



# Federation Samachar

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## It is Mulla Asgher Again !

For those who believed that nothing would persuade Alhaj Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer to continue as President of the World Federation, there was a pleasant surprise in store at the Triennial World Federation Conference held in Stanmore from 11 to 14 October, when Mulla was unanimously re-elected into Office.

The Vice- Chairman position was taken by Alhaj Manzoor Kanani of Nairobi who replaces Chacha Paryani of Toronto. Alhaj Hasnain Walji was reinstated for the General Secretary post as was Alhaj Ahmed Daya who will continue to keep track and report on the World Body's Finance.

Councillors elected at the Conference were Ashiqhusein Rashid [Nairobi], Dr. Anwer Dhanji [London], Dr. Ahmed Hasham [Birmingham], Dr. Gulam Sumar [Sweden] and Chacha Paryani [Toronto].

Those nominated were Roshanali Dewji [Vancouver], Haider Haji [Birmingham].

Mohamed Dhirani [Dar es salaam], Yawar Visram [Paris] and Sibtain Panjwani [Essex].

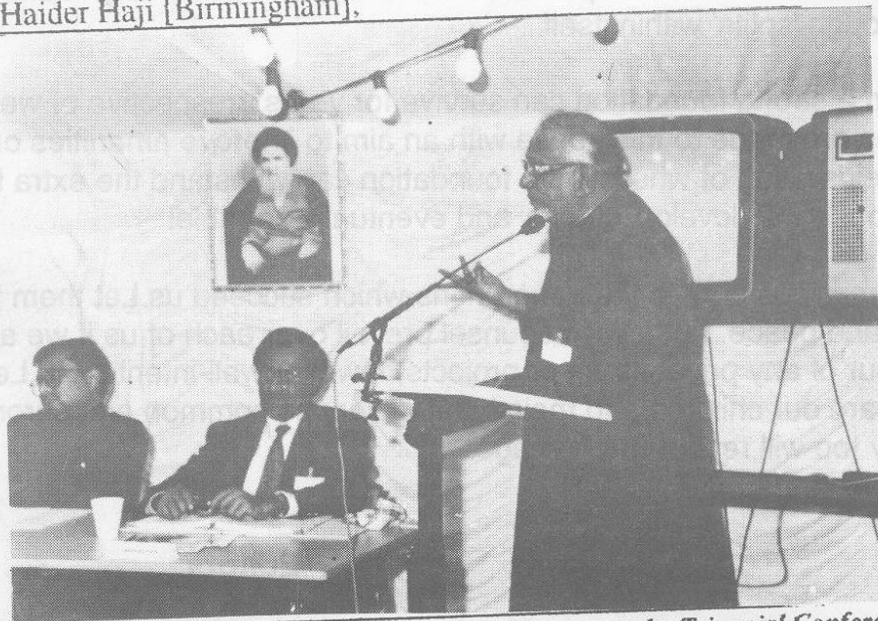
We Congratulate the newly re- elected Office-bearers and also Alhaj Manzoorali Kanani who hails from the Africa Federation and takes up a maiden term at the helm of the World Federation.

The World Federation leadership headed by Mulla Saheb will act and be seen acting as a solid wall to signify the solidity of its foundation as a preventive deterrent to any threat to the unity and harmony of the Community.

At the Conference the following Resolution of the Africa Federation was adopted :

*" This Conference authorises the Executive Council to form a Board and provide to it an appropriate mandate to deal with all issues of displacement and resettlement existing as or when they arise in respect of any sections of the Community under the ambit of the individual members of the World Federation. "*

(Continued page 26)



Alhaj Mulla Asgharali M. M. Jaffer addressing delegates to the Triennial Conference.

## A WORD OF CAUTION

In this Issue we feature two speeches delivered recently in the United Kingdom by the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Habib Mulji when he attended the triennial World Federation Conference and the inaugural Session of Community businessmen and professionals from around the world.

There is a timely ring of caution and warning in the messages of the Chairman, very much relevant to the events which have unfolded time and again and which are likely to recur in and around the Community at the regional and global levels.

In one of his deliverances, the Chairman paid a befitting and long overdue homage to our forefathers in Africa for having established, through their wisdom and loyalty, a strong traditional single rank of democratically sustained heirarchical type of leadership run with discipline and loyalty.

A perspective view from the past to now shows that the Community in Africa, through generations, continues to function and progress in its material and spiritual well-being within a conducive climate of unity and harmony.

All praise is due to Allah (s.w.t) that the Community has been able to protect itself from the malady of private trusts and rival or parallel jamaats which have bedevilled other regions and produced schism,divided loyalties,rivalry and struggle for mandate,power and prestige through immoral personality clashes.

A good deal of time,money and energy--essential for the material and spiritual progress of a Community-- is wasted through this malodious fight for power to serve.The motives may well be sincere but the danger is that we would be ensnaring ourselves to a system run by different divisions and is it not an open secret that the downfall of any Community or society is catalysed through 'splits' within itself.

A house built on a strong foundation can survive for years irrespective of weather vagaries but if alterations are made to this house with an aim to improve amenities or living conditions but with no consideration of whether the foundation can withstand the extra load of such changes, the house will develop 'cracks' and eventually crumble!

We too have a religious duty to the generations which succeed us.Let them too enjoy the legacy of unity and peace. Let a wise counsel prevail over each of us if we are influenced or tempted in favour of any private trust or projects,however well-intentioned.Let us guard the tradition and spare our children and theirs' the misery so common and chronic elsewhere.They too will repeat the homage.

**Editors**

## A Point on KHUMS

The Shariah places strict precautions for paying of Khums. The liability is not absolved or fulfilled if paid knowingly or unknowingly to a person not entitled to collect it by the Marja - e - Taqleed. Our Marja has a clear policy guideline that Ijaza held by individuals allows them only to collect Khums in their countries of domicile and this Ijaza is not valid for other countries or continents which they may visit or migrate to for settlement.

This letter is intended to protect Mu'mineen from paying wrongly and then having to make replacement payments later. I am providing to the Secretariat, Dar es salaam photocopies of the relevant questions and fatwas for reference by anyone interested.

'CAUTIOUS'

## MY CONFESSION, Lost

I am of advance age and have been confined at home for over an year due to a permanent physical incapacitation, frail health and torturous restlessness. As I live through my empty days, my thoughts are often drawn to the 'wrongs' I inflicted out of enmity against others engaged in voluntary Jamaat services.

My ego and arrogance sickened my mind to the extent that I easily found justification for not wanting to forgive and forget and instead wanting to punish and thereafter relish the harm caused. The distasteful deed that torments me most is the one in which I caused harassment through State Organs whilst attempting unsuccessfully to hide my identity.

My sick mind enjoyed the game and I prided over my connections with State Authorities despite the open risk of permanent harm to the Jamaat and its religious functions. Jamaats as religious Organisations are the trusts of Hazrat Hujjat A.S. with us during his 'ghaibat'. There are examples of devotion and dedication to Jamaats but mine is a devilish example of vengeance and destruction.

In my rare visits to Kabrastan I see the graves, some dilapidated, of those whom I remember did serve their Jamaats so well and of those few like me who caused trouble. How forlorn and educative is the scene there! Let this Confession caution others lest they find themselves in torment as I find myself in and I pray that this 'Caution' be 'zaria' for Allah's forgiveness to me.

While Community members were engaged in offering prayers for safety and security, I was preoccupied with harming those who had slighted me in the Community --- and at any cost! Services to a Jamaat which are not 'Lillaah' are a waste. My services led me to ego and sin and were therefore worse. WOE TO ME!

' REMORSEFUL'

## From the Publishers.....

# A WORD ON WORDS

With our Community of Khoja Shias spreading far and wide, the importance of keeping members, at least those who are interested, informed of Communal happenings around the world has become more pressing. At present the *Shia World* published by the World Federation and the *Federation Samachar* of the Africa Supreme Council continue to be the Community's main media with a total readership of about 30,000 or probably even higher

The *Federation Samachar* is published for free distribution with a current circulation of 5000 copies (of which 1500 are in Gujarati) and with about four people reading each issue, readership is estimated at about 20,000 people. Circulation is worldwide and the readership we enjoy is presently comparatively high within our Community worldwide.

The extent of readership pointedly marks out the important role the *Samachar* plays as a communication organ of the Africa Federation and though we are to some extent limited in the scope of coverage, we do aspire for and try to exhort what is consistent with reality as it prevails, devoid of wishful thinking or utopian vision that may appear good on paper.

The *Samachar* offers a forum for expression of views and ideas on almost any issue relating to our Community as long as comments are objective, constructive and therefore effective. To achieve this, writers have to be well conversant with the subject handled - - especially if they want to be seen as being forceful in their comments.

On the other hand we cannot help being selective in accepting articles for publication or

subjecting them to a fair proportion of editing to ensure that the forum does not do any undue injustice to any section especially because querulous critics find it easier to be critical than to be correct

There is an adage which says that 'if you want to hit a dog, you are bound to find a stick' and with this stick a truthful situation can be made to appear wrong and half-truths or unfounded logic can be concocted to appear 'well-based'. For this reason we do not knowingly promote any debate on views which are clearly misplaced, ill-conceived or have resulted from mis-perception of a subject matter.

Our scope of coverage is however limited as is that for almost any publication and it has generally been felt that there is a need for a Community periodical that can cater for a wider readership on commercial basis. There is a proverb which says that every 'hair makes its shadow on the ground' and surely any additional magazine within our Community would provide further enlightenment to members on various issues as long as its objectives are sincere and not imprecations.

Any publication released with the intention of furthering our faith and goals in life and which offers pragmatic antidotes to social wrongs has and will always be welcome. Writing is thinking expressed and constructive thinking put on paper means spreading explosive transformation material and ideas that could enable radical changes, for the betterment of the Community.

Written language is influential and it is a religious duty to ensure that the influence spread is not deleterious.

## .....Chairman does not mince his words

The full speech delivered by the Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji at the World Federation Conference held in Stanmore from 11 to 14 October, 1991 is being carried to enlighten esteemed readers on important issues our Community has at hand.  
Editors.

"It is a proud occasion for the Community when the World Federation meets at a Conference level. This is such an occasion. But such precious and auspicious occasions come up only once in three years normally.

In the meantime however things happen fast in our present world. More often, it would seem to us that bad things happen even faster. By the time we meet again, much may have taken place which was not foreseen, or perhaps foreseen but occurred much sooner than expected.

At a Conference we normally have for decisions, issues on the Agenda which are current, pressing and relevant to the time. But some of the members may have also some matters in mind which are not issues - perhaps NOT YET - or they may be localised issues and not yet global for the Community - that is, for the World Federation.

### SHARE CAUTION

I believe that such matters can also be appropriately raised by such members to share caution and awareness thereof with other members at a Conference during the time set for keynote speeches by regional leaders.

I therefore commend the President and the Secretariat of the World Federation for providing members with an opportunity for key-note speeches in the programme of this Conference. I strongly suggest that such an opportunity be continued with as a traditional feature of our future Conferences.

### THE PROCESS REPEATED

Of all the places in this world, we are rightly gathered here in Europe for the Community's

World Conference once again. Of all the places, its Secretariat is also in Europe.

When our forefathers left the eastern shores of the subcontinent of India and crossed the Indian Ocean to settle in East Africa, they could not have envisaged that this was only the beginning and that the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean would also be crossed by some of their third and fourth generations in about 100 years only.

What is more glorious is that when our forefathers went on establishing a Jamaat at every new centre of settlement in Africa, they perhaps could not have foreseen that there would be a strong unity of a chain of Jamaats spread over 10 countries in Africa in the form of a regional federation in less than 60 years, and that the same process would be repeated in Europe and North America and that the regional unity of the entire world-community would be consolidated through a world body like our World Federation.

What could not be imagined has happened - all by the grace of Allah (s.w.t.).

### A SEED OF UNITY

What was however clear to our forefathers was that by establishing a Jamaat even where there were only three families, to facilitate communal, religious and traditional rites, they were sowing a "seed" of unity. What perhaps they did not visualize was the extent to which the "seed" would grow and flower.

We cherish their wisdom over their motto "STEADFAST TO RELIGION IN UNITY". May Allah (s.w.t.) repose their souls in the Abundance of His Mercy.

# WORLD CONFERENCE.....

If we are gathered here today as a united Community, it is a legacy of their wisdom. But what are the examples of their wisdom?

## PRIVATE TRUSTS ???

What I can see as one striking example is that they rarely allowed, accepted or promoted the proliferation of private trusts for religious purposes within the folds of the Community in Africa on which the Jamaats had neither control nor say.

As a result of this tradition, a large number of properties were donated to Jamaats for tabligh and other purposes by donor families instead of the families forming their own private trusts for the purposes. Even the few private trusts which had existed were eventually vested with the Jamaats.

They never condoned establishment of rival Jamaats at any one Centre. Only two such Jamaats existed out of 50 and now we only have one in Africa out of 45, over a period of more than a century!

The Jamaats in Africa normally always served as an umbrella under which other organisations sprung to serve the Community and there was rarely a tradition of such organisations operating independently or rivalling the Jamaats in offering services.

## DEMOCRACY AND LOYALTY

Is it surprising therefore that it was the Community in Africa which found itself in a climate conducive to the formation of the first regional federation as a forerunner to a few more to follow elsewhere?

If I am asked to define the key to the Community's success in matters of unity I would attempt by saying that it is the democratically sustained hierarchical system with the 'religious' loyalty of the Community to the System. In this definition, the key words are 'democracy' and 'loyalty'.

Therefore any institution or trust however small

or well intentioned, within the folds of the Community but outside the traditional System is as unhealthy to unity as is a blood clot to the circulatory system.

## A LEGACY OF UNITY

We have a legacy of unity given to us by our predecessors. We too should now leave for our generations which succeed us, a legacy - a legacy of measures to protect the legacy of unity!

Let these facts with their benefits be brought into the limelight to impress the Community.

Having known these facts, I am sure no member of the Community would want to disturb the System that produced the unity. On the contrary, he would want to ensure that the System is not disturbed by any. The posterity will acknowledge our wisdom as we do that of our forefathers.

Let us remember that:

**To want continued unity is natural ;  
To ensure continued unity is wisdom ;  
And wisdom is not natural.**

## UNITY IS NOT ALL

When the time is ripe, this matter can come up as an important issue of a policy to guide the Community on it. While we have been able to widen and consolidate our unity, it is unfortunate that we are slow in appreciating that the unity is not all that the Community needs. It needs also such substantial and stable sources of funds as would ensure that it functions as a progressive Community by meeting the ever growing demand for greater and greater services in constantly changing circumstances. The services rendered are not only religious but also educational, social-welfare, charitable and medical - and these are yet only some of the categories. Resettlement is a recent addition to the list of services required and its costs are staggering.

We need foundation funds. Let this decade 1991-2000, even belatedly, be that of Foundation Funds everywhere for the members and the

# WORLD CONFERENCE.....

World Federation. Annual targets be set now and met each year.

When I took over the Chairmanship of the Africa Federation in 1989, mobilisation of finance for a Foundation Fund was set as one of my projects.

## A MAMMOTH CHALLENGE

While a Foundation Fund is a priority, a greater priority has arisen regarding mobilisation of funds to shelter and then resettle the entire Community of 1200 persons (250 families) who have been dispossessed and displaced in Somalia and are now temporarily sheltered in Kenya and a few in Tanzania.

This is a mammoth challenge to the entire Community because apart from other aspects of the task, the money required is of a great magnitude. The resources have to be pooled to meet the challenge.

If the dispossession and displacement is a test of patience and fortitude for the victims, the task to comfort and resettle them is a greater test for us all. I am sure that we all shall not falter or waiver in this test - the Community will not fail them !

Copies of the latest issue of the *Federation Samachar* are available to you here. The issue provides full pictures of all aspects of the events involving the Community from Somalia and their present situation.

## COMMON TAQLEED

One of the factors that helped the Community in its unity and harmony is that of a common taqleed derived and enjoyed by the Community over many decades.

We all are thankful to Allah (s.w.t.) for this guidance and inspiration and pray for His continued guidance and inspiration in this matter.

It is possible that not all in the Community have realised what benefits would have been lost and their effects felt in practical lives of the members and in the functioning of Jamaats if there had

been no common taqleed, though it is an infiradi (Individual) fiqhi issue.

## PRAISE MIXED WITH SYMPATHY

Finally, I would refer to the atrocities against the Shia population, Shia Islamic symbols and the Holy Shrines in Iraq following Iraq's defeat in the Kuwaiti war. The extent and intensity of these are known to all of us to need any narration.

Never has the Community as a whole suffered so much anguish before as now over these cruel contemporary events.

Our praise mixed with sympathy goes to our Marja, Ayatullah Al-Ozema, Seyyed Abul Qassim Al-Khui for the exemplary fortitude and tenacity he demonstrated in his endurance of all that anguish and state-terrorization despite his old age and his frail health. Consider the extent of mental torture he became subjected to by the sight of the sudden blood-bath - - attendant with savagery and brutality involving innocent lives - - all around him !

## PITIFULLY WEAK

More tragic is the fact that the world remained in complete ignorance about the extent and intensity of these atrocities when they were in the process of being committed and therefore they did not arouse immediate world indignation.

And when these became later known through some sympathetic foreign reporters who had influence over their western papers; the versions of the Iraqi regime were also publicised in the Western papers in a lame defence for such atrocities.

For a moment the Shia world was seen pitifully weak without any means to bring these atrocities and the true versions in response to any distortions, to the open glare of the world. Of course, Iran as a country made good endeavours, but then these were seen by the biased West and the United Nations as of political strategies and national interest in the context of the Iran/ Iraq post-war era.

( ...Continued page 9 )

# CHAIRMAN TELLS BUSINESSMEN.....

## .... ' NEW ROLE MUST HAVE OLD RULES '

*The Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji addressed a World Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Businessmen Conference in London on 15 October, 1991 immediately after the World Federation Conference held in Stanmore from 11 to 14 October. His deliverance to this inaugural congregation accentuated on a number of crucial issues and we have reproduced his address in full.*

Editors

"This gathering here represents yet another milestone in the history of our Community. The fact that such an assembly with its aims and objectives, as we know of, could be organised is by itself 'a challenge overcome'. But greater challenges await the Organisers and their Organisation.

One of such challenges is *how to sustain the momentum of enthusiasm and direct it towards translating the aims and objectives into tangible results in a reasonable period of time.* There is also another challenge of *how to ensure and be seen that the results benefit the Community businessmen and professionals globally and do not become apportioned into benefits for a few in the name of the whole Community. Otherwise we are here to see an inauguration of a 'syndicate' which would be a preserve of a few. Any attempt for credibility once harm is done will fail and the adage of 'once bitten, twice shy' will prove true or relevant.*

We must not forget that this Organisation is not intended to be purely religious and charitable where the sole pleasure of Allah (s.w.t) is permanently on one's subconscious and conscious mind. At the same time the intention is not to facilitate into fruition the oft advocated principle that in business everybody is for oneself because this Organisation will be assuming a prestigious Communal identity.

We do realise that the present world economic and commercial trends have made regions inter-dependent and through technological advancements in communications and transportation, the world has become a mere 'global village'. This is now the age of international corporate thinking, corporate

organisation and corporate credibility and productivity. This calls for a pooling of resources of ideas, funds and personnel on the new premise of 'THE MORE, THE MONEYER'. But there is one important ingredient necessary, though just a pinch like salt, lack of which can spoil the broth -- and that is 'Trustworthiness'.

Thirdly and finally I wish to forget for a moment that I too am a businessman like others in this gathering. I wish to speak knowing that I assume some responsibilities as the Chairman of the Africa Community.

I wish to say with the confidence now gained that we have not gathered here to inaugurate an Organisation that would grow and then act as a rival to our existing Organisations or would it? *It may, if precautions are not taken from now to clear a ground and lay a foundation which are clearly understood what they are for and what they shall remain for - - now and later.*

We have assurances from the sponsors that the proposals shall preclude encroachment, duplication or interferences into the fields and mandates of services presently catered for the Community by their respective Jamaats, regional Federations and the World Federation. It is clear that the consequence of any competition would result in a 'crack' in our unity, which we presently well excel in.

On the contrary, the proposals will include an acknowledgement that it is the existing socio-religious bodies of the Community with democratic rights from the grass-root level which are the supreme bodies charged with management of the affairs and dischargement of responsibilities --- for the well-being of the



(Continued from page 7)

## SHIA WORLD

As a result of this crucial weakness, our Shia world was seen suddenly weak in a global reaction. Many wars are now won through the 'battles for mind' in the media to avert the conventional wars. Many atrocities are deterred or averted for fear of adverse publicity in the mass media.

The Shia world has to rise to the occasion which now demands that all such weaknesses are identified and remedied. We as a part or a section of the main Shia world have a role, however small, to play. We can at least take a lead in sounding our observations at the global level in the Shia world.

Our credentials to sound such issues lie behind



## NEW ROLE -- OLD RULES

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(Continued from Page 8 )

Community as a whole and it is they who are the authority and spokesmen for the Community in the international arena of Communities. This and other similar valid feelings have to be respected for a big success of the wonderful proposals for which we have gathered here.

It will be seen therefore that those at the helm at this stage of birth and infancy will be assuming much greater responsibility - than those to follow them , that is in respect of the fate of this Organisation and the fate of our harmony and unity.

not only the fact that we are members of the same Shia world but also by our records which prove our own self-confidence and the confidence of others in us and our complete devotion to our Marja - e - Taqleed. Our credentials also lie in our commitment to the welfare and well-being of the entire Shia World, though we have limitations in actions - because of our small number - a mere 120,000, but there is no limitation in our feelings and concern".

"ALLAAHUMMA 'ALNA FEE KULOOBINA NOORAN WA BASRAN WA FAHMAN WA ILMAN INNAKA ALAA KULLI SHA 'IN KADEER".

**O' ALLAH INSTILL IN OUR HEARTS GUIDANCE, INSIGHT, INTELLIGENCE AND KNOWLEDGE; YOU ARE ALL POWERFUL.**

What I have said is only a note of caution. The sponsors have appreciated this caution in the same good spirit in which it was given. It shows that the exercise of foresight is at work in all quarters. This is a welcome augury.

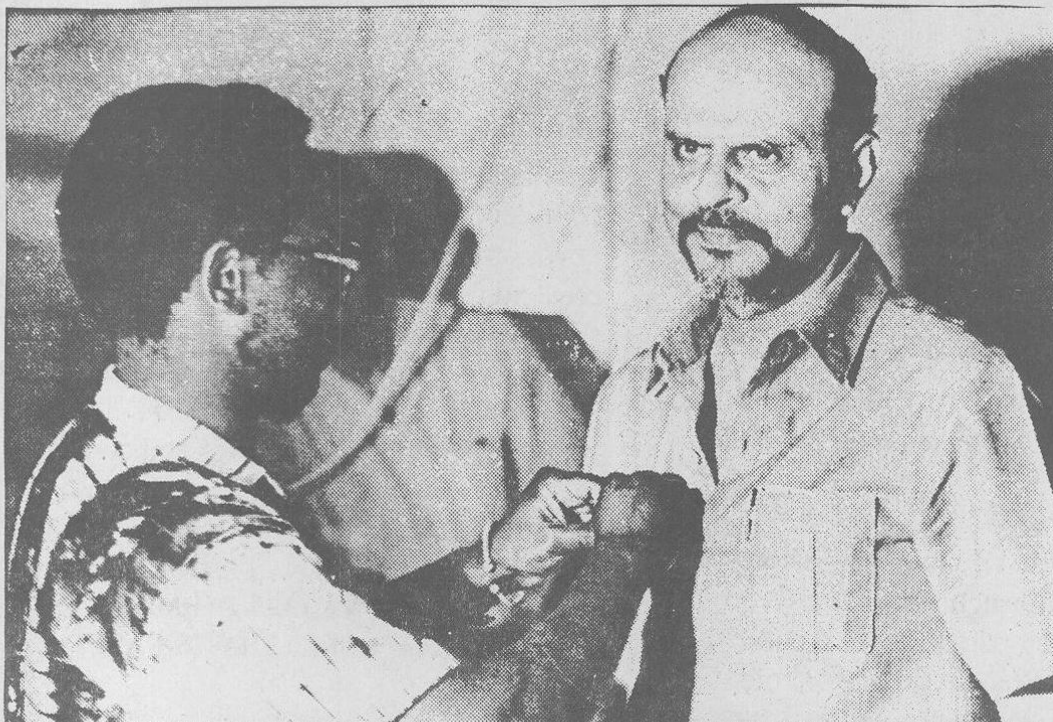
Having spoken as a businessman, then as the Chairman of the Africa Federation, now let me conclusively act as a Professional -- and play a doctor with a prescription : Regular exercise of CAUTION builds up muscles of FAITH to ensure a healthy long life. And a long healthy life is exactly what I sincerely wish the new Organisation. Please let me invite myself at your 10th anniversary celebration from now -- provided of course, I am still around! "

**Recitation of the Holy Qur'an, eating honey and drinking milk help in improving one's memory.**

*Imam Ali A.S.*

**Islamic culture defines free society to be one in which there rules no power but that of Allah and divine injunctions.**

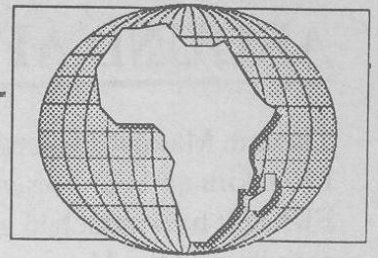
*Ayatollah Montazeri*



*The Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat, Alhaj Sajjad M. Rashid being awarded the Golden Baden - Powell World Fellowship Award by the Executive Commissioner of Scouts in Africa, Kiraithe Nyaga for his pioneering the successful Somalia rescue mission. Alhaj Sajjad has also been awarded by the Pakistan President in appreciation of the many Pakistani nationals evacuated . The official presentation will be in March next year. Alhaj Sajjad was accompanied by 17 men and women volunteers on the mission. They were Dr. Mohamed Azani, Gazanfar Hasham, Murtaza Khaku, Abdulali Kanji, Salim Khaku, Razahusein Muraj, Kassam Yakub, Ashraf Rashid, Aftab Hussein, Mohsin Ebrahimali, Alimohamed Khimji, Mrs Tahera Rashid, Mrs Laila Karmalli, Mrs. Kulsum Khaku, Mrs. Laila Dato, Mrs. Kuisum Kanji and Miss Fatmabai Karmalli.*



**Veteran sportsman, Amir Somji of Arusha seen with Zambia's former President, Kenneth Kaunda, at the Arusha Gymkhana Golf Course when the former President last visited Tanzania. Brother Amir is a keen sportsman who still plays cricket, volleyball and golf and is a past recipient of the Abul Fazlil Abbas Trophy for being the Sportsman of the year in 1969.**



## Council Officials visit Dar Bilal Centre

A delegation of the Africa Supreme Council visited the Bilal Mission at Temeke in Dar es salaam on 8 September, 1991. The delegation, which included Chairman Alhaj Habib Mulji, Vice-Chairman Alhaj Mohamed Khalfan, the Honorary Secretary Alhaj Habib Virani and Trustee Alhaj Gulamabbas Janmohamed, was received and shown around the place by their hosts who included the Chairman of the Mission, Alhaj Fidahussein Abdullah Hameer, the Chief Missionary, Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi plus Maulana Syed Sajjad Husain who is currently in charge of general operations at the Centre and Alhaj Murtaza Jivraj, a Committee Member.

The delegation first visited the Al-Ghadeer Colony built at the Changombe area in Dar es salaam especially for our African Shia brothers. So far eighteen flats have been completed and allocated free of charge to as many families. The delegation was told that six flats are currently on the finishing stage and will soon be ready for occupation. The infrastructure can accommodate 48 more flats subject to finance being available.

At the main Centre, the Council delegation was shown the almost completed Charitable Dispensary of the Mission which will be run by the Medical Sub-Committee of the Dar es salaam Jamaat and they then visited the Markaz Seyyidol Khoui building which also houses a library and a Madrassa that grooms new teachers through a five year Arabic course. They also saw progress in construction of the proposed enlargement of the al-Ghadeer Mosque and were shown the newly built and impressive al-Ghadeer Boarding House that can accommodate 104 students of the Howzah and which also has halls earmarked for tailoring and typing classes.

The Administrative Block including its Correspondence Course section and Printing Press was also seen and when returning, the Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji with Alhaj Gulamabbas Janmohamed visited the Mission's

Stall at the third National Book Festival held in Dar es salaam.



*The Council delegation with the hosts at the main Centre*

### IN PERSPECTIVE:

The Bilal Muslim Mission was founded in 1968 as an autonomous body under the Supreme Council with the primary intention of propagating tabligh outside the Community. After a constitution was prepared by the Secretariat, a committee was formed with the Late Haji Ahmad Hussein Shariff Dewji of Moshi as its first President and the late Haji Mohamedrafik Somji as the Honorary Secretary. Five founders signed the Constitution on behalf of the Council, namely Maulana Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, Haji Ahmad Hussein Shariff Dewji, Haji Mohamed Jaffer Shariff, Haji Fidahussein Abdullah Hameer and Haji Hussein Nasser Walji.

The Mission is run by annual grants from the Supreme Council and through voluntary donations and subscriptions. The publication of books and periodicals and the propagation of religious education are the foremost means used by the Mission to further its objectives.

# AROUND AFRICA

The late Maraje' Taqleed, Ayatullah Syed Muhsin El-Hakim and our present Marja, Ayatullah Syed El-Khui have attached great importance to the activities of the Mission. They have expressed full support for the Mission and have blessed its activities with their earnest prayers.

The Mission, although based in Tanzania and Kenya, has spread the light of True Islam far and wide. Its fame can be reflected from the formation of similar named Organisations in other parts of Africa. In Sierra Leone, for instance, when a Lebanese Muballigh, Hujjatul Islam Shaykh Houssein Chahada, established a Society with similar objectives, he named it 'Bilal Muslim Mission'. Later the Bilal Muslim Mission du Burundi and Mission Islamique were also established under the umbrella of the Supreme Council to undertake tabligh work in Burundi and Madagascar respectively. These two Missions work in close cooperation with the Missions in Tanzania and Kenya.

## NO COERCION:

Islam does not believe in conversion which has been coerced or through material inducement. The Mission has steadfastly operated under this guideline and all its activities are purely confined to 'conveying the message'. The *Message* is conveyed through teachings in Madrassas and schools, through correspondence courses and propagation through literature in Kiswahili and English and through direct contact with individuals or groups.

A five years course is run in the Howza-e-Ilmiya, which is called 'Madresatul Ahlul Bayt (A.S.) lil Ulumul Islamiyya". On completion of this course, students emerge as qualified religious teachers and Muballighs and return to their respective areas to spread the Message of Islam.

The Mission has its own printing press and appropriate facilities for type-setting of its publications. Two of its bi-monthly magazines, *Sauti ya Bilal* (The Voice of Bilal) for Kiswahili readers and *The Light*, in English, enjoy widespread readership. *The Light* is globally read with circulation in the U.S.A., Canada, Jamaica

and Trinidad in the west to Malaysia, Indonesia and Japan in the east.

The Mission also has more than eighty English and Kiswahili books covering a wide range of Islamic topics. Books written by the Mission's Chief Missionary, Maulana Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi have proved to be particularly popular with subsequent translations being made in French, Turkish, Indonesian amongst other languages.

The Mission has 12 branches in Tanzania which are run by African Muballigheen and teachers trained at the Howza at Temeke area in Dar es salaam. Many Muballigheen and teachers trained at this Howza are currently also serving some Centres in Kenya. Some teachers also impart religious knowledge in Government Schools. The Tanzania branches are based at Temeke, Songea, Arusha, Bagamoyo, Msata, Ikwiriri, Kalela, Karutanga, Kwembago (Lushoto), Singida, Ujiji and Zanzibar. New branches are expected to be opened at Newala, Mtama, Mingoyo, Tabora and Pangani. A Branch has reportedly also been established at Nampula in Mozambique.

The Correspondence Courses in English and Kiswahili that are run by the Mission have a large enrolment of students from as far as South and North America, South, East and West Africa, the Far East and Australia.

## EYE CAMPS:

The Mission's basic aim is to bring spiritual light into those enveloped in darkness. **'Allah is the Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into the light' (2:257).**

But light for the physical sight has not been forgotten. The Mission's Eye Camp group has held 27 Eye Camps in the past four years with about 14,838 patients being screened and 348 eye operations being subsequently arranged. Over 13600 spectacles have been distributed free of charge and medicine has been supplied to over 6600 deserving needy people.

The aim of this service is purely to enable people to have a better sight and thereby enable them to

## AROUND AFRICA

read and learn. The service is not meant to be an inducement for people to follow our faith and for this reason there has been minimum or no publicity to this effect in local newspapers or other media.

### SUCCESS YARDSTICK:

Apart from operating branches with madrassas for tabligh and education, the Mission has now embarked on an ambitious and long due programme of promoting Community Centres with mosques at various locations. Such Centres will then organise their own religious and social activities which would be within the guidelines of the true faith with the objective that scattered communities with a solitary faith will grow in different areas.

Growth of such communities would represent the main success of the tabligh activities of the Mission.

## Mission Hosts Singida Seminar

The Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania hosted its Fifth Seminar at Singida from 14 to 16 June this year with 35 Shias mostly from Singida, Arusha and Dodoma participating. Many local Shaykhs took part including Maulana Syed Sajjad Husain who went specially from Dar es salaam to conduct the Seminar.

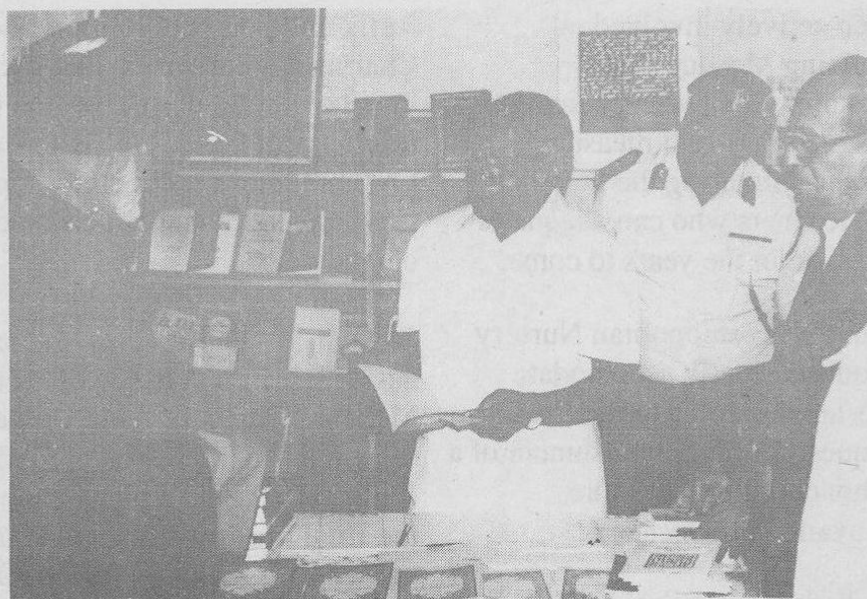
The Seminar, which was held under the Chairmanship of Haji Zeenatali Dewji, was organised to enable participants to meet each other, to teach new converts important religious beliefs and rites and to also discuss on better ways of propogating tabligh activities in different areas.

Participants were accomodated in the Imambara and sessions were held in the Mosque. The hosts were specially commended for their excellent hospitality and good organisation of the Session.

## Tanzania President visits Bilal Stand and.....

The Tanzania President, Alhaj Ali Hassan Mwinyi was impressed by the activities of the Bilal Muslim Mission after visiting the Mission's Stall at the Third National Book Festival held in Daressalaam from 2 to 9 September, 1991.

The President was particularly interested in the Mission's Kiswahili and English Correspondence Courses and the fact that these courses spread out to countries as far as Nigeria, Ghana plus Zimbabwe amongst others, impressed him.



*The President has a word with Bilal's Chief Missionary, Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi as Alhaj Fidahussein Hameer looks on.*

President Mwinyi also expressed appreciation of the Mission's Eye Camps and the invaluable services it has rendered to date. It was indicated to him that such services are offered more for 'cause than glory', that is, with minimum publicity and the President, who is well conversant with many Verses of the Holy Quran, responded with Verse 76:9 : " **We feed you only**

**for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks".**

The Book Festival attracted thirty local and foreign publishers and the Bilal Stand was amongst the six specially mentioned Stalls on the National Swahili News Bulletin over Radio Tanzania.

### .....and praises Community for being amicable

The President was accorded a red carpet welcome at the Dar es salaam Mosque on 4 October, 1991 (25 Rabil ul Avval 1412) when he arrived to participate in a special Programme organised by the Ithna-asheri Union Volunteer Corps to mark Milad Un Nabi.

The Programme which was also attended by Muslims from other Communities began with recitation of Quranic Verses by Sheikh Hashim Mussa of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania. The Chairman of Dar es salaam Jamaat, Alhaj Aliraza Rajani then gave a welcome address which pin pointed activities being undertaken by the Jamaat to uplift the general standard of living in the country irrespective of colour or creed.

Alhaj Rajani said that the Ithna- asheri Community has been actively involved in building and maintaining Mosques and Madressas in the country along with encouraging religious education as a grass-root measure towards promoting and furthering the faith and also to provide able teachers who can adequately spread the word of Islam in the years to come.

He said the Community's cosmopolitan Nursery and Secondary schools currently accomodate about 1100 students and appealed to the President that the pending request for the establishment of a primary school be honoured so that more Tanzanians can be availed of education.

The Community's dispensary, he said, serves over 100,000 patients in Dar es salaam at modest charges, the beneficieries of which are mostly

(about 95%) our indigenus African brothers. The President was assured that " *no patient goes unattended for want of money in our dispensary.*"

He said that to spread health services to the masses, the Community is aiming at opening Centres in remote areas and that to this effect a health centre will soon be openend in Temeke area of Daressalaam. He said dispensaries had been openend in Tanga, Arusha, Moshi and Bukoba whilst Songea and Singida are soon projected to have one.

Reference was also made to the medical and eye camps, regular donation of shallow wells in remote areas where water is scarce, assistance towards various national catastrophes like the Rufiji and Southern Region floods and the Chairman emphasised that such endeavours are a moral and religious obligation in line with the teachings of Islam. He also pledged the Commmunity's unflinching support to the Government in its political, social and economic objectives.

Students of the Husseini Madressa then recited a qasida which was followed by a lecture from Alhaj Mohsin Alidina from the University of Dar es salaam and a recitation of Quranic verses by Alhaj Kassamali Rajwani plus qasidas by students from the Bilal Muslim Mission. An Address was then made in Kiswahili by Sheikh Omar Mayunga, also of Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

Following next was BALUKTA's Sheikh Nure- deen

who graced the Occasion with dua and fateha after which presentations were made to the President. The President was presented with Islamic books, a copy of the Holy Quran, Musallahs plus a pledge of a full sponsorship for one student to study Medicine at the University of Dar es salaam. He was also pledged a full cost for one person to go for Haj and was then given a pecuniary donation of a million Tanzania shillings.

The President was not scheduled to speak but gave a delightful surprise to the congregation when he took to the mike and spoke for over 20 minutes. He expressed gratitude for the gifts and quoting a Verse from the Holy Quran, he said it would have been unislamic for him not to acknowledge what had been given to him. Citing each gift specifically, he said the books and the Holy Quran would help further his knowledge thereby helping him lead the Country better whilst the Musallah, he said, was probably given to him to ensure that he regularly prayed.

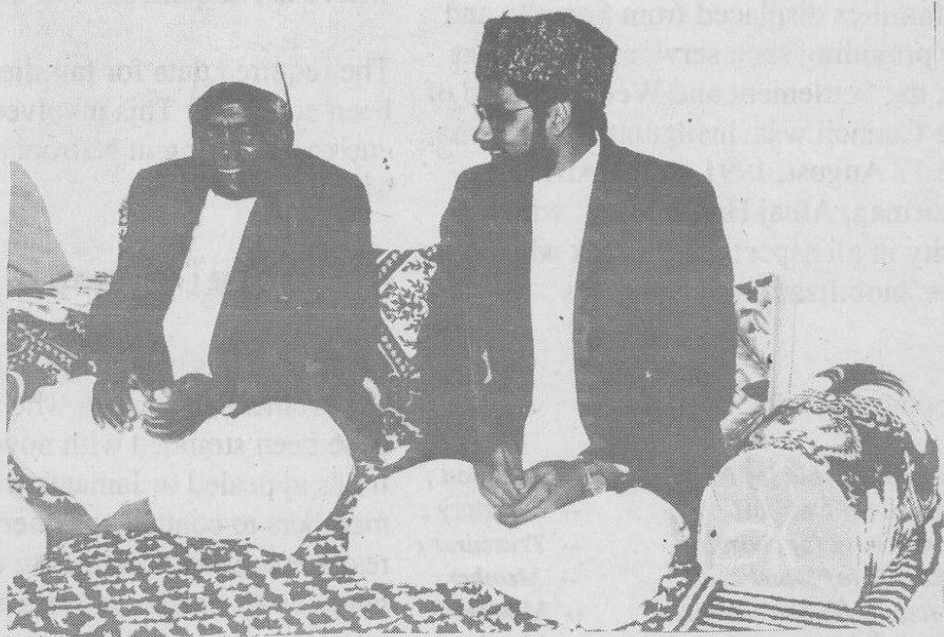
The President said the cash donation would go towards a special Fund launched to help small-scale traders in the Country so that they are made self sufficient. He related the adage that : *rather than giving a needy person fish it is better to give him a net. This would make him independent and*

*enterprising as his welfare would depend on how well he uses the net !*

Alhaj Mwinyi also appreciated the full pledge for one person to perform Haj and said he would give this opportunity to a person who would least have expected to travel to Mecca. On the scholarship, he said this adapted well to national efforts to increase the output of doctors. He said Tanzania currently has one doctor for every 26,000 people whilst the need is to have one doctor for every 10,000 people.

The President referred to the Ithna-asheri Community as having lived in Tanzania for many years in peace and as respectful citizens. He said that businessmen of the Community are performing a good function of making various public amenities available easily. He said that good guidance from elders had enabled the youths of the Community to be respectful unlike others who through the 'human rights' motto have opted to act as they wish thereby exposing themselves to a spate of social ills.

A final vote of thanks was made by the Chairman of the Ithna asheri Union Volunteer Corps Ad Hoc Sub Committee, Alhaj Mohamed Somji to draw curtains to the occasion.



President Mwinyi shares smiles with Dar es salaam Jamaat Chairman, Aliraza Rajani during the ongoing ceremony.

# Set-wel Board Settles to Resettle

The political upheaval in Somalia at the end of last year which led to the subsequent evacuation of our brothers there, brought to the forefront the issue of their resettlement.

Whilst maximum efforts have been made to this effect, the results have been slow in showing. For Great Britain, over 200 applications were submitted to the British High Commission in Nairobi of which 80 reached the 'interview' stage. However to date only four families have obtained final clearances to settle there.

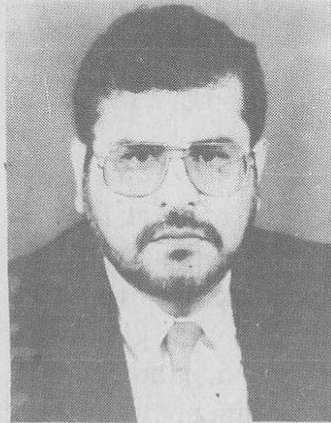
Settlement in Canada has been handled by N.A.S.I.M.C.O. which has indicated that at present they can sponsor a limited number of families.

About 25 have families migrated to Pakistan and Mehfile - Murtaza there have either fully or partially maintained some of these families. As per the last report received, rupees 1.4 million had been disbursed towards settling these families in Pakistan.

In view of the mammoth task involved in resettling the families displaced from Somalia and the need for providing such services in future at short notice, the Settlement and Welfare Board of the Supreme Council was inaugurated in Arusha, Tanzania on 17 August, 1991 by the Africa Council Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji with a wide authority in all aspects of the task which also includes mobilization of resources worldwide.

The Board comprises of :

<i>Alhaj Ashiqhussein Rashid [of Nairobi]</i>	-- Chairman ;
<i>Alhaj Anver Manji [of Nairobi]</i>	-- Secretary ;
<i>Alhaj Ramzanali Nanji [of Nairobi]</i>	-- Treasurer ;
<i>Alhaj Sajjad Rashid [of Mombasa]</i>	-- Member ;
<i>Alhaj Aliraza Rajani [of Daressalaam]</i>	-- Member ;
<i>Alhaj Azim Dewji [of Dar es salaam]</i>	-- Member ;
<i>Alhaj Masoomali Meghji [of Mombasa]</i>	-- Member .



Ashiqhussein Rashid

The Set-Wel Board Secretariat is based in Nairobi and can be contacted at :

**P.O. Box 46325, Nairobi.**

**Telephone : 225512/ 225523**

**Telex :22713 ABBAS**

**Fax :335435.**

The Set- Wel Committee has charted out an action plan which includes :

- a) raising US dollars 3.5 million from our global Community to meet resettlement costs ; and
- b) settling evacuees in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Pakistan and in western countries where arrangements can be made.

The required data for families to be resettled has been compiled. This involves 40 families currently staying in Nairobi and 81 families in Mombasa.

## A Special Appeal :

The Board has begun collecting funds to resettle our brothers and sisters who total over 900 and have been stranded with nowhere to go.

It has appealed to Jamaats worldwide and their members to contribute generously so as to enable resettlement with minimum delay. Individuals do not have to wait to be approached as it is our religious and moral duty to contribute whatever our means do permit.



Funds can be remitted or deposited in the following Set- Wel Accounts :

**Habib Bank A.G. Zurich,**  
92 Moorgate,  
P. O. Box 42,  
London EC2P - 2 EX.  
Account No. 32475  
[ for help Mr. Kazmi can assist ]

**Trade Bank Ltd.,**  
Vally Road Branch,  
P.O. Box 48354,  
Nairobi.  
Account No. 1040810592 001

It is expected that about 35 families presently in Nairobi and Mombasa will be accepted by various Jamaats in Tanzania. Being close to Nairobi, Arusha has been chosen to be the transfer point for this exercise and two co-ordinators there, Gulamhussein Mukhtar and Zakir Pirbhai, have been appointed by the Board to assist.

At the time we went to press plans had been finalised to move about 22 families to Arusha, Moshi, Bukoba, Mwanza or Dar es salaam.

The Board has meanwhile maintained contact with foreign Jamaats and Organisations with the hope that new avenues will open up.

While in London to attend the World Federation Triennial Conference, Alhaj Ashiqhussein Rashid, Alhaj Anver Manji, Alhaj Ramzanali Nanji and Alhaj Aliraza Rajani who all represented the Board, met leaders of various Jamaats based in Europe, Pakistan, India and the Middle East to accentuate upon the plight of our Somalia brothers.

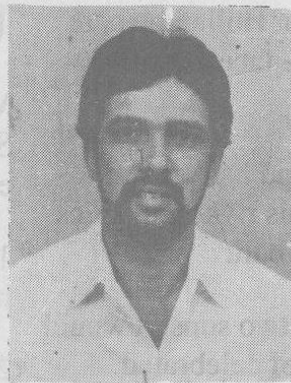
Amongst those with whom discussions were held were: Alhaj Mulla Asgher (President, World Federation), Alhaj Ahmed Bhalloo (President, NASIMCO), Alhaj Anver Rajpar (President, Mehfil- E- Murtaza), Alhaj Hamid Bhojani (President, Pirai Jamaat Karachi), Alhaj Bhanbhai (President, Gujrat Jamaat), Alhaj Mustafa Dhanji (President, Dubai Jamaat) and Alhaj Sumar (President, Stockholm Jamaat of Sweden).

## New Appointments.....

Additional appointments have been made to the Tabligh Committee based in Dar es salaam which is headed by Alhaj Raza Kara. The new members to join this Committee are :

- 1) Alhaj Mustafa Pirmohamed
- 2) Alhaj Mehboob Somji
- 3) Alhaj Hassan Walli

## Hasnain awarded *Abul Fazal* Trophy



Hasnain Tejani

The 1990 'Best Sportsman' Award for the *Abul Fazal* Trophy has been won by Tanzania's 31 year left handed cricketer, Hasnain Abbas Tejani, who plays for the Community team, Union Sports Club, which has also chosen him as the Sportsman of the year for the Late Akberali Panju Memorial Trophy.

Hailing from a cricket oriented family with his father, Alhaj Abbas Tejani and two elder brothers, Bashir and Ibrahim, all being good cricketers, the award is a befitting tribute to the family for the many moments of entertaining cricket they engendered and for the many victories at Communal or national level they helped achieve.

Hasnain's cricket career goes back to 1977 but his rise to stardom began in 1986 after his return from the United States where he spent four years. He scored 750 runs playing as opening batsman for Union Sports Club in the 1985/86 season and in the seasons to follow he emerged as one of Tanzania's most prolific run scorers amassing over 2000 runs including three centuries in official local games.

## AROUND AFRICA

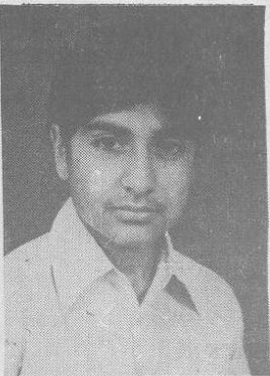
His performances earned him instant recognition and he was selected for the Tanzania national team that toured Malawi in 1986 for the Annual Quadrangular tournament. He justified his selection by scoring a splendid 87 against the hosts which won him the 'Man of the Match' award.

In the 1989 Quadrangular held in Kampala, he recorded a century against Uganda and was duly awarded the 'Best Batsman' of the tournament. The 1990 season was his best with three centuries and a stockpile of runs to his credit. He was duly rewarded with a place in the East African squad for the ICCA tournament held in Holland where he scored reasonably well in the face of stiff competition.

Hasnain is also a good fielder and has proved to be a fine 'change' bowler with his right arm spins. He also plays squash and volleyball.

He is happily married and with two sons, it would appear that another generation of celebrated cricketers is in the offing. Time will certainly tell!

### Best Students for 1990 Awarded



Sameer Tejani

The Education Board of the Supreme Council has selected Sameer Ahmed Tejani of Arusha as the best male student of the year out of nominations received from different Jamaats.

Sameer secured seven A's, one B and one C in the National Form IV Examinations. His attendance record, conduct at school, extra curricular activities and Madressa progress were most outstanding to merit selection of the coveted

award. He is presently in the U.S.A. pursuing a degree course in computer science.

Miss Shaheena Somji of Mombasa was at the same time selected as the best girl student of the year.

They were awarded the Marhum Rashid Moledina and Marhum Rafiq Somji Cup respectively and share a prize of Tanzania Shillings 25,000/- donated for 'Isale Thawab' for Marhum Mohamed Jaffer Nasser Virji of Mwanza. We wish them good luck in their future careers.

### Videos to See

Video cassettes can now be obtained from the Secretariat, Dar es salaam on the following events:

- 1) The 49th Session of the Supreme Council held in Arusha from 31 May to 2 June, 1991;
- 2) The World Federation Conference held in London in October, 1990 that dwelt with the adoption of a new constitution;
- 3) The arrival and reception of Somalia evacuees ex the vessel M V Ambassador at Mombasa port in January this year plus subsequent events;
- 4) The 1991 Triennial Conference held in Stanmore.

### DAR SEMINARY EXCELS

The Al Muntazir Islamic Seminary of the Dar es salaam Jamaat began with Form 5 Classes in July this year and is now an official 'A' Level Secondary School with a status similar to an intermediate college in India or Pakistan. The Seminary now enjoys a high reputation in the field of academic achievements and is recognised by the Country's Ministry of Education and the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA).

The Seminary also performed well during a Regional Mathematics Exhibition held in Daressalaam on 5 September, 1991. Most of the

## AROUND AFRICA

City's Private and Government Schools took part and the Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary was declared the best.

The Chairperson of the Tanzania Mathematical Association congratulated the Seminary on the models produced and praised the versatility of its students.

### Community Annals to be revisited.

We reproduce here the Chairman's observations at the last Supreme Council Meeting held in Arusha which also appeared in our last Issue (Vol. No. 25, No. 3 - Muharram 1412, July 1991) under the section on WHAT WAS THE COMMUNITY?

*'What is needed is not a mere cursory glimpse on the past, but a thorough and meaningful look to the past, carefully surveying the long path of history which the Community trod through four generations in the span of some 150 years. This will give us an insight not only of how we became what we are but also a sense of awareness and some foresight for the preparation of an onward journey on the same path of history which continues to unfold as we look towards the horizon.'*

*The Session was informed on the proposition of a project by the Federation to commission a Professor in History to make a research, compile materials and write up a history of the Community in Africa.*

*The Chairman said that the history will also serve as a testimony to the challenges faced and surmounted by our forefathers in the span of 150 years through generations in the fields of spiritual and material development and especially in the matter of unity, harmony and progress through establishment of Jamaats in various centres, small or large, and the eventual consolidation of these characteristics of the Community by the formation of a Federation.*

*The history will put on record the sense of foresight, commitment and sacrifice demonstrated by the elders who preceded us in forming the*

*Federation and then consolidating for the good of the Community.*

*With a copy of the history at hand in each household in the Community, there will be a little chance of the posterity tolerating anyone in or outside the Community to shake or topple the whole edifice of unity and harmony so ardously built up by our forefathers.'*

The Supreme Council has now appointed Professor Abdul Sheriff (pictured), a Professor in History at the University of Dar es salaam, who has agreed to take up the assignment.



Professor Abdul Sheriff

The assignment will involve research extending to visits to and studies at archives in East Africa, interviews plus a good deal of travelling covering also Madagascar. The cost for such an exercise will be high and because there are no traditional sources of funds to finance undertakings of these nature, the WORLD FEDERATION has agreed to share the cost whilst NASIMCO is considering a request from the Africa Federation to offer similar assistance.

All Jamaats, Institutions and individual members of the Community are urged to provide or lend to Professor Sheriff, any documents, papers or materials which are likely to assist him in his assignment which is beneficial to the Community at large. The materials required include old minutes, constitutions, wills and waqf deeds, books, photographs and any documents, papers or useful information relating to some activity or another of our Community in the past years.

In the case of important documents which may also have current relevance, only copies should be provided. Individuals who can by word of mouth give useful information that can help in or lead to a

## AROUND AFRICA

research are also requested to volunteer such information.

### New Developments in Nairobi

The Nairobi Jamaat and Nairobi Jaffery Sports Club have embarked on some major projects to improve sports, religious and educational facilities for our Community members.

The sports development project involves the construction of our own Club with amenities to play most games. To this effect the first phase of making the cricket field and pitch is almost complete whilst building of the pavilion, swimming pool and gymnasium will soon commence.

Another project being undertaken is that for a nursery school cum Madressa. Plans and structural drawings for this are ready and construction work was expected to begin at the end of November.

In the meantime a committee has been appointed to prepare feasibility studies for building of a primary and secondary school. This committee will work under the Chairmanship of Br. Abdulrazak Khalfan.

The Jamaat is also planning to build a Mosque which will accommodate a Quarter for the resident Alim. Plans have been submitted to the Government and the necessary approval is being awaited. Plans for the building of a projected multi-purpose hall have also been submitted to the Government for approval.

### Now its Zaire !

The situation in Zaire remains tense and as events unfold no glimmer can yet be seen at the end of the tunnel. Evacuation of foreigners and the non-indigenous population continues following the lack of consensus between President Mobutu and the Opposition over the sharing of power.

This impasse has led to a spate of thuggery and violence in some parts of the country and Western Governments with citizens in Zaire have issued a directive for them to immediately evacuate.

About 140 people were killed in riots which wrecked Kinshasa and several provincial cities at the end of September this year and the country, with an economy already in shambles, suffered damage worth millions of dollars through this unrest.

Western Governments including the United States, France, Germany, Britain and Zaire's former colonial ruler, Belgium have been pressurising Mobutu to install democracy in Zaire and to implement various reforms that would upgrade the standard of living of the people.

Zaire with its vast mineral resources should be one of Africa's richest countries but the situation is to the contrary with most of its 40 million population living in conditions of abject poverty and the crisis has made their situation worse.

The country is besieged with a runaway inflation which one banking source put at 10,000 per cent. Economic decisions made after the riots are more *to please than to help!* For instance, salary increases announced will add an estimated 9,000 billion Zaires to a budget deficit which was already projected at about 6000 billion Zaires.

The situation is grim because of the lack of consensus of Opposition groups. Our Community members in Zaire are mostly businessmen and many were afflicted with their shops, stores and houses being extensively looted. Rampant theft of personal belongings and cars have also been reported.

The Set-Wel Board with the help of Nairobi Jamaat has received and cared for evacuees (about 200 people) who arrived by chartered flights from Zaire. Many of them then made subsequent arrangements for onward travel abroad but were adequately catered for during their brief stay in Nairobi.

Some required assistance in updating their documents or in obtaining visas. For those travelling to Pakistan, arrangements were made with the Pakistan Ambassador and some Embassy personnel to assist them. The Ambassador saw the evacuees at our Imambara in Nairobi and issued visas to those having documents and special one way passes to those without documents. Few

## AROUND AFRICA

Community members, especially those holding foreign citizenships, managed to leave through Kisangani with the help of Belgian troops who entered Zaire to protect its citizens when the riots first began.

We pray to the Almighty to protect our remaining Community members in Zaire from being smitten and to reinstate peace and tranquility there.

### In Madagascar.....

The political tension in Madagascar appears to have eased. The height of the unrest was in August when a number of our Community members were directly affected.

About twelve shops and houses were looted in Majunga on 11 August and a nine year old child became a fatal victim of gun-shots. Community members had to take shelter in the Imambara and Musafirkhana for three days until the tension eased.

The situation was also bad in Antananarivo where one of our Community member was taken hostage.

It now appears that the different parties seeking political rights have come to some form of truce and Community members are requested to pray to Allah to restore peace in Madagascar with pending political decisions being sorted out amicably.

### After 20 Years.....

The Chairlady for the past 20 years of the Ladies Committee in Tanga, Mrs. Kanizbai G.F.K. Chandoo, has finally called it a day.

During her span of service, Kanizbai also served as a Muallima and today many past residents and current members of Tanga Jamaat credit her for having taught them to recite the Quran.

She was also regular in giving ghusl to the dead and taught many of our Community women how to undertake this liturgy. The Tanga Jamaat has thanked her for the invaluable services rendered over two decades during which the Jamaat has

had over seven Chairmans. In a formal gesture of thanks, the Jamaat presented her with a gift and in an appreciation letter she was denoted the title '**MOTHER OF JAMAAT**'.

## Crescents mark annual day

The Golden Crescent Group held its Annual Seminar on the 2 and 3 November, 1991 at the Kilimanjaro Hotel in Dar es salaam. On the opening night, the Vice Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Mohamed Khalfan and the Chairman of Dar es salaam Jamaat, Aliraza Rajani, were amongst the dignitaries present.

Talking on the subject of 'Marital Problems in the Community', Dr. Hameer touched on problems resulting from contrasting backgrounds of spouses prior to marriage, over-indulgence in business or recreational activities by the husband, interference of in-laws and its effects on marriages plus other related issues which in one way or another have augmented marital problems in our Community.



*Dr Hameer talking on marital problems*

The situation is presently not as bad as the 1: 2 marriage break-up ratio in the United States and the proportionately high break-up numbers in

other western countries but can aggravate if not tackled well.

In the limited time available, an indepth analysis could not be made but the lecture covered the gist of the problem and how to avoid or get out of it.

The second speaker, Alhaj Ali H. Sheriff spoke on the 'dependable power in us'. He said that other than the basic powers of health, wealth and knowledge which human beings acquire and use, there is a dependable spiritual power which makes all other powers meaningful and durable.



*Alhaj Ali H. Sheriff lecturing on the 'dependable power' to an attentive audience.*

He explained some Islamic ways to develop and sustain this power but cautioned that one could lose it through lack of sustenance. The delivery was punctuated with relevant Quranic verses and convincing traditions of Ahlul Bait. Some interesting instances of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), Shaikh Tahir of Zanzibar and Imam Khomeini further enlightened participants on the thought provoking theme of his paper.

Regrettably, such topics have rarely been addressed in our traditional preachings ---- especially at youth gatherings.

The following morning Group discussions were held after which Alhaj Ali Sheriff led congregational prayers in a room specially allocated by the hotel for the Seminar.

Food for the occasion was also self catered.

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Habib Mulji and Dar es salaam Jamaat Chairman, Aliraza Rajani were amongst the personalities who attended the Installation night.

After a welcome address by the Director of Dar es salaam District, Cr. Amirali Janmohamed, the outgoing Governor, Cr. Safder Jaffer addressed the gathering which included delegates from Crescent Groups in Tanzania and Kenya. He gave an epitomised account of activities undertaken during his term and then welcomed incoming Governor, Cr. Haiderali Gangji to take the Chain of Office.

After a few words from the incoming Governor, the Seminar Convenor Mushtaq Damji put in a final vote of thanks after raising about Tanzania shillings 600,000/- by auctioning an air ticket.

The Seminar was well organised, the lectures were well delivered and the hospitality extended towards participants was commendable.

### Dar Squash Meet a success

A squash tournament organised by Dar es salaam Union Sports Club in November and sponsored by Gulf Air was a success with 53 players participating in the main, juniors and veteran events.

The main event was won by Rizwan Jaffer who beat Asgher Alidina 3/1 in the finals whilst the Veterans event ( for players over 40), was won by Asgher Alidina who won in straight sets over Fazal Khimji.

The Juniors title (for players under 21) was won by Murtaza Jivraj who beat Riyaz Nathani 3/0 in the finals. Two players were awarded special prizes. Sajjad Rattansi was presented with the best upcoming junior trophy and Hussein Kermali was awarded the 'outstanding veteran' trophy.

The Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji and Dar Jamaat Chairman, Aliraza Rajani attended the prize giving ceremony. Also present was the Chairman of the Tanzania Squash Rackets Association (TSRA), Ostia Magimbe.



## Trollhatten

The Muslim Shia Community in Trollhatten, a western Swedish town with about 50,000 inhabitants, was formed in 1976. There are 150 registered members most of whom originate from Uganda, Pakistan and India.

The Trollhatten Jamaat was the first Shia' Jamaat to be formed in Sweden. There is another Jamaat in Marsta, a suburb of the capital Stockholm.

The Trollhatten Mosque and Imambara were built in September, 1985 and the Jamaat runs its activities from finance raised through membership fees, donations and Government grants.

The resident Aalim from 1976 until last year was Maulana Maqbool Ahmed Nauganwi but at present they do not have an Aalim. Activities include daily prayers, majlises on wiladats and shahadats of 14 Ma'soomen (A.S) plus a madrasah for children.

There are presently about 40 children between the age of 4 and 15 learning Quran, diniyat, history and akhlaaq in the Madrasah, known as 'Madrasatul - Mahdi (A.S.)' which was formed in 1989. Arabic is also taught.

The Madrasah is facing a shortage of appropriate Islamic literature and efforts are being made to update the current library. Most material has to be translated into Swedish because all students study in Swedish schools. The children understand Gujrati but cannot read and write.

Teachers also require to be adequately trained and to this effect the World Federation sent the Chairman of the Education Board, Alhaj Mohsin Jaffer and Mrs. Rubabbai Master for 18 days last Ramadhan to conduct religious classes.

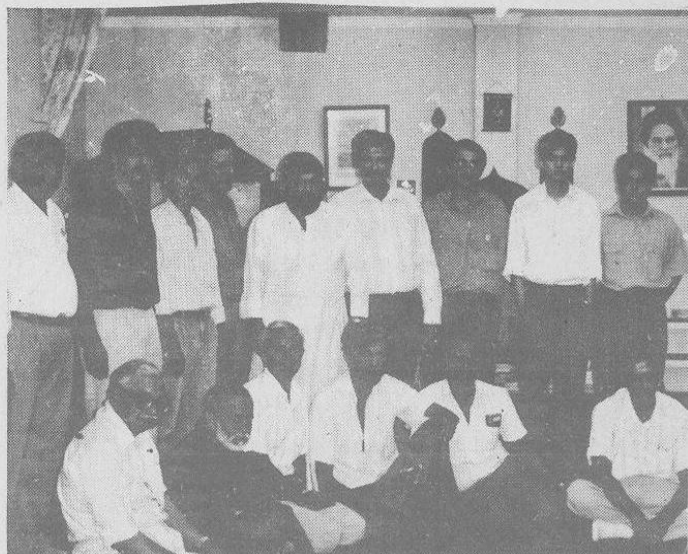
The present Office bearers are Salim Govani (Chairman), Mohsin Panjwani (Vice Chairman), Anver Alladin (Secretary), Mustafa Rehmtullah (Treasurer), Sajjad Govani, Asim Rashid and Salim Kanani (members).

## Portugal

Our Community in Portugal has about 80 members. The Jamaat does not currently have a resident Aalim but has been receiving them in the months of Ramadhan and Muharram.

During Muharram 1412 A.H., the World Federation sent Sheikh Mukhtar Abbas and his wife to conduct religious sermons. Majlises were recited in Gujarati each night and Mulyani Batul Mukhtar Abbas also conducted masa'el classes.

Meanwhile a group of ten girls from Lisbon attended a twelve-day crash course in Islamiyyat at the Hussaini Islamic Centre in London. And the current Secretary of Lisbon Jamaat, Br. Shabbir Damji has offered to keep the *Samachar* informed on activities from this Western Europe country.



Community members pictured at the Mehfile Imame Zaman in Lisbon (Photo courtesy : Br. Murtaza Hemraj).

## Turkish University Bans Hijab

A major higher education centre in Turkey, the Ankara University has stopped girls from cladding the hijab.

The University has issued a statement saying that the Government decree bans the wearing of hijab and that girl students will not be allowed to wear a headscarf or dress that represents their religious or political leanings. Students who disregard this regulation have been warned of punishment.

# IN OFFICE.....

*Various Jamaats have had elections during the year at one time or another and below is a list of Office bearers who currently serve the Jamaats featured.*

## Shiane haidery international association inc.-- Montreal

President : Br. Syed Mukhtar Hussain  
Vice - President : Br. Ali Visram  
Secretary : Br. Hamid Mavani  
Treasurer : Br. Sadik Mussa  
Members : Br. Jaffer Bhalloo  
                  Br. Afzalali Jeraj  
                  Br Salim Karim

Vice President : Anwar Nathu  
Secretary : Mahmood Jaffer  
Asst. Secretary : Muhammad Dewji  
Treasurer : Habib Rashid  
Asst. Treasurer : Jaffer Ladak  
M R C : Muhammad Hemraj  
Asst. M R C : Asgar Ladak  
Members : Asgar Virji  
                  Muhammad Dewji  
                  Roshan Dewji  
                  Sultan Jagani  
                  Amir Rashid

## K.S.I. Jamaat of Birmingham

President : Muhammad Bharwani  
Vice President : Husseim Mawji  
Secretary : Raza Ali Virji  
Joint Secretary : Hasnain Kara  
Treasurer : M'Amin Bhimani  
Joint Treasur : Muhsin Meghjee  
Members : Raza Moti  
                  Rizwan Ramji  
                  Muhammad Jaffer  
                  Shaffik Haji  
                  Shaukat Najafi  
                  Shiraz Alloo

## Muslim K.S.I. Community of Leicester

President : Masoom Jeraj  
Vice President : Fidahussein Allarakhya  
Secretary : Muhammad Roshanali  
Treasurer : Zahide Nandjy  
Members : Mustaq Moledina  
                  Muhammad Najfi  
                  Dr. Asgarali Bhojani

## Muslim S.I. Association of Stockholm

President : Pyarali Bandali  
Vice President : Muhammad Esmail  
Secretary : Javid Ghoghai  
Treasurer : Zulfikar Alibhai  
Members : Esmail Amirali  
                  Gulamhussein Sumar  
                  Aserali Mandan

## S.I. Jamaat of Pennsylvania

President : Muhammad Hirji  
Vice President : Liguatali Soonasra  
Secretary : Mohabbat Mawji  
Treasurer : Abdulla Soonasra  
Joint Secretary : M'hussein Rajmohamed  
Member : Murtaza Alidina

## Wessex S.I. Jamaat, UK.

President : Muhammad Kanji  
Secretary : Jaffer A. Jaffer  
Treasurer : Hassan Meralli  
Members : Roshan Gangji  
                  Sibtain Versi

## Islamic Association of Fort Wayne

President : Hassan Hudda  
Secretary : Monirah Behnampour  
Treasurer : Shama Gaziza

## Muslim Community of British Columbia

President : Akber Mithani

## K.S.I. Jamaat of Lindi, Tanzania

Chairman : G.M. Manji  
Secretary : G.M. Versi  
Treasurer : S.K.G. Jaffer  
Mukhi : H.G.M. Manji  
Members : R.S. Dhalla  
                  H.A.M. Manji  
                  R.Z.E. Rawji



# PHOTO LOOK AT THE LONDON CONFERENCES



*The new Office-bearers of the World Federation --- pensive of what lies ahead.*



*The incumbent Chairman, Alhaj Mulla Asgher making a point.*



*'Old rules should be preserved' --- Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji tells Businessmen's Conference*



*The Man from Africa --- Alhaj Manzooralı Kanani, the new Vice Chairman.*

### MULLA AT HELM AGAIN

(.....from cover page )

Of the good performances being looked forward to during the new term, we are confident that previous and recent Resolutions of the Conference will be enthusiastically and fully implemented.

The Businessmen's Conference was attended by about 150 businessmen from around the world. Delegates floated a number of propositions and the formation of joint financial Institutions was envisaged.

The need for cooperation amongst businessmen was seen to be necessary for our global Community to be able to take advantage of opportunities arising from the liberalisation of economies around the world.

Opportunities have often been missed due to insufficient capital or because of high business risks involved. Pooling resources into a finance company would alleviate the problem of capital and would help spread the risk.

It was agreed that an International Chamber of Commerce be formed to which regional Chambers would then be affiliated. An ad hoc committee has been formed to prepare a constitution for the proposed Chambers and a meeting to ratify this has been planned for April next year.

### Over 2000 attend Toronto Ashura Procession

This year's Ashura procession in Toronto was attended by over 2000 men and women and received fair coverage in the Canadian Press. The emotionally charged anniversary was also used to denounce the atrocities of Saddam Hussein on Iraq's Shiite population.

Dressed in black, mourners pounded their chests in the sweltering heat as they walked from Queen's Park along University Avenue upto the Court house. Ladies in strict 'hijab' actively participated in the walk and many could be seen

pushing their infants in strollers, the heat notwithstanding.

Against the background of skyscrapers and on an Avenue which is the hub of modern downtown Toronto, one would least expect to find a line of mourners marking Ashura but here was a vivid example of how believers can discard, albeit peacefully, any social set-up to grieve for their beloved Imam.

Attendance at the Mosque throughout the ten days was good with majlises being recited in English and Urdu. Toronto Jamaat is now among our bigger Jamaats with a population of over 4000 people.

### Peterborough Mosque being Extended:

The Mosque built in 1975 at Peterborough is being extended to enlarge the capacity of the Imambara for ladies and gents and to add classrooms for the Madressa plus facilities for a library, nursery school, Nyaz preparation area amongst other general improvements.

Work commenced in March this year when Agha Lavasani, the former Iranian Ambassador to Tanzania, laid the Foundation Stone. The cost involved is about Pounds Sterling 450,000.



*Ashura Procession in Toronto*

# WABIL CONFERENCE AIMS TO CONSOLIDATE SHIA RIGHTS WORLDWIDE

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The Fourth General Conference of the World Ahlul- Bayt Islamic League (WABIL), which was convened at the Wembley Conference Centre in London from 18 to 20 October, 1991 reviewed the affairs of Shia Muslims worldwide with particular emphasis on the plight of Shias and the desecration of Holy Shrines in Iraq.

The Conference dwelt on measures to be taken to preserve spiritual leadership and heritage whilst promoting positive international understanding of Shias whose image is often distorted by the Western media. The Western media, through its misreporting, has created a misconception that Shias encourage terrorism. For example, the British media used the term 'Shia terrorism' about 2000 times in a space of 28 days in 1985.

The need for adequate propagation through a Shia media was emphasised and proposals included publishing a bilingual paper in Arabic and English and starting a media centre that would form the nucleus of a Shia News Agency. Establishment of a public relations office to clear wrong accusations was also deemed necessary.

There was also consensus on the need to spread Shia views and culture, importance of unifying activities, need for comprehensive planning of Shia affairs and the urgency of restoring natural and civil rights to Shia communities.

The Conference, which was also addressed by the World Federation President, Mulla Asgherali Jaffer and attended by the Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Habib Mulji, passed 22 resolutions which included the organising of an international campaign to denounce and counter

the atrocities and sacrilegious acts in Iraq with also a demand that the holy Iraq cities be put under an independent Islamic administration with supervision of the United Nations.

It was also resolved to demand the release of Ayatollah Syed Abul'Qasum Al Khui and to ensure that Shia Muslims worldwide are granted their legitimate rights devoid of political, economic or social prejudice and discrimination. To this effect, special reference was made to Muslims in Afghanistan, Palestine and the Soviet Union. Freedom to practice Islamic religious rites is in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines the freedom of worship for mankind.

The Conference condemned all acts of terrorism including kidnapping, denial of freedom and punishing the innocent for the guilt of others which is in conflict with Allah's declaration in the Holy Quran that '*a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another*'.

The need to uplift the religious, cultural and social status of muslim women was deciphered for attention and so was the need for social responsibility towards refugees, dispossessed and displaced persons from Iraq and elsewhere. The importance of sending delegations to international Conferences was also emphasised.

WABIL was established in 1983 by a group of clerics and intellectuals and the League coordinates the activities of Shia Muslim organisations worldwide which represents around 200 million Shia Muslims. Its headquarters is in London with branches in 83 countries.

### *First Indian Mosque.....*

The message of Islam reached India during Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) lifetime much before Islam took roots in most Arab and Islamic countries of the present day.

The ancient Indian *Cheraman Maliq Manzil* at Kodungallur, north of Cochin, bears testimony to this. It was built around 529 A.D. by the Prophet's close followers who had set out to spread Islam in the east.

The missionaries' dhow was wafted into the flourishing port of Kodungallur by the south-west monsoon breeze. The arrival of the Arab dhow caused little commotion since trading ships from Egypt, China, Phoenicia and other seafaring nations were a common sight at the port.

At the time Kodungallur was the capital of the Chera Empire, ruled by an illustrious king of the dynasty, Cheraman Perimal. He received the visitors with traditional hospitality and before long, Habib Dinar, the head of the missionaries, became a close friend of the king.

Cheraman Perimal was influenced by the message of Islam and arranged for the construction of a Mosque close to his royal court on a plot he donated.

And that was how India's first Mosque came up on the south-eastern banks of a large pond called 'Arakulam' which was also an anchorage for ocean-going vessels.

The Cheraman Mosque was built in a typical Kerala style of architecture and until recently looked like a storeyed house with a gabled tile roof.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Now the ancient frontage has given way to a concrete and plaster structure with a blue dome and matching minarets. The Mosque has been excellently preserved and periodic renovations have helped it to stand the test of time.

### *Hadiths on diskettes*

A Muslim scientist in India has recorded hadiths (traditions) of the Prophet (PBUH) on computer diskettes and entitled them 'The Library of Al-Hadith.' Hadiths have been categorised according to the subject matter and are therefore easily accessible. Translations have been made into Urdu, Bangladeshi, English, French, German, Spanish, Malawi and Turkish.

### *Ireland permits Islamic School*

The Irish Government has allowed Muslims to establish an Islamic School in Dublin. The proposed school will teach Islamic science with emphasis on the recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

### *33 Million Dollar Centre for Namibia*

The first Islamic Centre will be established in the Namibian capital, Windhoek at a cost of \$ 33 million. The Centre will include a Mosque, congregation hall, Quranic school, a clinic plus a training centre amongst other utilities. Namibia has more than 1000 Muslims and the cost of the

project has been pledged by a number of Muslim States.

### *New Islamic Centre for Australia*

A new Islamic Centre will soon be opened at the Obran District in Australia. This will include an Islamic school to be attended by more than 1000 students, a Mosque that will accommodate over 2000 people plus an Islamic library and a conference hall.

The Orban district has the biggest Muslim population in Australia with about three million Muslims. Australia has various Islamic schools. In Sydney a school was opened five years ago and presently has about 300 pupils.

**INNA LILLAH WA  
INNA ILAIHI  
RAJEUN**

Two prominent elders of the Community recently passed away. They are ALHAJ HABIB KASSAM MANJI of Dar es salaam who served Tanga Jamaat in various capacities for two decades during the 1940 and 50s and ALHAJ MOHAMEDALI P. HASMANI of Mombasa who served Mombasa Jamaat for many years. He had also been an ardent supporter of the Federation and a regular participant in almost all its Sessions.

May Allah (S.W.T) bless the souls of the deceased and rest them in eternal bliss within the proximity of our Chaharda Masumeen (A.S.) --Ameen.

## NO DIVIDENDS FROM DIVISIONS

By M.A. Khalfan, Dar es Salaam

A favourite sagacious story of early school days relates about an old man calling his sons around his death bed and demonstrating to them that 'united they stand; divided they fall'. Though we were only primary school students then, the message of this story-- the importance of unity, impressed us.

When Nabi Musa A.S. rejoined his followers-- Bani Israel-- after an absence of 40 nights, his anger knew no bounds when he saw his Community engaged in the worship of an idol-calf. However, he immediately calmed down when his brother, Hazrat Haroon A.S. stated that he had feared divisions in the Community and therefore waited for his return, for he had tried to stop them from worshipping the idol but they refused saying that they would keep to it until Nabi Musa A.S. returned to them.

Similarly many believers are perplexed on first knowing that the Holy Prophet [S.A.W.] had called for the demolition of a mosque, yes indeed a mosque, because it was hatching conspiracies and promoting 'fasaad' in the Community.

This is a striking example of how the Prophet eliminated pretensions in the name of 'ibadat', 'tabligh' or 'Islam' even if it meant taking a resolute action to eliminate the means, however noble they may seem, if the ends aimed at are not what the means are for!

Islamic scholars are moved by the pain of injustice and oppression Hazrat Amirul Mu'mineen A.S. chose to endure in order to sustain a conducive climate of unity in the Umma for the survival and betterment of Islam. The pain described is akin to the uneasiness suffered of having a bone stuck in one's throat for 23 years.

All good things must be pressed into practice but at times some have to be given priority at the expense of other good things as a transitory move

so that the main mission is not jeopardised. This is a part of 'hikmat' and Unity is one of such good things that rank high in priority as a means for greater ends.

Nabi Musa A.S. created separate streams of water for the 12 tribes among his followers, though all shared the common faith. A number of streams were anyway necessary to serve the large community (over 500,000 souls) and as there already was close unity along the tribal lines, the arrangement reflects pragmatism- a part of 'hikmat' - to enable peace to prevail.

Even instincts in animals dictate that the interest of the flock (community) is paramount. The instinctive unity among them provides a security against predatory (hunting) animals. Difficult decisions have to be taken for the common security (good) of the flock (community). An injured member in a pack of wild dogs is immediately devoured so as not to leave a trail of blood for predators to pick on to. Besides, the Community benefits instead of letting an outside predator feast over a member.

Unity is not however cultivated and maintained for its sake or as an end. The same unity would be a liability if for its sake 'amra bil ma'roof' and 'nahia anil munkar' are inhibited for fear of rocking the boat!

There are examples of nations and communities which have suffered the wrath of Allah (S.W.T) because they were united in their silence and condoning of evil doings of the few.

Our Community is reputed for its high regards for unity and loyalty as a means for noble achievement of this and the next world. The blessed state in which we find ourselves is partly due to this.

There is no fear of any member taking actions knowingly which are a threat to our unity. The real fear is of his doing so unknowingly apparently in the name of religion.

# PRETEND A 'PEARL'

We often come across claims as to what is or can be a key to a successful recognition of good leaders in the community. There is a key to yet another successful recognition regarding leadership. It is an aspiration for a recognition of being a good 'leadership- material.'

The rule of the game is simple but must be observed very strictly for success. Play a *pearl* begging to be discovered but refuse to be picked up and strung to avoid exposition of fake!

Endeavour to impress through speeches and bulky writings, your wisdom which of course, the leaders lack but avoid at any cost being coaxed into venturing in the arena of leadership where it would be difficult to cover the hoax --- that is, the good 'leadership- material' you claim to possess!

Follow the following strategies :-

- \* Proclaim a lack of foresight on the part of leaders in connection to any unpleasant event, however unforeseen, but to do so AFTER the event has taken place;
- \* Circulate critical views without being specific on 'things not going on well here and there' in the community, which is the case anyway in every society. Then LATER, claim that you had forewarned on any negative situation that may have developed which as a matter of fact you too had not foreseen but some relevance can be connected with what you had earlier said vaguely and generally.
- \* Portray and list utopian visions of magnificent things which the leaders must achieve but WITHOUT trapping yourself into discussion of

the realities of circumstances, feasibilities and practicalities because there can be none.

- \* Use of high sounding verbosity and phrases will make it difficult, and it should, to infer your line of reasoning but will not fail to impress some listeners, participants and readers. They will not be able to recollect if you had also offered solutions to the problems you had so well articulated. They will assume that you have !
- \* Quote from verses of the Holy Qur'an and Hadith however remote these may be in relevance to the actual issue. Such quotations work miracles with some and will score you the credibility of 'Holier than Thou'.
- \* Although the democratic principles which operate in the community ensure a collective leadership in which you too as a member of a Jamaat or as a Councillor have a constitutional right to contribute towards decision- making, you provoke and level dis- satisfaction for less agreeable decisions at the top office- bearers.
- \* Finally, quote an example of a good old leadership, for emulation without however connecting to any specific issues to avoid being challenged; and better still a post- mortem glorification as no one would want to speak bad about dead persons. Of course, they too may have suffered the same fate during their time.

The purpose for revealing the *game* is to warn against its *play* and *results*. But then the members of our community are too alert to be caught unaware!



# THOSE SCENIC MEETINGS

*Our ANONYM columnist dwells on the sensitive subject of 'Meetings' in good faith and without any direct references. Readers may wish to send in their opinions*

*Editors*

For any issue that concerns a Community at large, no one can possibly know all its aspects in full perspective but some do claim to know--- honestly --- until they are wiser!

We seem to see many issues so vividly -- even through them (naturally because they are not there!) -- and yet we are to an extent 'blind' about them, but we do not see this!

Blind! This reminds me of how the blindmen described an elephant they had just touched. One, having felt the trunk, said it was like a snake while the other who had felt the legs, recounted it as a tree-trunk. The third felt the torso and narrated it as a 'boulder' whilst the fourth man who had felt the tail, saw the elephant as a rope. All were honest in their assessments, though the method used was wrong because of their sightlessness.

If the blind men had their sight restored, would you expect them to retract their judgement? You would; but would you do so if you were in their position?

In Meetings we see certain people make wrong judgements, they are proved wrong and they well know they are wrong and yet they cling to their views, fight for them and eventually lose their cool when they lose the fight. Wrath plunders all the riches of the intellect and sensible reasoning then takes a flight and what remains is a flared temper and a fouled atmosphere. There is a false satisfaction that one's personal credibility has been preserved but contrary is the truth. The point is that the blindmen clustered under the mango tree look more dignified, their blindness notwithstanding --at their debate!

Such sorts are also disastrous in their work places. Great pain is taken to identify them right at interviews and deny them the field for the game. The trap is flung when the interviewer invites an advice on a hypothetical problem in the company

and they would blurt out 'solutions' with many 'slips' and when the 'slips' are pointed out, worse still, they would defend their solutions vigorously.

And those who oppose or resist good ideas because these have not originated from them, are no different. Insidious ingenuities in sabotage are soon at play when the ideas are adopted for implementation. Such sorts are also found in the position of durable leadership to be endured. Whilst the proclamation of the *good* they have done is *good*, the *bad* they will be remembered for is just too *bad*!

Visitors to a family are often offered profuse apologies by embarrassed parents for misbehaviour of their child who acts 'difficult' when visitors are present. When a child is lavished with a lot of attention from parents, he creates 'scenes' on finding that his dotting parents divert all their attention to the visitors.

Almost similar psychological situations arise in meetings but are not very much noticeable since the actors do assume a different role. Because more than necessary attention and importance is given to them at meetings, some participants are more vocal and asserting than they ought to, in order to continue to draw attention to themselves.

If they cannot prove that they are right, they endeavour to prove that they are not wrong either -- but they must babble on every subject which they dabble with -- as each arises at meetings. Meetings turn out to be unproductive, to say the least, when sincerity and frankness are replaced by self-pride or indeed, false pride. With petty divisions, the standard of proceedings drop and attendance dwindles. The Community so suffers for lack of productivity of such Meetings because of the few.

**Check yourself at the next 'scene' and offer an antidote if you are not among the ones talked about!**

# LANGUAGE PERPLEXITY IN THE WEST

By Ali H. Sheriff, Arusha

When I was invited this year by the Minneapolis Jamaat to recite English majlises for Muharram my immediate response was negative since I had neither the experience nor the confidence in reciting such majlises. It has been customary for me to recite brief majlises in simple Gujrati after evening prayers and that also, once a month. For this reason the thought of making sequential deliverances in a language which I was least conversant with made me hesitant and reluctant.

However the persistent calls from Minneapolis pleading for even brief lectures in the language the young generation could understand aroused me on the difficulty that our Jamaats in the west are facing with regard to having apt preachers for not only Muharram but for different occasions at different times. This arousal prompted me to give a second thought to the invitation.

Subsequent consultation with the Chief Missionary of the Bilal Muslim Mission, Saaed Akhter Rizvi and the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgher M.M. Jaffer convinced me on the importance of undertaking such an assignment and how helpful it would be to our communal brothers and sisters there. As if to encourage me, they both defined our Minneapolis Community as small, friendly and where I would not have problems in reciting majlises.

Looking back, I have no regrets and indeed feel good that I summoned courage and made the trip because the visit not only introduced me to reciting majlises in English but also made me receptive to the fact that I could recite majlises more often than once monthly. The response to the majlises by our communal brothers and many non-Ithnaasheries who also attended, convinced me of the fact that there was indeed a need for majlises to be

delivered in a language understood by the young and old.

A first impression may carry a lasting impression but a first attempt could never be one's best attempt. That my majlises were acceptable and motivated questions and discussions was encouraging enough. There is room for improvement and God willing, further practice will help me develop the necessary experience and consolidate confidence in reciting English majlises.

The underlying message that I am getting to is that : *if one with no experience can try and recite acceptable majlises, then there surely are many who have the requisite religious knowledge and an adequate oratory command over the English language who therefore can recite English majlises and come to the assistance of large and small Jamaats in the west.* A word to this effect should be spread around and I do believe that there are seniors and youths with adequate capabilities to render such a service. Very often, only a simple approach plus the necessary encouragement is required and certainly this would go a long way in alleviating the shortage of English preachers in the west, especially during the months of Muharram and holy Ramadhan when attendance is high.

Minneapolis is the capital of Minnesota State in the Midwest and presently twenty of our families reside there. I also had the opportunity of travelling further west to Los Angeles and then north to Vancouver in Canada and at each centre, on request, I recited majlises and the yearning for majlises in English was noticeable at all places.

This response of the members there brings to the forefront the fact that it is now high time we adequately prepare ourselves to produce enough English preachers who can propogate our faith from the pulpit and in classrooms to ensure that the new generation is kept abreast with Islamiyyat education. Those who can play their part have a religious obligation to offer their services because a language barrier would isolate many of our young ones from our faith.

**Whether this isolation has begun and to what extent is anybody's guess.**