Newton to discover the fundamental laws of physics. He was also the first man to conceive the idea of Aswan Dam but could not construct it because the technology of his time was not developed enough to put his scientific ideas into practice. Similarly Al-Biruni, Ibn-i-Sina (Avicenna) and many other Muslim intellectuals developed the edifice of science which was then expanded on by Western scientists to present dimensions.

Western Scholars have unanimously accepted the immense contributions of Muslim scholars in the development of science. They admit that modern science is the most momentous contribution from Islamic Civilisation. For instance, Briffault, a Western scholar writes "What we call 'Science' arose as a result of new methods of experiments, observation and

measurements, which were introduced into Europe by the Arabs".

The impetus given by the Prophet (S.A.W.) and his noble progeny greatly motivated the Muslims to excel in scientific research. They laid the foundation of astronomy, chemistry, physics, biology, geology, physiology, anatomy, mathematics, meteorology and thereby extended the domain of human knowledge. In this short paper it is by no means possible to analyse the impact of Islamic Civilisation on Western Scholarship. Following these monumental contributions by our great ancestors in almost every field of science, it is sad to note that the former enthusiasm has waned over the years to the current situation whereby we adopt a conservative and rigid approach in our learning institutions.

Those who know the infrastructure of Islamic epistemology will agree with me that the word 'ILM' has much wider dimensions than its synonyms in English and all other languages. The words, 'knowledge' or 'science' used for 'Ilm' in English falls short of embracing the long-range aspects of Ilm and its undetectable boundaries. The Hadith in which Prophet refers to 'The City of Ilim' precisely elaborates its infinite dimensions.

In conclusion, I invite our intellectuals, leaders and community members to make collective efforts to do something within the sphere of their influence. Let us consider the vital issue of education in its Islamic perspective and in response to the inevitable demands of the fast changing times. Islam covers the entire spectra of time and controls every

aspect of human life. It is therefore important to review our systems and activities from time to time within the Islamic parameters to meet the new challenges of the changing world.

Our learning institutions should be run on Islamic lines and in the process can also accommodate the normal secular education syllabus. A small comprehensive school of this type has been initiated by the Bilal Muslim Mission in Tanzania in which courses cover a syllabus of Madressas and secular institutions.

In the present enlightened world, our Muballagheens often have to discuss issues with educated people from different faculties of specialised knowledge and to have an impressive and balanced communication with them, their academic credentials should be exemplary.

We have rightly shown great concern over the deterioration in spiritual and academic values of Muslim society. This is a good realisation but it is not enough only to document such abuses. We have to find out the root cause of the problems if we sincerely want to bring some positive changes. The major cause of our problems is the existent Western education system which we have adopted in our schools and to guide our youths we need to have comprehensive Islamic schools which also adequately cover the secular syllabus.

Death, Marriage or Birth announcements

The Samachar is distributed world-wide and this gives readers a golden opportunity to notify others about a death, marriage or birth?

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

Our Majalis need higher intellectual content

by Bashir Versi, Ghulam Abbas Sajan and Nazmul Damji, Toronto, Canada.

A look at the history of the present form of majalises takes us right back to Sham where Bibi Zainab (s.a.) held the first majalis after being released from captivity. Her message was later formalized by the saying of Imam Jaffer-as-Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Mehdi (a.t.f.), **"Every day is Ashura and every place is Kerbala"**. In other words, always take the high road based on honesty, integrity and high principles and morals regardless of the circumstances.

This message is to be read in conjunction with one of Imam Hussein (a.s.)'s last messages, **"it is better to die fighting for truth, than to live under an oppressive ruler"**.

However, if we look further back into history, the first majalis (gathering) was held by none other than our beloved Prophet Muhammed Mustafa (s.a.w.) at his house when he invited members of his family to accept Islam.

Prior to that, every prophet held majalis in one form or another. The message put simply was "Kulu laillah-ha-illAllah, tuflihu" i.e. **"Say there is no God but Allah, and you will prosper."** Incidentally, this was also the first message of Prophet Muhammed (s.a.w.).

This statement may sound simple but it has a deeper meaning. It means that we have to be absorbed into the Oneness of Allah (s.w.t.). This is where all the challenges begin and where Shaytan comes in and surely he has been given permission to approach us from behind, from the front and from the right and the left. The way to Allah

(s.w.t.), therefore, is from above and that is enough, since our Creator gave us akl, which if used rightly, is more powerful than the four accesses given to Shaytan.

Then Allah (s.w.t.) sent prophets. The first human being created was a prophet and thereafter 124,000 followed with the primary objective of guiding the people. The last was the Rasool for the entire universe and after him came the twelve Imams, the last of whom Imam Mehdi (a.t.f.) is in occultation. His functions are to be carried out by the Ulama, some of whom have fulfilled or are fulfilling their responsibilities well, for which we owe them our sincere gratitude.

These ulama, like the Imams and the prophets before them, use the minbar to convey the message of Islam. They still do. Increasingly, the minbar is being used to carry out the function of azadari of Imam Hussein (a.s.), which is important. As stated earlier, the first majalis was held by Bibi Zainab (a.s.). What was the purpose? Was it only a call for pity in the way Imam Hussein (a.s.) was martyred? Most definitely not. It was a call to inform those in the dark on what actually happened. It was a call for the muslims to be vigilant. It was a call to the Muslims not to let history repeat itself. It was a call to the Muslims to be the true souls of Islam. It was to remind the Muslims that the majalis is a platform for education, in the same manner as it was in the time of Prophet Muhammed (s.a.w.). Her call was to tell us that if the minbar is not given its due respect, it will be abused as it was by Muawiya

and his descendants. The call was to be vigilant.

Let us examine how the minbar is being used these days by our maullanas and zakirs. Unfortunately, the path of our majalises have been rituals rather than substance. It is not enough to make a blank statement that **"Islam is a way of life"** and leave it at that. What is important is to explain and expound upon that statement and to convince the congregants by giving concrete and practical examples on why Islam is the true way of life.

Rituals have become our religion

Various ethnic groups are formed because some people feel that the minbar must be used to serve their needs rather than Islam. The Arabs must have their majalis in Arabic, the Iranians and Afghanis in Farsi, the Indo-Pakistanis (including Khojas) in Urdu or Gujrati and so on. What about the new converts? It does not matter if those Arabs, Iranians, Afghanis, Indo-Pakistanis and the converts cannot understand what is being said from the minbar. They will earn thawab. It does not matter, if the different tribes and nations, created for the purpose of understanding each other, are not provided an opportunity to do so, through a language commonly understood. The rituals must prevail. Imam Hussein (a.s.)'s sacrifice can be reduced to rituals. That is enough!!!

Rituals have become our religion. A majalis is not complete unless there is 'nyaz'. The reason? Well, (continued on page 36)

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when Prophet Muhammed (s.a.w.) invited the people of Mecca to accept Islam, he offered them a meal. However we are not being invited to accept Islam. We are and have been of the flock for generations. If the meal is for convenience, it is fine, but if it has to be given religious significance, then let us do it right. Let us make our programs open to all muslims to explain them our view point. This way, the minbar can be used to guide the unguided. But to do so would be anathema for the traditional maullana. He probably will not be invited again to preach as this is a taboo topic for the minbar.

Then there is also this attitude from the minbar to attack individuals, groups, beliefs and practices adopted by others. Those who make such attacks sometimes have a point but fail to understand that firends are won through love and not hatred! When it comes to issues calling for changes within, those on the minbar often feel threatened by the so called opposition which says things as they are and proposes solutions. These are however often not acceptable to the traditionalists who believe that the rituals established by our forefathers and the beliefs of our ancestors must be protected even if they are wrongly, but honestly, held.

Imam Ali (a.s.) has said, *"God has sent down the prophets, one after the other, to seek and demand the fulfilment of the covenant that He has entrusted to the intuition of men, the covenant not concluded verbally nor recorded on paper. Rather, that covenant which is registered in the hearts, in the deepest station of man's essence and intuition"*

The very first revelation was

"Read in the name of your Lord and cherisher who created, created man, out of a mere clot of congealed blood. Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful. He Who taught (the use of) the Pen-taught man that which he knew not." (Al'Alaq 1 - 5).

The covenant is to serve none but Allah (s.w.t.) and one of the reasons to "READ" is to reflect. How do we do it? We use aql. To use aql, we seek the assistance of an aalim. These aalims are the ones who use the minbar thereby assuming great responsibility.

Maulanas need to research

If the aalims use the minbar aptly we should have no problems but unfortunately the minbar is less used for enlightenment than for entertainment in the form of polemic diatribe. This is easy because the maulana does not have research deeply and can repeat was said previously, only in a different style! The few who come prepared and challenge the system ironically get into trouble for trying to awaken the sleepy system by talking about "Living Islam".

A message from the minbar can change the whole life style of a muslim. We rightfully claim to be on the right path but this does not absolve us from caring for the ones who have not understood the message. Ironically instead of guiding, the minbar tends to be more used to ridicule and bluntly [amid laughter] tell off others.

Many outsiders used to participate in our programs, especially during Muharram. They had faith in Imam Hussein (a.s.) and Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) and undertook nazr in their names which they fulfilled in Muharram. We now see less of them. Where are the rest? Have we driven them away with irresponsible outbursts from our minbars?

Muharram is the peak period for us to do tabligh so that Islam is understood in the right context. But rather than concentrating on the substance of the message of Islam, we often resign ourselves into carrying out the rituals because there is "thawab" in it. As Imam Ali (a.s.) has said, we tend to be like the merchants who do their ibadat not because of love for Allah (s.w.t) but to gain the Jannah.

What can be done? A lot. However to do it, we have to revisit our practices and re-think. Is the minbar being used the way it should be? The answer is an emphatic NO. How then can this be changed? Let us look back into history and compare our practices with those of our aimma (a.s.). Let us compare our approach to that of the muslims of the past.

We have an excellent machinery in place to do tabligh, not so much to convert as to let outsiders know what we truly are. Our Imambaras should have practical programs for enlightenment to guide all to the madhab of Ahlul Bayt.

How pleasing to the ears is the slogan, "Muslims united shall never be defeated". Practical examples of muslims acting in the spirit of unity follow:

i) Janabe Fatima (a.s.) in one sermon said that the main function of al-Imamah was unity of ummah.

ii) Imam Jaffer-as-Sadiq (a.s.) advised his Shia followers to offer prayers with ahl-sunnah, to visit the sick among them and to attend their marriage ceremonies because Allah (s.w.t) is pleased with actions demonstrating solidarity with muslims.

iii) Imam Ali (a.s.) did not let the issue of Caliphates create disunity within the Ummah but instead let it pass and even co-operated with Caliphs on numerous occasions.

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The ultimate aim of every muslim should be to fulfill the command of Allah (s.w.t.) who has said, **"Do not be divided and hold on to the rope of Allah all together"** (Holy Quran). If fulfillment of Allah's command is what we cherish, we will immediately think of using the imambara and minbar in a different fashion altogether.

We are so much engrossed in the rituals that we sometimes sacrifice practicality. For example when a wiladat/wafat falls on a weekday and we know that more people will attend if the same function is held on the weekend, can we not consider holding the same program on the weekend at least for some occasions? It is for the maullana, through the minbar to educate and tell us this is viable or at least to engender thoughts on the subject with the intention of drawing healthy dialogue. Flexibility for a noble cause is healthy and after all we are not even sure of many of the important dates including the exact date of the birth of our beloved prophet. Was it 12th of Rabi-ul-Awaal? Was Imam Hassan (a.s.) martyred on 7th or 28th Safar?

Introducing question time

The traditional format of the majalis whereby the mullah delivers his lecture in a monologue has got to be changed to include an opportunity to question him and preferably the subject should be known in advance through newsletters or a telephone answering service. Questions can be in written form to avoid long winded queries but such. Such arrangements would possibly increase attendance.

Majalises should have practical themes such as the approach of a momeen to a tragedy when it strikes his family. What should be

done in those circumstances? Are there any support groups which he can turn to in his effort to face the tragedy? How should he handle the issue of his daughter marrying a non-muslim or his suddenly discovering that his son is gay? Issues such as euthanasia, artificial insemination, in-vitro fertilization or abortion are some of the issues amongst others that need to be more discussed from the minbar.

In some countries the notion that homosexuality is a way of life and other amoral lifestyles are being propagated. The minbar should provide enough material to combat this notion and the imambara can thereby also be a launching pad for opposing such twisted thinking on the part of the so called intellectuals.

It is also not necessary that all majalises be recited by a maullana or from the minbar. Experts on various subjects can be invited to deliver lectures on areas of their expertise from a lectern. Debates on issues of the day can be arranged with speakers chosen so that the occasion enlightens as well as entertains.

Most majalises at imambaras are organized for the community at large. But can our youngsters and teenagers understand the language or level of the majalis? Why not organize majalises or other useful programs for our youngsters, concurrently with the main majalis so that they too can fully may participate in imambara activities. They will then be inside the imambaras and not outside! The youths themselves should be involved in organizing their programs and activities, ofcourse with active encouragement from the seniors.

The role of women in Islam is another issue which needs to be explained in context with modern day realities, elaborating on their

responsibilities as daughter, wife, mother, sustainer, economic partner or provider of the family.

The need to serve

In many Jamaats members are indifferent to communal activities. The minbar can be used to tell us that it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to be the representatives of the Imam and if there are not enough people doing it, the rest are not absolved. It has to be emphasized to the congregation that the various roles that have to be played cannot be sacrificed for lack of workers. If the work does not get done or if tabligh work is insufficient because of lack of volunteers, every member of the community is responsible for the non-fulfillment of our obligation.

The majalis is a great inheritance that we have received in which we can learn to enrich ourselves even in tragedy. Imam Hussein (a.s.) never reminded the enemy that he had given them water even as the enemy was holding back water from him. In this is a lesson of the height of humility that humanity is capable of.

We started this article with two quotes - one from the 6th and the 12th Imams and the other from Imam Hussien (a.s.). As a rule, every saying of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) is full of wisdom. If we were to cling to and exhaustively follow even one saying, the shape of Islam would be different and it would be as dynamic as it was meant to be. These two sayings are vital from the point of view of amr-bir-maruf.

'Every day is Ashura.' This is a message which tells us that we have to be vigilant at all times. We have to be concerned regarding all calamities that may befall humanity or where innocent people are killed and propagations from our

(continued on page 38)

(...from page 37)

minbars or imambaras should help raise more awareness on such contemporary issues.

'Every place is Kerbala.' This is to tell us that we should raise our voice against tyranny. What sort of voice have we raised regarding Bosnia or the numerous media attacks against Islam? What role has the imambara played? The chief of the martyrs has said that it is better to die fighting for the truth. There is no dying involved here. All it takes is to be resolute and to take a firm Islamic stand at all times. All it takes is to remember that **"every day is Ashura and every place is Kerbala"**.

Unemployment is a problem in many countries. The imambaras can be used to launch youth clubs with a view to making the young adults in the community entrepreneurs. Schemes can be devised whereby Karde-hasna is given for business purposes. This has effectively been used in Iran and Karachi.

Children of the community should be encouraged to get together in the religious atmosphere of the imambaras. We often complain that our youngsters are drifting away from the community and marrying outside but on the other hand we create hindrances in their way. Gone are the days of marriages taking place by viewing photographs! Let us provide the necessary facilities within the bounds of sharia. It is appalling to hear leaders make statements such as "although it is clearly permissible from the point of view of sharia to allow both male and female who are in proper hijab to be in the same hall without partitions, but I will not allow it".

As a community we receive several benefits from the society we

live in. However it is incumbent upon us to join forces with society at large and play an equal part in the betterment of humanity as a whole. The time has come for us to give something back to the society. Blood donations on the day of Ashura and at other times in the year should be encouraged; food banks could be organised in the month of Ramadhan and throughout the year; volunteer services may be offered to local charities, e.g. fund-raising telethons for sick children; charity walks and so on.

Aalims should be well versed with communication skills

All these aspects bring us back to the minbar/aalim. The aalim has got to be well informed in matters of religion, the dynamics of the society in which we reside and the techniques of communication. Not enough attention is being paid to this last item. It is so important for the aalim "to connect" with his audience because an aalim may be learned but he has to know how to impart his knowledge to his community. Let us have workshops, seminars and conferences for the aalims where they can compare notes and also learn and brush up on their communication skills.

We would like to state that the

success of the imambaras is how the members of its congregation react on hearing the word "MAJALIS". If the response is like that of the butterfly heading towards the candle to be lost in its flame, then the majalis has not been understood. If the response is "Oh! Again?" then there is something seriously wrong. But if the response is, "Thee do we worship and from Thee only we seek guidance", then the imambara has succeeded. The minbar has succeeded. The Aalim has succeeded. Islam has found another mujaheed.

Let there be literature produced from the imambaras. Let there be lectures for the general muslim community who are ill-informed about us. Let there be programs for non-muslims so that they may understand al-Islam and not Islam as depicted by the media.

And let our character, our actions, our outlook and our attitude be such that no media would dare malign Islam simply because no one would believe from our proven character and actions that we can be capable of such deeds.

Our prophet Muhammed (s.a.w.) has said, **"call mankind towards goodness not just by words but by your deeds, truthfulness and virtue"**. This should be our ultimate aim. Where else but from the minbar can we be taught this?

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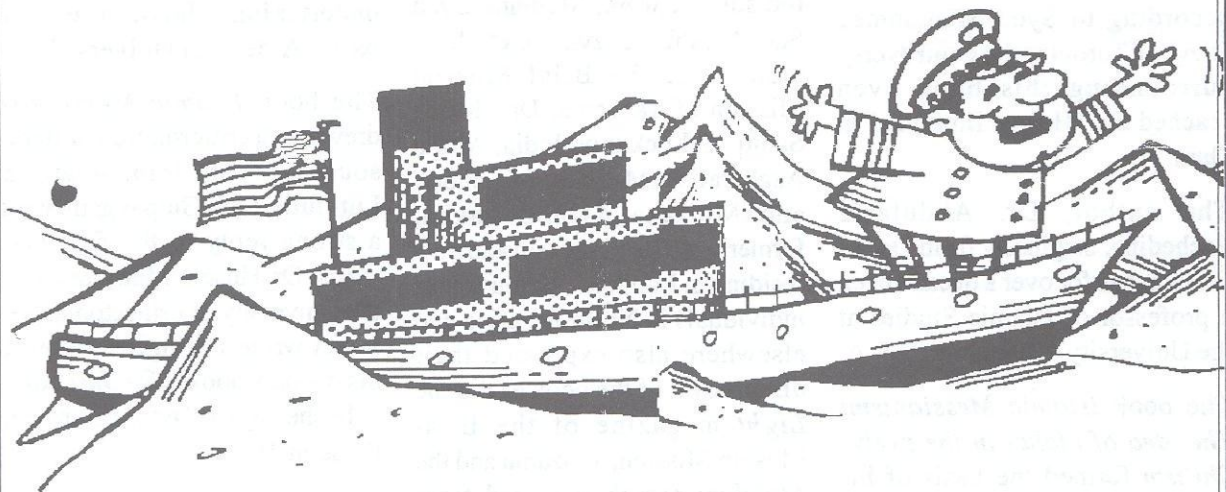
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Was the Toronto Open Forum conclusive?

Brother Fidahussein Hameer, Dar es Salaam revisits the Open Forum held in Toronto in September last year to discuss the book *Islamic Messianism*.

The Toronto Jamaat held an open Forum in September, 1995 to resolve the controversy surrounding the book - '*Islamic Messianism: The idea of Mahdi in twelve Shi'ism* - (State University of New York press 1981) by Dr. Abdulaziz Abdulhusein Sachedina'

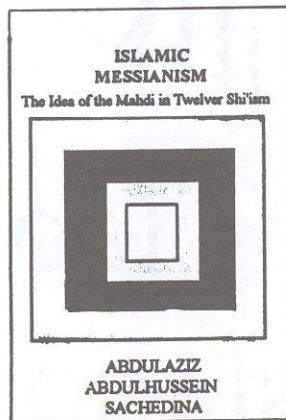
Discussion on the book had previously been restricted to a few informed people some of whom were leaders of various Jamaats. Now the book has become the subject of public debate and according to Syed Muhammad Rizvi of Toronto, the controversy surrounding this book even reached the 'Hawze Ilmiyyah' in Qum.

The author, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina, originally from Dar es Salaam, has for over a decade been a professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Virginia, U.S.A.

The book *Islamic Messianism: The idea of Mahdi in the twelve Shi'ism* formed the basis of his Ph.D. Doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Toronto in 1976 and was later published in book form by Sunny Press, Albany, NY in 1981.

According to Dr. Sachedina, the book was the product of his methodological research and was essentially written for the 'Non believing western readers in the academic world' and was not for general consumption by lay Muslim readers.

Soon after the publication of this book in 1981, those among the learned Shia who read the book, found it objectionable. Among the



well known community members who made their views known on the subject were, Maulana Syed Saeed Akhter Rizvi, Chief Missionary of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania, Dr. Kalbe Sadiq of Lucknow, India, Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer of London and Murtaza Ahmed Lakha, formerly of Dar es Salaam and now residing in London. Various other individuals in North America and elsewhere also expressed their disapproval of the book as did the *Light* magazine of the Bilal Muslim Mission, Tanzania and the *Mahdian* pamphlet issued from Los Angeles, USA.

With the passage of time, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina gained increasing recognition in academic circles in the USA as a Professor of Islamic Studies. He was interviewed by the USA Television Network over diverse issues such as the Fatwa of Ayatullah Khomeini on Salman Rushdie, author of the 'Satanic verses'. During the Iran and Iraq war and the subsequent Gulf War, he was among the numerous Islamic scholars invited by T.V. Networks to shed light on topical Islamic issues.

Following the Islamic revolution in Iran and the subsequent Gulf War, world attention on the Muslim world increased and the Shia Faith attracted much interest. Until recently, not much writing concerning the Shia Faith was available in Western languages and thus the *Islamic Messianism* and the *Just Ruler*, easily became authoritative works on the Shia Faith. These books have since become reference guides for students undertaking Islamic Studies in North American Universities.

The book *Islamic Messianism* drew much criticism from different sources. From Iran, Ayatullah Lutufulla Safi Gulpaygani wrote a strong reply to the first book whilst Dr. Husein Mudarrasi from the University of Princeton in New Jersey wrote a stringent critique of his second book, *The Just Ruler*, published by the Oxford University Press in 1988.

Individuals sought to seek clarifications from Dr. Sachedina but doubts remained on his belief in the existence and the occultation of the 12th Imam.

As misunderstandings grew, the once sought after lecturer and zakir was barred from reciting majalis in some Jamaats. To clear the air and put things in their right perspective, Toronto Jamaat took a bold initiative to organise the Open Forum in order to resolve the controversy surrounding the book *Islamic Messianism*.

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(....from page 40)

The Open Forum was held in Toronto on 30 September 1995, with an attendance of over 1200 participants, both male and female. Several participants had travelled from distant parts of the U.S.A. and Canada to take part in the Forum.

Amongst those invited were Maulana Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi of Dar es Salaam who however received his invitation late by when he already had alternative travel plans. It is not known if Dr. Husein Mudarassi from University of Princeton, a critic of Sachedina's second book, *The Just Ruler* was invited. At the same time, one would have hoped that an eminent Shia scholar living in the United States, Dr. Syed Hussein Nasr would be invited to be on the panel.

To the credit of Toronto Jamaat however, it appears they desired to resolve the controversy surrounding the book and its backlash against Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina.

As it transpired eventually, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina, Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer and Dr. Liakat Takim, Resident Aalim of Toronto Jamaat were the only penalists sitting behind the high table with Br. Nazir Gulamhusein, President of Toronto Jamaat. Maulana Syed Muhammad Rizvi of Toronto chose to sit with the public and contributed to the proceedings when called upon by the Chair.

At the Forum, Dr. Abdulaziz emphasised that at no time did he abandon his faith and belief in Shia teachings.

Mulla Asgher in his response, read and condemned some excerpts from the book and said it was indefensible for any book to be

written only to please Western Academicians.

However Mulla Asgher affirmed that he had confidence in Dr. Abdulaziz to be a practising Muslim and a Shia Mo'min. He said but for the fact that Dr. Abdulaziz had declared his faith in the latter part of the book, he would not have travelled to Toronto to talk otherwise to a Kafir or Murtad.

Mulla Asgher called upon Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina and others not to defend the book and appealed to all to ignore the book.

The following comments by Mulla Asgher as he quoted excerpts from the book, highlights the magnitude of the problem.

"What does it matter, if Western scholars pay credence to our faith or not?"

"Having written the book as laboriously, I am sure not a single person came to believe it".

"Objectivity induces a scholar to enter into a suspended belief !!! In order to please the examiner, masters and to get a degree?"

"Akida is for moatakideen not for Kafireen.....If you read pages 2 and 3 and read between the lines, you will find that the holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has been ridiculed, Sahaba have been ridiculed, Imam has been ridiculed and Imam Mehdi A.F. has been ridiculed".

He went on "Dr. Saheb has said here today that it (Imam Mehdi A.F.) is from the Qur'an, it is from the Qur'an!" "You have to write what you believe and you have to believe what you write".

Quoting from page 6 of the book, Mulla Saheb read "Shia doctrine of Imam was formulated during

Imam Ja'afar Sadiq's time" and then he posed a question, "what happened to the 1st Imam to Imam Mohamed Baqir A.S?"

Mulla then said "Mahdiya went out from the Qur'an and also went away from Hadith. What is left now is a concoction."

The question now is: What has been the final outcome of the Forum?

Far from closing the debate, judging by the discussion that followed on the internet, the book *Islamic Messianism* has become a subject of further scrutiny.

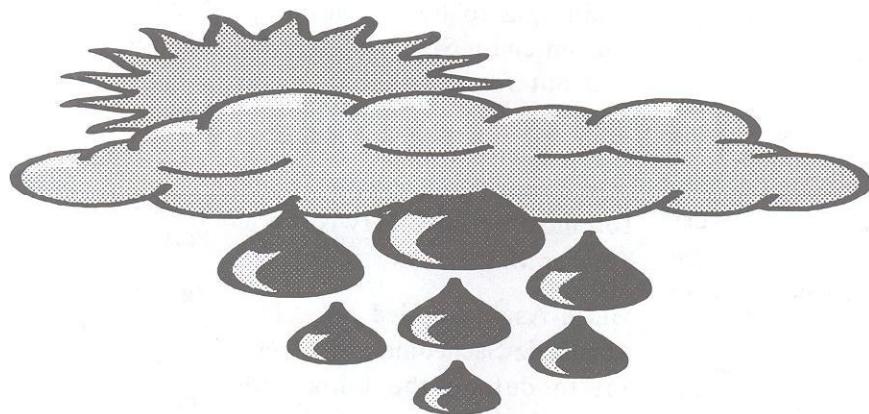
In the course of the Forum, Dr. Abdulaziz did not respond to the suggestion by Mulla Asgher to stop defending the book. When called upon by an individual from the audience to do so, he chose to remain silent. Another participant came to the rescue with a suggestion that since Dr. Sachedina had but opposed the suggestion made by Mulla Asgher, his silence could be construed as a tacit agreement. On this note, the meeting was brought to a close.

For the posterity, it would be wise for Toronto Jamaat to publish an unedited version of the entire Open Forum in the form of a booklet. This will greatly help to set the records straight and eliminate misunderstandings and/or misinterpretations of what actually transpired in the Open Forum.

On the issue of whether Dr. Sachedina can be given the pulpit by Jamaats, Ayatullah Lutfullah Safi Gulpayegani D.A. has said, *"If he insists on the correctness of what he has written in his book and does not unambiguously announce the falsity of those writings, he is not fit for mimber or tabligh".*

That presumably should be the best guideline for Jamaats.

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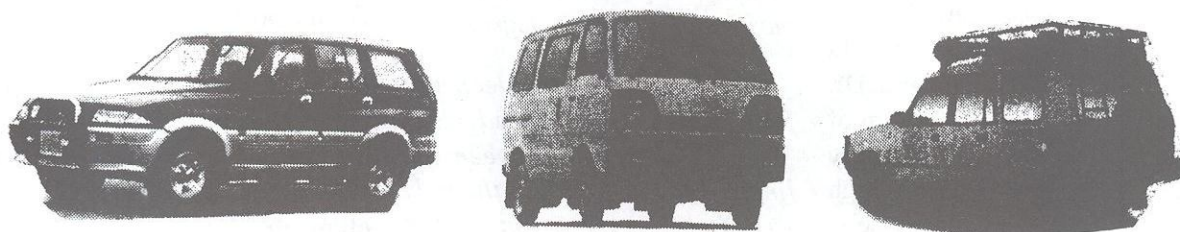


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Understanding the Surah Yasin

By Mohamedhusein Kermalli, Dar es Salaam

The most commonly and frequently recited "Surah", yet least understood by many, is "Surah YASIN", described by the Prophet of Islam as the **"Heart of the Quran"**. We all know the importance of the heart to the body. Therefore we can easily see the importance of the Surah in relation to the Quran.

There are numerous "Ahadith" of the Prophet and our "Aimmah" which underscore the importance of the "Surah" and describe the benefits of its regular reading. The basic purpose of reading the Quran is to understand what is read in order to derive guidance from it. Therefore we must make efforts to understand the "Surah" when we read it. A mere habitual recitation without understanding what we recite does not serve the Divine purpose of guiding us to reform our lives and open our inner eyes to see things in the light of the Divine Scheme.

"Surah YASIN" is the 36th Chapter of the Holy Quran. Revealed in Makkah, it contains 83 verses divided into five sections. As the heart or the inner-most core of the Quran, it contains the main thrust of the Message conveyed in the Quran. An overview of the "Surah", outlining the topics covered, is enough to explain generally the reason for it being called the "heart" of the Quran.

The "Surah" starts with the fundamental Message of Islam - "Tawhid" - as the centre piece or basic foundation of the Message. It gives a graphic illustration of the

negative response by the majority of people to the Message through their arrogance and disbelief. It further tells us about the difficult task of delivering the Message undertaken by Allah's Messengers sent as Prophets to warn mankind, the last and leading among whom is our Prophet Seyyidina Muhammad (S.A.W.) who is addressed as "YASIN" (Model Man) by Allah (S.W.T.) in this "Surah". It continues further to tell us about the perpetuation of the delivery system after the Prophet through the teachings of the Quran and the divinely appointed successors of the Prophet.

Section two of the "Surah" gives a classical example of a historic event which took place during the time of Nabi Isa (A.S.). It refers to the pains and persecutions suffered by the Messengers of Allah (S.W.T.) in their difficult mission of delivering the Message to the people. Nabi Isa (A.S.) sent two of his close companions (Yahya and Yunus) to the idol worshipping people of Antioch (now known as Antakiya) situated in Northern Syria. While delivering the Message they were caught, tortured and imprisoned. Nabi Isa (A.S.) sent his third very close, learned and wise companion (Shamu'n) to help them. Finally they were all, together with their follower (Habib Najjar), subjected to extreme atrocities. Habib Najjar was stoned to death in a market place. Allah's punishment followed. The city with its people was destroyed. The story has been given as a lesson for mankind.

Section three guides us to understand the Message through thinking and reflection on several "Signs" of Allah (S.W.T.) seen in nature, which point to His Single Existence and Oneness manifested in all His Creation. Among these "Signs" are: a dead and dry piece of land turns lush and green after a good rainfall and produces grain and fruit for man to eat; the pairing pattern between male and female found in all living and non-living things; the regular and systematic alternate change of night and day; the sun and the moon, the solar system, the planetary and the stellar systems all moving along the heavenly highways in space in a perfectly organised fashion; ships with passengers and cargo sail in the high seas and waterways - what makes it possible for them to sail and how they can be sunk instantaneously by Allah's Will. Yet, instead of understanding and taking up the Message, man rebels against Allah (S.W.T.). He disobeys Him openly until he meets his end suddenly while wrangling with others.

Section four gives us a scene of the Day of Resurrection describing the events in sequence: the sudden blast of the "Trumpet" when all will perish followed by the second blast when the dead will dramatically be brought back to life; the summon to proceed before the Divine Court of Justice for the final judgment; the body organs given power of speech to testify while the mouth is sealed; the reward of an eternal blissful life in the

[continued on page 44]

Jaffry wins the hearts of art lovers

The Community has excelled in various fields world-wide but we have rarely heard of members creating an impression in art.

The Dar es Salaam based, Mohamed G. Jaffry has recently achieved a tremendous surge in popularity in the field of art.

The Finest Art Association of Tanzania (FAAT) recently selected him to display pictures at various exhibitions in Dar es Salaam and thereafter the good quality of his pictures immediately caught the attention of other Groups like the French Cultural Centre. He was also amongst the few who displayed their work at the recent UNDP Exhibition and the Sheraton Fine Art Exhibition.

Born in 1946 in Dar es Salaam, Mohamed is a self-taught artist who has been drawing since the age of seven. During his childhood he was greatly inspired by his maternal grandfather who then designed traditional African

Khangas.

In 1988, he seriously studied the prevalent Art field in Tanzania with an objective of taking up the hobby on a professional and commercial level. His pictures today fetch handsome prices on the local market but he claims that one bottleneck is the existent dearth in art awareness.

Today, Mohamed Jaffry is well known in art circles for his bright and vibrant work, based on life in Africa. He transforms everyday life

situations into pictures with the colours, designs and styles being left to the mood of the moment. His paintings depict African culture in general thereby enlightening viewers on local traditions and customs.

He uses various combinations of oil paints and water colours for his pictures along with acrylics and crayons. He told the *Samachar* that if called upon to do so, he can also produce pictures with a religious theme.



Mohammed Jaffry.....giving final touches to yet another picture

Surah Yaseen -- the heart of the Qur'an

[...from page 43]

Paradise for the successful; the punishment of an extremely painful life in the Hell-Fire for the guilty and convicted; Allah's wrath on those who rebelled against Him in this life and arrogantly disobeyed Him. The scenario given is indeed hair raising and shocking for anyone to break into tears.

In the fifth and final section, Allah (S.W.T.) draws man's attention to the reality and truth contained

in the Quran warning those who are alive and awake; reminds man of his Creation from a dirty drop of semen; the aging process that he undergoes; the Creation of cattle for his use, the perfect and complete control of Allah (S.W.T.) over his entire Kingdom extending over the universes and beyond; His supreme command of BE and it is, by which He creates and controls His entire creation and executes His Will.

The "Surah" ends with Glorification of Allah (S.W.T.) as the Mighty

Creator and Controller of His entire kingdom on which He has a complete hold.

In conclusion, bearing in mind the above summary of the "Surah", the whole picture can be unfolded in our minds each time we recite the "Surah" as we pass from one Section to another, provided we have studied the "Surah" and pay full attention to what we recite. Such recitation will surely absorb our minds and affect our hearts to reap the full benefits of the "Surah".



Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam.

Life is like a clock

There is a parable of a philosophical clock which pondered on its future after being first installed. The clock reasoned that it had to tick twice each second, 120 times each minute and 7200 times every hour thus totalling 172,800 ticks per day. The clock calculated that this meant it would have to tick 63,072,000 times every year and in ten years the ticking would number to 630,720,000 times! At this point the clock collapsed from nervous exhaustion.

When the clock was revived by the repair-man, it saw in a moment of insight that all it had to do was to tick once at any particular moment and by doing one tick at a time

instead of harbouring apprehension of the extensive 'ticking' it would need to perform in the years to come, it continued to work for many years until when its owner replaced it with a newer model.

People often fail to accomplish results because they waste current opportunities by dreaming or dreading of what they will do in the days to come or by contemplating and being complacent on glories achieved in the years gone by.

In every important task there comes some form of challenge which can be overcome through enthusiasm and assertiveness.

However if one lacks confidence and only thinks of the difficulties to be overcome, enthusiasm is hampered and like the 'philosophical clock', one can suffer from a nervous breakdown and simply give up.

To undertake the challenges of life successfully it is important that one performs an immediate task well thereby laying ground for successful accomplishment. The effort and pleasure of successfully performing an immediate task at hand then fuels determination to carry on enthusiastically towards one's objective.

Life is too short to hoard up one's energies for some day to come and by postponing decisions or actions a time soon comes when one realises to one's regret, that by hoping and willing rather than willing and doing, such a day remains elusive. Surely procrastination is the thief of time.

Are the grapes sour?

There is this ancient fable of a hungry fox who wanted to eat a bunch of grapes which were on a branch beyond his reach. After repeated unsuccessful jumps to get the grapes he bitterly walked away but satisfied himself by saying that the grapes were sour.

The same applies to resentful people who often write off the achievements of others simply because they cannot achieve a similar or higher level of success. For example some people who lack education, out of envy, undermine those who have achieved educational honours whilst some not very affluent persons deride successful businessmen by generalising that all wealthy people are dishonest.

The envy and jealousy of not having achieved the success attained by others can ruin a person and just like iron is eaten away by rust, the envious are consumed by their own passion. Rather than forcibly look for faults in the success of others, one needs to concentrate on one's objectives in life and then try to successfully achieve these objectives. And at all times the mind will be at much more peace if one learns to accept and appreciate the success of others rather than trying to compare their success with yours and then undermining their achievements by paltry rhetoric just to please yourself.

Nobody can claim to be the best

because in one way or another there always is somebody better than you. Sporting stars who at one time appear invincible are gradually surpassed by others and when this happens they have to accept defeat sportingly which by itself is a tact because such defeats can be demoralising especially when inflicted by a newcomer in the presence of thousands of spectators.

The envious blame others in their success without realising that they are actually calling the grapes sour! To get to the grapes you need to put in maximum efforts and if after then you still fail, its best to acknowledge that they are beyond your reach.

In Modernity, Shaitan is a step ahead!

As man continues to develop his intelligence for a greater and wider control over this world and to improve order and peace in human society while engaged in search of the spiritual (or divine) truth, Shaitan too continues to develop or apply greater and wider techniques of subtlety and deceit against man to counter his developing insight, to misguide him and keep him in rebellion against God.

Let us examine a few examples:

* As man gains knowledge to enable him to appreciate the wonder of creation, this knowledge is proving to be a spiritual liability because he begins to doubt his origin and considers it as accidental without causation.

* As man begins to feel ashamed of his weaknesses like jealousy, greed, anger, pride, etc. these traits are now termed normal healthy human behaviours except that there is a need for self discipline over them.

* Man begins to feel undignified and low by bowing before idols or images for worshipping in view of the rise in human intelligence. The idols and images are now hidden in the hearts of man in the form of deities and saints. Idol worshipping hence continues but is camouflaged. Man is unaware of it.

* When the Holy Prophet began his mission, it was the unbelievers who were challenging the new Islamic Ideology, doctrine and values because they saw these as strange and insensible. To

day, the believers are raising their voice in this manner and advocate secularism in Muslim countries so as to distance Muslims from Islamic values.

* In the former times, it was the ignorant among the unbelievers and the *mushrik* priests who became confused as to the right path. Today, we cannot fail to see that it is among the educated Muslims and a few Islamic Scholars who are seen even more confused while preaching Islamic Guidance.

* In the days gone by, a believer was ready to prove his sense of sacrifice for the defence of Islam against unbelievers. Today, the priority has shifted to the defence of one faith against another of Islam.

* There was a time when open slavery with physical cruelty prevailed. The slaves did not have control over their bodies but they did have over their mind and whilst in bondage they sought freedom. Today there are millions of slaves as wage-earners whose wages are already committed for years ahead under the system of consumerism. This is worse because they have control over their body and movement but not their mind because they

are not even aware of this bondage.

Because of the unequal physical and emotional nature of men and women, God has prescribed unequal responsibilities between them over one another. Women now see this "favour" as their "oppression" by men. In the name of progress, women now campaign for freedom - whose freedom? Freedom of men from their responsibility to toil, sweat and fulfill the role of bread-earner and guardian of women. Modernity has infested society with 'single woman families'. Ironically 'A free woman' has to toil and sweat more than man for man's children.

The holy Prophet taught Islam and submission and devotion to God and to God only. He banished the practice of rituals and devotional offerings to appease dead spirits. Today the latter is regaining hold insidiously in the name of Islam and with "Islamic" embellishment.

In the Holy Quran, God repeatedly warns us that Shaitan is our open enemy. Shaitan slides us into what God detests most - *Shirk* - and perpetrates oppression of man by man in the guise of "modernity."

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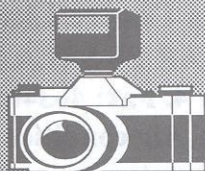
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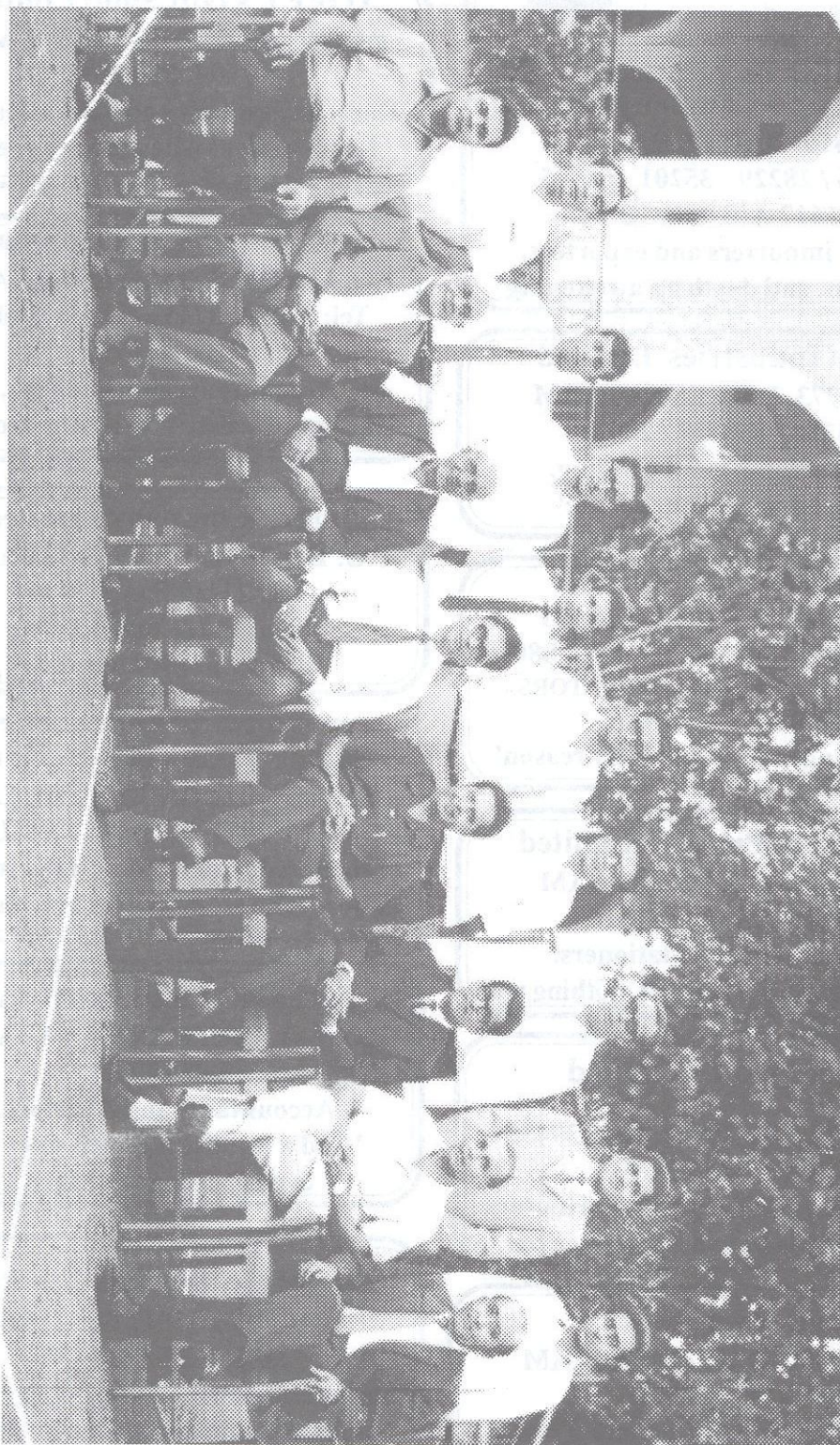
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Down Memory Lane

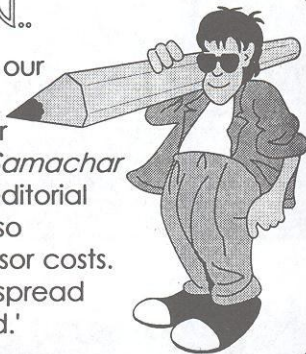
In the last issue the below picture appeared unclear. A better version is reproduced below - Editor.



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

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That cricket craze

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam.

The world was gripped with cricket fever when the World Cup contest took place in February and March, 1996 in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In Tanzania, Live broadcasts (courtesy DTV) of all the matches brought the action on the grounds right to our living rooms and whilst wives previously complained of husbands not spending much time at home, during the cricket World Cup we had husbands complaining that their wives did not cook simply because they spent a full day watching cricket. Take-away joints surely did not complain!

Like any major sport where teams have many supporters, the game of cricket knits a few hundred thousand people together to support their team and every time a player hits a four or six or when a wicket falls, there is a thunderous applause in the stadium and frequent cheering in thousands of households around the world.

Bernard Shaw may have decried cricket as a game played by 11 flanneled fools and watched by 11,000 other fools but then he overlooked the many benefits that the game offers in the form of entertainment, raising physical fitness and the like.

There is nothing wrong with cricket as a game and with the happy hysteria that flows from it when fans cheer their teams on. After all, we all need some time for recreation and one way of doing this is to cheer teams when they contest for glories.

However happy hysteria is not the same as fanatical or adolescent adulation in support of teams.

When Pakistan lost to India in the World Cup quarter-final, a distraught college student fired bullets into his television screen and then killed himself. The semi-final between India and Sri Lanka at Calcutta, India was disrupted by fans when India was on the verge of defeat and the game was awarded to Sri Lanka by default.

In Pakistan, fans burnt effigies of Captain, Wasim Akram whilst in India a disappointed fan hanged himself whilst others took to the streets and burnt pictures of Captain, Mohammad Azharrudin. Such rash behaviours benefit nobody and only bring the game into disrepute.

Surely games can get me glued to the television set but never would I like to involve myself in a brawl, dispute or confrontation with others to back my team. It is not that I am unpatriotic but rather what would such a fanatical following benefit me, the team or society at large?

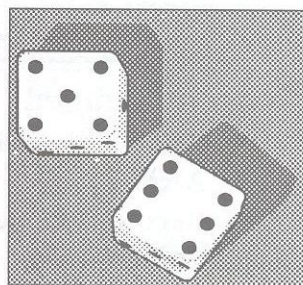
The cricket World Cup, like any other major sporting event, has contestants from different countries, different races and different religions competing for glories. It is a great feeling when your team wins but passions and emotions need to be restrained to a level of civility.

Sporting contests occur at one time or another and never can one team win all the time. Such contests are held on commercial lines to uplift standards. Players reap financial benefits as do the hosts and organisers. The best we can do is to take delight out of supporting a team and let's not overdo this by being fanatical in our support.

Would you now like to paint the colours of your team on your face?

Footnote: There was one particularly positive and poignant reaction to India's win over Pakistan. A housewife in Borivili, India said that the win brought about her reconciliation with her husband, with whom she was not on talking terms for over two months.

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