

Vol: 30, No. 5

Jamadi-ul Avval 1418 A.H.
September, 1997

Federation Samachar

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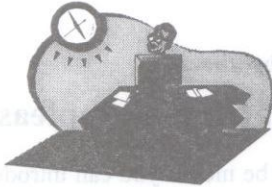
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FEDERATION SAMACHAR

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

Volume 30, NO. 5
Jamadi-ul-Avval 1418 A.H.
September, 1997.



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COVER PICTURE

* The new Chairman of the Madagascar Regional Council, Moajez Kamis with the Africa Federation Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani, the Chairman of Antananarivo Jamat, Mohamed Pyarali plus members of the Managing Committee of the Jamat.

From the Editor's Desk

We can't be a dumb and deaf community

After the Extra-Ordinary Conference held in Stanmore in June, 1997, the question asked by many is "what now?" Many have opined that a community should not be divided because of its leaders and that there should be some sort of compromise to let things continue smoothly. This is fine but under the present circumstances, the reconciliation path is strewn with a plethora of difficulties whereby it is not easy to patch issues by simply overlooking the past.

Following the occurrences at the Stanmore Conference, where the Africa Federation had simply sought fair deliberations and voting on Clause 20.1, a sense of insecurity has prevailed among the delegates from Africa and they now remain unconvinced that their basic right of being treated with respect in future meetings will not be flouted, yet again. Politeness and good etiquette in meetings are virtues that can never be overrated. What threats and insults cannot accomplish, politeness often can.

The hallmark of a good community is reflected by its unity. In our case we do not want our communal infra-structure to break down because this, despite the many developments that have ensued over the years, would be tantamount to *progression* towards *retrogression*. Ours being a religious organisation, undue break-ups would also be contrary to Islamic teachings because such break-ups would undermine, in one way or another, the community's religious and secular activities. At the same time, however, we cannot be a community which does not deem it essential to treat its members, many of whom work essentially in the name of Allah (S.W.T.), with due respect.

Going back to the Stanmore meeting, where a fair number of abnormalities took place without subsequent clarifications, it does appear that the message to the Africa Federation was one of intimidation because rather than pure steadfastness to the World Federation constitution, there was sheer effrontery. To be resolute and to stick to one's principles is fine but there should always be room to accommodate fair and reasonable requests, like the request by the Africa Federation for a secret ballot. The 'never budge an inch' attitude, even when reasonable requests are made, contradicts the very tenets of Islam because in the process it pollutes the environment as it did in the Stanmore meeting.

In any meeting, a *deaf* Federation (which does not heed to reasonable requests) and *dumb* members (who assume that it is wrong to ask constructive questions) would unambiguously contradict the requirements of true democracy. Under true democracy, leaders of an organisation are expected to encourage their members to play a constructive role towards ensuring fulfilment of its objectives. One way of encouragement comes by way of ensuring that members are given a fair chance to give candid opinions — after all, our meetings are supposed to shed undue political shrewdness aside and instead be dictated by a religious ambience.

What Africa needs from the World Federation is not an overdose of humility, pampering or praise but due respect to allow it to exercise its democratic rights in the name of Allah (SWT). Until then, without in any way undermining normal activities of the World Federation, Africa should restrain itself from being too committed in the affairs of the World Federation.

Munir Daya

YOUR LETTERS

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

Dear brother,

Samachar is not accessible on the Internet

I was pleased to learn that the *Federation Samachar* can be read on the internet. However I have repeatedly tried to get access to the *Samachar* on both the internet addresses given but without much success.

On the <http://www.dircon.co.uk/worldfed> address I only came across the March, 1997 issue with no trace of the July issue. On the other address, <http://www.raha.com> there is no sign of how to get into the *Samachar* files.

It would be of great help if you can inform your readers, many of whom are beyond reach of normal circulation on what exactly is happening.

Shia Muslim
Kuwait.

There was some delay before the July issue appeared on the World Federation web page. The WF now has a new address: <http://www.world-federation.org/>. The *Federation Samachar* can be read under the 'community magazines' section. There have been some teething problems with the other address [<http://www.raha.com>] but we have been assured that both, the July issue and the current issue will soon be accessible. Editor

Dear brother,

Books available for Wakf.....

I recently came across the *Federation Samachar*. I am a member of the Khoja Shia Isna Ashari Jamat of Karachi involved in the business of exporting textiles, garments, marble blocks, slabs, tiles and broken onyx along with handicrafts of marble, onyx, bass and wood.

I also supply religious books (in Arabic, Urdu, English and Gujrati languages) and if any of your readers

Dear brother,

That was good WF

When surfing the internet, I came across the July, 1997 issue of the *Federation Samachar* on the World Federation page. It was very mature on the part of WF to carry this on their web page considering that this issue had a candid and critical analysis of the Extra-ordinary Conference.

M. Allarakhia
Karachi

Sure was a mature demeanour on the part of World Federation. We appreciate that.

Editor

Federation Samachar

Dear brother,

Samachar in New York?

I believe some copies of *Federation Samachar* are sent to New York for distribution. Is it possible to know who your agent is locally and if I can be a regular subscriber?

Jangbario@aol.com
USA.

Dear brother,

Matrimonials please

It will be nice if you can introduce a matrimonials section in the *Samachar* so that single youths like me can find their match within the community.

Thanks. Allah Hafiz

Naushad Naorani
Ohio, USA.

Dear brother,

How do I subscribe?

I would like to ask you if I could be sent some information of subscribing to the *Federation Samachar*. Your early response will be greatly appreciated.

Mrs. Rubab Master
Birmingham

Dear brother,

Holier than thou attitude

One of the delegates at the Conference became enthused by the proverbial pretense of "holier than the Pope" and castigated the delegation of the Africa Federation for insisting rightfully on voting by a secret ballot. He said that Islam taught frankness with no fear of man.

He failed to take a clue on human nature from Hazrat Imam Husain A. S. when he extinguished the candles to allow his companions to exercise their choice of returning to their homes on the eve of Ashura.

Arif
Scarborough. Ont
Canada

Dear brother,

A Muslim journalist's duty

I read your editorial titled "Wither the World" media in the *Federation Samachar* Volume 30. No. 3 of March 1997. This refers to newspapers which have written against God's existence but we should not blame them when they write such things against our religion and beliefs, because, as Muslim journalists, we have failed to perform our duties towards Islam.

It is the responsibility of Muslim journalists to come up with some Islamic articles on the proof of the existence of the Almighty God (SWT) and then have these published in newspapers and journals. However it appears that our journalists have become very materialistic, having left behind Faith and Religion due to self interest.

This also explains why our youngsters are interested in foreign reading materials e.g. Readers Digest etc. and not in Muslim magazines which lack articles that touch on the present social problems in the family and society at large. Muslim journalists should try

hard to come up with articles that can attract the youth and youngsters of the present generation. May the Almighty Allah (SWT) grant our journalists more effort in guiding our Muslim Umma.

**Munawar H. Okera
Nakuru**

Various Islamic books, magazines and articles in newspapers have and continue to be published. Some of this literature has contained intellectual and constructive nomenclature but the major problem is that in today's vast media world it is not easy to draw readership to serious religious material. Rather, people are tempted towards pornography, scandals, entertainment, tragedies, crime, horror and the like. This doesn't absolve us of our duty to impart knowledge and it is desirable for our writers with religious knowledge to put pen to paper even by way of short articles in local newspapers. Other literary efforts like publishing books, magazines and videos should meanwhile be intensified. Editor

Dear brother,

"After a father's death".....

In your last issue, the article "After a father's death" was enlightening but there appear to be some mistakes with regard to two questions. On page 53, the last question does not continue on page 54 while on page 54 the last question again does not continue on page 55. As these questions are important, it would be nice to get the requisite corrections.

Mortal

Dar es Salaam

Indeed there were some mistakes but essentially it was a typesetting mistake which caused the mess. The bottom three lines on page 53 (third column) should have been on the bottom of page 54 (third column) and all would then be right. The Page 53 question should have read: "What is the position regarding burial of a person who dies in a foreign country where there are no family members of the deceased. Our community is often divided in such cases, since family members prefer that all burial ceremonies be attended by the kith and kin of the deceased. This naturally delays burial by a few days. Also in some places like Toronto, burials are not possible during weekends due to public cemetery restrictions thereby causing delays? The Page 53 question should have read: "The phrase 'time is a great healer' does not mean much when family members are devastated by the loss of their loved one. What should be done to alleviate this grief, with reference to specific duas, amaals, etc?"

That is the problem of being at the mercy of one's computer. Editor

Dear brother,

After all, editorial did not make a mountain out of a mole-hill

On reading your editorial in your latest issue of the *Federation Samachar*, I thought you were making a mountain out of a mole-hill while condemning the foul language reported to have been used in the June 97' Conference.

However, when I later watched the video tapes, I found to my disgust that you were right in your total condemnation, especially when the most blame-worthy was no lesser an actor than the Chairman himself.

It is said that an abusive language is an impulsive defence when one finds oneself bankrupt of arguments.

**M Mujahid
New York
USA.**

Dear brother,

Applause was uncalled for

The great majority of the delegates at the June 97' Conference applauded every move including foul language when these were directed at the opposition delegates. You rightly attempted to describe the rowdy scene at the Conference in your last issue.

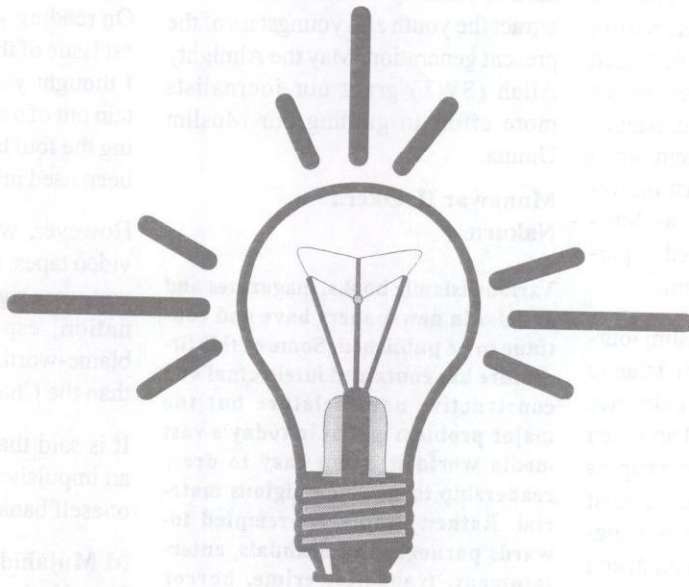
The followers of Ameerul Mu'minin, Imam Ali A.S. at the Conference would have spared themselves from the sin of hypocrisy if they had paused to take a lesson or guidance from one of his sermons which was on the subject of controversy on the Battle of Jamal. He advised the Muslims not to take sides by seeing who were on what side but to take the side where "Haq" was.

**Shabbar
Queens, NY**

Readers who have, by way of letters or otherwise, asked to subscribe for the *Samachar* or have asked for complimentary copies, will be communicated to individually.

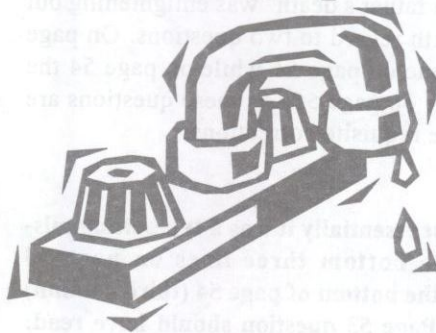
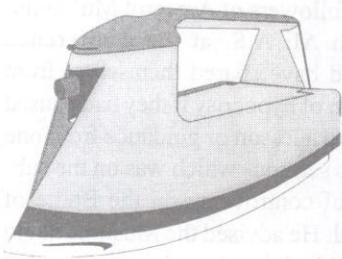
Editor

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Dear brother,

Should not the AF delegation have walked out?

There are two separate verses in Qur'an e Majid which direct a Muslim to withdraw oneself right away from a group which continues to speak ill of our *deen*, Islam.

Similarly the delegation from Africa should have taken some guidance from the holy Qur'an and walked out from the Conference in protest against the ill language used, as reported by you.

Yours truly,

DISGUSTED
Toronto

Dear brother,

Samachar is popular in the USA

The *Federation Samachar* has become very popular among KSI Communities in USA.

It has greatly improved its editorials, presentation and printing. You can expect to get more subscribers in due course.

Gulam
Los Angeles

Dear brother,

Keep up the good work

The quality of the *Federation Samachar* is excellent and the intellectual dimension and flavour given to the articles therein is worth appreciating. Please keep up the good work.

Mohamed Bharwani
President, KSI Muslim Community
Birmingham

Dear brother,

Readers' have a right to freedom of constructive speech in the *Samachar*

The *Federation Samachar* is perhaps the only publication which has evolved into an international, high quality magazine with news and articles of the Khoja World to match its 'new-found' status. In fact one would be hard-pressed to find such a publication in the entire Shia World which scrupulously maintains its reader's right to say 'his piece' whilst, at the same time, it manages to inform, enlighten, educate and entertain its readership!

Hence, if the editors of *Federation Samachar* failed to follow brother Ghulam Abbas Sajjan's counsel and continue to air the readers views and opinions in the Islamic Messianism debate, they are only living up to their rightly earned reputation of allowing readers a freedom of expression. It will be a sad day when the *Samachar* bars readers from expressing their views and opinions just because the subject is 'controversial'.

It is wrong for brother Sajjan to suggest that "*those aspects should be left to the politicians, and not so political people, to deal with at their general meetings*" (*Samachar* June, 1997). This is because very often our Jamat meetings do not discuss sensitive issues like these and again does not the community at large have a right to express its views? So please leave our *Federation Samachar* alone and let us concentrate of the subject under debate.

I have heard Dr. Sachedina's majlises in 1989 where he repeatedly asserted that Imam-e-Zamana is with us in the majlis. We have no doubt on Dr. Sachedina's belief in the presence of the Imam. Mulla himself said so in the Open Forum. Mulla said if he had any doubt, he would have considered Dr. Sachedina a murtad and would not have acceded to come all the way to Toronto take part in the Open Forum.

We are thankful to Brother Sajjan for informing us that Sachedina is regularly invited to make academic presentations, he is writing a medical thesis for the United Nations etc. Dr. Sachedina is a scholar in his own right. In so far as Dr. Sachedina's otherwise scholastic achievements are concerned, no reader grudges him. On the contrary, he makes us proud.

However for Brother Sajjan to doubt the lay readers' opinions as petty jealousy and to condescendingly refer to them as 'scholars' is to abuse them, insult their intelligence and is a denial of their right of expression of such beliefs and opinions. I wish to reiterate that the book is in the public domain and the readers have a right, nay duty, to opine on its offending parts.

The debate is on the book *per se*. As Maulana Rizvi intimated at the Forum, he found Sachedina's book and Sachedina's subsequent public lectures incompatible. Maulana Rizvi wondered aloud whether Sachedina had subsequently mellowed -- *converted*, so to speak. So long as the author does not reissue a revised version by expunging the parts that his readers find offensive, he will stand accused of having thrown doubts on the core of Shia faith. Khoja Shias, the people of the Indo-Pakistan origin as Brother Sajjan fondly dubs them, will remain in the forefront demanding that their brother-in-faith puts the record straight.

Finally, to answer Brother Sajjan's question, who has lost out? It is of course our Mehdi Saheb-uz-Zamaan A.S. who would have expected much better treatment from one of his followers.

Mohamed Hemani
Mombasa.

Dear brother,

We stooped low in the Conference..

As a young community member, I want to share my thoughts and feelings about what I saw at the Extra Ordinary Conference of the World Federation. I want to let my elders know and request them to examine and think and guide us.

After having participated in Muharam majalis where we commemorate and reflect on the valour, ethics and actions of our Imams and draw lesson from it, a few lessons certainly came to mind when contemplating on the Conference.

The Imam provided utmost psychological and physical comfort for his companions to make a decision at the most difficult of times by putting out the candles and allowing them total anonymity and freedom to decide according to their conscious whether to stay on or leave prior to the battle on the following day. We failed to observe this principle at the Conference.

The Imam treated even his adversaries with utmost respect and kindness. When he differed he never lost his cool or use nasty language even to his harshest opponents, and these were people who were set to actually physically destroy the Imam. We again failed to observe this principle of statesmanship and resorted to vile language to our own brothers. The tragedy is that a lot of community leaders and members relate this as if it was an accomplishment rather than a shameful deed. The impression created is that public abuse, even though we say it is bad, is okay if practised by our leaders.

I saw the majority of the so called world leaders fall in line and watch and even support this farce. This certainly depicted timidity and was definitely a far cry from the principled stand of our Imam.

I also saw manipulation and denial, where people were used as a front to bring forth results favorable to the powers that may be. Were not community resources wasted to bring supporters for voting? Others were

made to fall in line under duress and strong arm tactics. They tell me that these leaders are wise and know how to protect their "self interest". Whatever happened to conscious, right and wrong, and principles? I guess all is fair in the way of power.

Alas, I wish our words and our deeds matched. Am I supposed to take these preachers seriously? We are full of it. All these lessons were violated and it makes me wonder whose behaviour are we emulating? It is certainly not the Imam's. Then we are told that the young people, are going astray. Get real!

If such politics, for khums or not, can make us stoop this low, I thank God that we do not have a country of our own. Otherwise who knows what we would have done to each other. If we did, the Talibans of Afghanistan may look like Boy Scouts compared to our leadership. They say power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. I believe it but was under the illusion that religion is supposed to protect us from it. Is it? At least not in action!

Confused Khoja Boy
Toronto.

Dear Brother,

Conference undermined meritorious Hyderi medals

I wish to make a few observations of the Extra-ordinary Conference held in London on 7 June, 1997. I wish to ask one and all, one important question: *was the matter on agenda at this Conference so serious as to warrant cracks in our pillar of unity?*

The democratic right of the Africa Federation not to support the deletion of Clause 20.1 in the Constitution of the World Federation was construed surprisingly as a personal affair. With only a single item on the agenda and with the odds appearing to be against Africa Federation, why then was Africa not left alone peacefully and gracefully to explain its case?

Do we or did anyone realise that the ugly scenario and humiliation that ensued at the Extra-ordinary Conference was against the very leaders (past and present) who have been awarded with meritorious Hyderi Medals – medals which are only given to exceptional personalities within the community.

If our leaders of such outstanding calibre, who are devotedly occupied in honorary services, are to be humiliated openly in our dignified Forums, then its shadow is bound to extend to the minds of our upcoming youths and what then would be the future of our community?

Akberali A. Karim
Mombasa.

Dear brother,

We lack magazines like the Samachar in the Phillipines

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah (SWT) be upon you.

I studied a course on Islamic studies in Qum Theological Centre and during my studies I learned from one of the staff of Zahra (A.S.) Academy by the name of Ustadz Ali Kazim that you have a publication. For your information, our country has no Islamic publication like the *Samachar* and thus I request that you send us some copies each time you come up with a new issue. This will help increase our knowledge of Islam and will also keep us informed on what our brothers are doing in Africa and around the world.

Montazer R. Bongalon
Phillippines

Dear brother,

Clause 20.1.....

I would like to congratulate the *Samachar* on the article 'Clause 20.1-Why Africa was misunderstood', which appeared in the June 1997 issue. I found it very interesting and well put.

Munir Chagpar
Nairobi

Dear brother

Mr. Editor, you are wrong

In the June, 1997 issue of *Federation Samachar*, Munir Daya gave a very sober analysis of the Extra-Ordinary Conference of June 7th in his article "Clause 20.1, why Africa was misunderstood....."

In the Editorial of the same issue, the Editor stated inter alia "ultimately, however, the result reflected the opinion of the majority of voters and hence all, including the Africa Federation, would be expected to honour the result without exception".

I disagree with such a conclusion. Firstly, because the majority is not always right. Secondly, if relevant authorities referred to in Clause 27.1 of the World Federation Constitution were to be given original and fair view of the proceedings of the meeting, I believe they too would disagree with the Editor's conclusion.

The Chairman of the 7th June meeting denied that he was a beneficiary of the proposed change in the constitution. He argued that he had informed the President of Africa Federation that he planned not to stand for re-election, and therefore he could not have been a beneficiary.

Now that he has taken the Chair once again, as he allegedly is "irreplaceable and was "forced", it goes beyond doubt that he was a beneficiary and he was aware of the fact. Yet he continued to Chair the meeting and as a result intellectual honesty was sacrificed at the Conference as is often customary to sacrifice a goat.

In the same issue of the *Federation Samachar*, some humble souls describe the Chairman as "Irreplaceable", "a divine gift" "without an alternative". The theory of indispensability at work !! The tragedy

is that the Chairman appears to believe in such misguided sentiments.

To quote another humble soul, the Chairman is "the most learned, eminent, honest, pious and a great" leader. The Conference, unfortunately, showed some additional traits, such as the foul language used when describing the rights of the World Federation and the discourtesy shown to the current and past Chairman of the Africa Federation.

Yet another humble soul and presumably a "jewel" in his pious and poetic language who calls himself an "Observer" calls the Africa Federation delegates "the Saturday Night Gang". This "Observer" supported voting by show of hands, because nobody should be afraid to do so, and yet he is afraid to give his own name and calls himself an "Observer".

And talk of unity of the community! Is it "wajib" upon the insulted leaders of the Africa Federation to uphold the "unity" while the leaders disregard such "petty" issues in search of power?

Mr. Editor, you were only trying to imitate the unity call, and you are wrong.

Mohamed Sumar
P. O. Box 486,
Dar es Salaam

In an election the majority may not always be right but yet the majority wins. The Editorial called for an acceptance of results but did not call for unity at any cost.

The Editorial in this issue once again emphasises on unity but again, not at any cost ---rather, it elucidates on the need of initiating action by inaction!

Editor

Dear brother,

London Madressa on internet

Well done on the excellent work in the *Federation Samachar*. It is a great source of information for those who wish to keep in touch with our community.

Now some good news to report from London: The Shia Ithna'asheri Madressa, London now has an internet presence at "http://www.madressa.net". The main purpose of the web site is to be a repository of religious materials.

Inshallah, this web site will be a focus point for all Madressas to contribute to and gain from. The Shia Ithna'asheri Madressa London has initiated this and can be contacted directly on email to "principal@madressa.net". Comments and feedback on the website can be sent to: webmaster@m

The Principal

The Shia Ithna'asheri Madressa

PO Box 60

Wood Lane

Stanmore, Middlesex.

United Kingdom

Sarfaraz Manji@bluepoint.net
London

Dear brother,

From Qum...the Samachar please!

We believe that you all at the Editorial Board are doing fine by the grace of Allah (SWT).

My wife and I are students from Kitchener, Ontario, Canada at the Hauza Ilmiyyah in Qum and we are interested in receiving the *Federation Samachar* on a regular basis.

The last issue I read in Qum was the Rajab 1417 A.H. issue (November, 1996). I would appreciate receiving all copies that have been published thereafter.

Saleem Akbar Bhimji
Qum, Iran.

Dear brother,

A null and void Conference?

You rightly noted in your article (June 1997) that there were shortcomings during the World Federation (WF) Conference. I will add that actually these were not shortcomings but major procedural defects that make such proceedings at a meeting null and void.

The right to a secret ballot is universal, notwithstanding the claim from the Chair that the WF Constitution does not provide it. As long as that particular constitution did not deny it, a scenario where a secret ballot was denied was intimidating and in technical terms can be defined as 'rigging of votes'.

In my life, I have never seen or heard, during a vote, that the Chair first asks, "...those against the motion, raise your hands". The normal procedure is for those who moved the motion to be asked to show their majority before those opposed to it are asked to show their strength. In cases where more than 50% is required rather than simple majority, (in this case 75%), failure to obtain the required majority renders the motion defeated without even asking those opposed to vote. This is unless there is a secret ballot, where all vote secretly.

Apart from this observation, I do not understand the phenomenon of each individual Jamat in Europe being a member of the WF (each of which was present at the Conference) despite the WF Constitution limiting membership to Territorial/Federal bodies where they exist. Why were the individual European Jamats not represented by the Council of European Jamats. Unless rational explanations are given one would be tempted to assume that the existent system of counting votes disfavors the Africa Federation. Europe with population of about 6000 Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri has 27 (twenty seven) votes at the Conference. A particular Jamat of 250 has 5 votes while Africa Federation with a membership of 18000 has 18 votes (1000 to 1 vote) plus that of 5 councillors. I wonder if the notorious so-called democracy of the United Nations, International

Federation Samachar

Monetary Fund and Whitehouse, where preaching is often done without practising, is now pervading into our august Federation.

And finally, without mincing words, I think it is time Africa Federation makes it clear to the World Federation that we cannot continue to have our members and leaders regularly insulted. As for the proceedings and outcome of the Conference, history and future generations will judge, whether it was civilised and wise or a shortsighted farce.

Hussein A Karim
Moshi

Dear brother,

Samachar on the internet.....

Congratulations for putting the *Federation Samachar* on the Internet and surely this will help to make your magazine more popular.

I have noted that photographs are not carried in the Internet edition and suggest that at least important photographs be included. Profiles of the Editorial Board members, which one sees under 'About Us' of the Internet Edition, should also be backed by recent photographs (the present profiles have no photographs). Recent photographs enable those who want to send e-mails to at least contemplate whom they are writing to.

A. Jaffer, UAE

So whom would you prefer to write to—someone young and bold or someone old and wise?

Editor

Dear brother,

WF Conference — life is too short to make enemies

Much has been said and analysed about the WF Extra-ordinary Conference, both positive and negative. We feel that it is now time for both sides to settle this issue amicably and with maturity.

We do not say that mistakes have not been made but the apparent anger of the Africa Federation should cool off and fences should be mended. Top leaders from both sides should sit down and sort out their differences, for the betterment of the whole community. To recall a parable of two antelopes on a narrow bridge, neither giving way to another, it took wisdom of the elder antelope to sort out the situation, by laying down and allowing the younger one to walk on him.

Please our dear Elders, remember 'United we stand, divided we fall'. We earnestly beg you to forgive and forget for the sake of our community and Allah (s.w.t). After all, life is too short a time to make enemies.

Hamida and Kubra Rashid, Nairobi
Sabira A. Somji, Moshi

Dear brother,

Samachar is a blessing

The publication of *Federation Samachar* is a blessing for the community around the world. If it were not for this publication, we would not have known about the abnormalities of the last Extra-ordinary Conference and of the shortcomings of some of our leaders.

You should not be surprised if obstacles are placed against distribution of your esteemed publication.

Bashir Punja
Dar es Salaam

Dear brother,

WF Conference ----- strong language?.....yes, but.....

I have received a lot of communications and have also read your comments about the above Conference.

Apparently few have really looked at the issues involved. It is conventionally said that "petty minds discuss personalities, mature ones discuss events and wise ones discuss ideas" Thus discussions on personalities or calling of assumed names is a product of pettiness and unlike others who enjoy indulging in pettiness, like the one who assumed the Boswellian attitude of taking dictation of my speech! (what a waste of time!), I will not indulge into or stoop to that level.

The deletion of Clause 20.1 from the World Federation Constitution, according to the Africa Federation decision taken at Kampala, lacked sustainable rationale. It was purely to accommodate our out-going President. This is not the way Constitutional changes ought to be tackled as any lettered person can understand.

We argued our case purely from the point of principle and in no way wished to undermine our age-old unity. What we tried to say is that one person cannot, must not and should not dictate terms because even the Holy Qur'an counsels us to act by soliciting others views.

Then we noticed that some Jamats were goaded into this proposal and without reference to their General Body, they supported the motion to delete Clause 20.1 which restricted the President of the WF to a three year two term service, thus preventing an injection of new blood and new thinking into the WF.

It was felt long ago that changes were needed and to this end a Task Force to study the constitution was formed. But without waiting for the report from the Task force, this Extra-ordinary Conference was summoned only to play to the tune of the President.

I cannot support such a stand and we must also vehemently stop the insult

ing demeanours made against leaders and members of delegations from Africa who attend WF Conferences. After all, we all give our time for the sake of Allah (S.W.T.) so that our community can make progress in various fields and uphold our culture, tradition and Islamic values.

And finally, why was a secret ballot refused when this is a democratic right? We did fear (and our fear proved to be true) that a fair number of those who voted for the motion by show of hands did so through unctuousness, otherwise how can a letter supporting the deletion of Clause 20.1 (or part of it) addressed to the World Federation (from Wessex Jamat) be exactly copied by the Gujarat Council for the same purpose?

The atmosphere was charged right from the welcome speech (which impetuously welcomed the deletion of the Clause!) thereby putting emotional reason to the back seat. It is true that some of us were initially inordinately carried away to use words like "conspiracy" but the tragedy was that instead of logic, emotions thereafter ruled the meeting. What I tried to say at the meeting was that it would be fair for voters to know of some apparent anomalies that existed prior to them voting. Like for example, in the case of the Council of Gujarat, what I tried to point out was that their letter which essentially was worded the same as that of Wessex Jamat, depicted prior collaboration. I thought it my responsibility to inform the voters and then let them decide for themselves whether that collaboration was healthy or if someone was behind it.

Rather than presenting constructive dialogue, many of the speakers who followed were unfortunately immoderately carried away to the extent of absolutely diverging off the subject matter. The meeting thus lacked a cordial atmosphere and was nothing but a farce. One wonders if, the Executive Council, can justify the calling of

such a meeting (with its personal related motion) when participants had to cough up hundreds of dollars only to see principles flouted, logic thrown overboard, democratic rights denied and neutrality misused.

As a matter of fact, the meeting should be declared invalid, with the Task Force to then report on proposed constitutional changes, as was originally decided.

Mohamed Ali G. Pardhan
Barrister at law, Dar es Salaam

AF Chairman did well to be composed at the WF Meeting

I congratulate you for giving fair coverage with logic of the deliberations in the meeting held on 7 June 1997 at Stanmore, U.K.

Now the crucial point is that since seeds of discord have been sown, let that not thrive; but efforts should be made for a solution acceptable to both parties. To achieve the above goal I suggest that the current President be requested to abide to his unwillingness for re-election publicly expressed and the President be elected from the aspiring capable leaders at the ensuing World Federation elections. Thereafter at any opportune time, the present constitution which is silent on secret ballot may be amended with also a reinstatement of Clause 20.1.

Finally I salute the Federation President for remaining calm and composed despite of not being allowed to air his views on a point of information. He could have very well done this at the time when he protested to the ruling of the presiding Chairman of not allowing a secret ballot which is a universal right.

I conclude by praying to Allah (SWT) that we remain united for ever because united we stand, divided we fall.

Pyrali Asserwalla,
Mombasa

Dear brother,

Ayatullah Uzma Lutfullah Safi Gulpaygani is skilled and competent

Your reader Gulam Sajan cast aspersions on the authenticity of Ayatullah Uzma Lutfullah Safi (*Federation Samachar* vol. 30 No. 4). Let us examine what the Ulama of our time have said about the great Ayatullah.

Ayatullah Uzma Seyid Mohamed Raza Gulpayegani A.M. (Our late Marja') has said in his Will: "*The funds, the assets and the institutions which were either in my name or administered under my control by the special favour of the Imam of the Age, Hazrat Wali-ul-Asr (May Allah hasten his reappearance), were all made possible by religious dues, charities and donations by fine and generous believers, and they should continue to operate in the same way under my sons, Haj Seyed Mohammad Jawad and Haj Seyed Mohammad Baqir in accordance with the religious law Shar'iah. And whenever it is necessary to have any permission from a jurisprudence they should seek the same from Ayatullah Shaykh Lutfullah Safi, whom I acknowledge to be a competent jurisprudent Mujtahid and a man of piety.*"

After him, the required permission may be sought from any other competent pious jurisprudent from the religious centre of learning at Qum."

Now let us see what Hujjatul Islam Seyid Murtaza Kashmiri, son-in-law and wakil of Ayatullah Uzma Seyid Husein Sistani, D.A. has said: "I have gone through the book written by Ayatullah Lutfullah Safi which is in reply to the book Islamic Messianism. The reply is quite appropriate except that the English translation is not up to the mark. Ayatullah Lutfullah Safi is one of the noted and hence it was not necessary to send these books to Ayatullah Sistani and consume his valuable time."

We should be careful when commenting on our Ulama. The Holy Prophet S.A.W. has said "Ulama of my Ummat are better than the Prophets of Bani Israel." May Allah (S.W.T.) guide us towards peace and tranquillity.

**B.H.A. Karim
Dar es Salaam**

Dear brother,

Doubts on Ayatullah Safi are unfounded

This is in reply to Gulam Sajan's remarks in the last *Federation Samachar* (Volume 30, No. 4 - June, 1997 -Safar, 1418 A.H.) about the personality of Ayatullah Safi. He expressed doubts on the status of Ayatullah Safi but these doubts are actually unfounded.

For his information and for others at large who are as yet unaware, Agha Safi Golpaygani is a grand Mujtahid, a Marja-e-taqleed having written a risalah of his own. In addition to this, he is an expert in *Mahdaviyat* (matters pertaining to our 12th Imam (a.s.)) and in political issues.

The Grand Mujtahid, amongst his several books, has also written a series of 14 books presenting a correct view of the concept of Imamah (in Persian).

**Shabbir Dattoo
Dar es Salaam**

Can Sachedina tell us?

When calling upon Dr. Sachedina not to defend the book after telling him "you have rendered yourself indefensible", Mulla Saheb said, "we will not touch it again." And when called upon to respond to the suggestion, Dr. Sachedina chose to remain silent. Another person came to the rescue and suggested that his silence was to be construed as an act of agreement. On this note, the meeting came to a close.

We are now told Dr. Sachedina picked up the mike to speak but it was not turned on and he did not get the opportunity. What stops him now to make a statement?

As to the translation of Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini's book "Al-Imam Mahdi. The just leader of Humanity", if his silence is construed as an act of

agreement not to defend the book, then why does Sachedina defend it in the translator's introduction? I just quote a paragraph.

"The methodological difference between the two endeavors actually points to the different readership: the former is written strictly for the educated 'insiders' (the believers); whereas, the latter is written for both the educated 'insiders' and the 'outsiders' (non-believers). This is an important distinction to keep in mind, as the readers in the community begin to fathom the contribution made by Ayatollah Amini to reach a believing audience in contrast to my own academic contribution to reach a non-believing audience for the intellectual appreciation of the twelver Shi'ite school of thought."

I am advised that a second edition of the book has been published without the translator's introduction by Agha Anasariyan of Ansariyan Publications, who is a very close friend of Ayatollah Amini, and a party to the suggestion for translation of this book by Dr. Sachedina.

From the debate that has ensued on the Internet and the *Samachar*, it is evident that the book has become a subject of further scrutiny. As a demonstration of maturity and to resolve this long outstanding issue, it is a duty of Dr. Sachedina to make a categorical statement with regard to the book.

**Hassan M. Versi
Dar es Salaam**

Please refer to the interview carried in this issue of the *Samachar*. Editor

Dear brother,

Birmingham library would like to have *Samachar* reference copies

I take this opportunity to congratulate your editorial board for publishing such an interesting and useful magazine.

I am the Chairman of our Al-Ghadeer Library, Birmingham for our Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Community. We currently do receive the *Federation Samachar* but sometimes after few months of its publication. I shall therefore be most grateful to you if you could keep my name on your Mailing List and can mail me one copy soon after its publication so that members of our Library can take advantage of your esteemed magazine.

Secondly, I would like to make a request. In the *Federation Samachar* of Zilkaad/March 1997, pages 16/17 there are articles about films on Imam Husein(a.s.), Imam Ali (a.s.) and Muslim bin Akil. I will be most grateful if you can send me all the three films dubbed with English sub-titles. Please let me know the cost and postage and I shall be more than pleased to remit you the funds.

If you are unable to send these, then please let me have the name and address of the institution where I can obtain them. These films will be of great interest to our members, both youths and elders. Please also let me know if there are any other useful books, audio or videos I can obtain from you.

May Allah (SWT) reward you for all your good deeds here and in the hereafter (Ameen).

Shabbir Moledina
Birmingham.

We have forwarded your name to the AF secretariat for inclusion on our mailing list. We don't have the requested films but you can probably contact the Iranian Embassy in your country which may be able to guide you on how to get the films.

Editor

Dear Brother,

Editorial was mudslinging

Almighty Allah (SWT) has already destined the respect for the people of faith and praised the embodiment of faith and piety. I am sure that nobody can humiliate the ones who live and die for the sake of Allah (S.W.T).

The Editorial of your last publication of June 1997, (Vol. 30 No. 4) has done a lot of damage to Africa Federation as well as to your *Samachar* by directing mudslinging remarks towards Janab Mulla Asgher Saheb.

Mulla Saheb is our dynamic, eminent, pious and active leader who commands great respect amongst even the Marajey, let alone the common people. A man with such a stature, in whom the Marajey have seen the qualities with the powers of *umur-e-hisbiyya*, does not deserve the remarks put forth by you.

The World Federation is our parent body and thus its leader, who is our father, has every right to silence its children if he deems it necessary. It is done in light of progress and nobody should take it personal. If the final result of the clause 20:1 reflected the opinion of the majority, why then the hul-la-ba-loo?

Ali Ibnul Hussain Baqri
President
All India Bilal Mission
Delhi, India.

The Editorial made no direct references to personalities but decried the circumstances that prevailed in the Extra-ordinary meeting. No intention was made to humiliate anyone but rather, as a fair communal media, we are sometimes compelled to hold up a mirror so that we can see our ugly side and change it for the better. Sincere journalism, where you want to make a difference for the better, cannot function behind the smoke screen and then hope to remove unIslamic practices in the community.

We said in our Editorial that uncontrolled anger cannot be justified in our meetings. You say "it is done in light of progress" —were we wrong or are you right?

Editor

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Dear Brother,

Involvement to educate Trinidadians is commendable

Recently I had an opportunity to watch a video cassette produced by the Bilal Muslim Mission of America on Ashura commemoration in Trinidad and I would strongly recommend your readers to watch the said cassette. Until I saw this cassette, I was unaware and indeed was very surprised to learn that Shia Muslims of African Trinidadians exist in that part of the World: of significance being that the carnival atmosphere, matam and drum beating on Ashura that accompanied the taazia was not only attended by Shias but also by Christians and Hindus. The non-Shias also participated in the other rituals.

Of more importance to us is the fact that any society, secluded and without knowledge or Aalims through generations keeps adding traditions and eventually ends up losing the original values and significance of religion and its observances. A typical example is the wrong belief of the Trinidadian Shias that there was a fight between two brothers Imam Hussein (a.s.) and Imam Hassan (a.s.) where both were killed and went to heaven thereby signifying the yearly commemoration of Ashura.

I must commend Bilal Muslim Mission of America and Imam-e-Zamana Mission and particularly Brother Ashik Kermalli and his colleagues to have travelled to Trinidad during the commemoration of Ashura and more important for drawing the attention of those poor Shias of their un-Islamic rituals and belief. The video cassette is indeed very informative.

Ashak Taki
P.O. Box 733
Moshi.

Federation Samachar

Dear Brother,

The *Samachar* avoided my letters

I refer to the *Federation Samachar* issue Vol. 30 No. 4 Safari 1418 A.H. June 1997 issue. With poignant grief I have noted that you have not published my letter sent to you on good faith.

However on 3 July 1997 during our discussion after majlis you tried to convince me without any justifiable ground for non-publication of my letters. At this juncture I am left in a position having no alternative except to believe that you are purposely covering the misdeeds of the leaders. I am challenging you as well as the leaders involved to prove me wrong as far as the contents of my letters are concerned.

With regret I have to state that I shall have no alternative except to get my letters published using all possible means be it fair or foul at my disposal, be it beneficial or detrimental and holding you responsible. It is incumbent upon me to face Zionism or those like the Zionist controlled media who are only one sided and afraid of narrating the actual truth.

May I ask you who try to champion the cause of democracy in the *Samachar* if stopping the publication of my letter, where factual truths are presented, be considered to be democratic?

Zakirhussein Mohamed Lakha
Dar es salaam

Your unpublished letter referred to the Open Forum and on the book, **ISLAMIC MESSIANISM: THE IDEA OF MAHDI IN TWELVER SHI'ISM** (Albany: State University of New York, 1980) by Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina. Your letter was based on correspondence from M.J. Sahlani to you which, fair enough, did say that Ayatullah Taskhiri had not read the book. But did not the last paragraph of the same letter inform you that it is unadvisable to have instigating correspondence on the subject? ...To quote: "...and Ayatullah Taskhir is not content with more criticism, because it doesn't seem to help the cause of Islam."

You have accused us of being one-sided and covering misdeeds of our leaders. This is rather paltry because a retrospective look at past issues will show you that, as a matter of fact, it was the *Samachar* which first carried an article that was critical of the book. Thereafter we have published letters for and against, on constructive issues, directly pertaining to the book. The intention has not been of ridiculing individuals haphazardly (which is unIslamic and a grave sin even if even an iota of accusation is wrong) but rather, to draw our thoughts towards how we should react to the situation surrounding the book after the Open Forum.

When an issue needs to be pondered, a responsible magazine first reports on the issue (which we did), then allows its readers to air constructive opinions (which we did) and bars crude letters with slipshod and slapdash accusations (which we did) and finally offers the aggrieved party to offer a clarification (which we have done in this issue).

In any dialogue, especially so when it involves a religious community like ours, we have to bear in mind that the objective is not to insult a wrongdoer but to educate him towards the right path. Insults have no room in Islam and neither do foul methods (indicated in your letter) because no right can be achieved by doing a wrong! (If in doubt, think about how justified terrorists are in their demands). Finally why would you want to do something detrimental? (ref. para 3 of your letter) Editor

Dear Brother,

Postmortem of an Extraordinary Conference

After reading the latest issue of *Federation Samachar*, I had the opportunity to watch the video on the proceedings of the Extraordinary Conference of the World Federation Of Khoja Shia Ithnasheri Muslim Communities. I was appalled to see what I saw. It showed lack of leadership and absolute lack of respect for others as well as total lack of dignity.

The first salvo came from Gujrat when the leader of the delegation stated that the Council of Gujrat was not subservient or beholden to anybody when this is actually not true considering the many projects and immense help rendered to it. The Gujarat Council may not be subservient but one would expect it to be obliged.

Africa's first speaker should have known that people do consult each other before meetings, so what was the big deal about organizations' resolutions being similar? This is not a conspiracy. This happens all the time! Did Africa not try to get support from NASIMCO? Had NASIMCO agreed with Africa in opposing the amendment, would he still have condemned this agreement as a conspiracy? Probably not. Africa came into the situation where the result of the debate was already stacked and when it began very offensively it further put the odds against it.

The incumbent, and now declared President of the World Federation for the forthcoming term, had most definitely a vested interest in the outcome of the conference. Otherwise what was the purpose of calling the extraordinary conference at such an expense? Regardless of what is provided in the constitution, the President should most certainly not have chaired the meeting in the

interest of giving it some semblance of fair play. It is possible, although highly unlikely, that at the time of this conference, he may not have been interested in coming back (or else why the extraordinary conference?). He did not declare this to be his position, but he did come back.

Towards the end of the conference, the Chairman of Africa Federation (Chairman) asked for a ballot. The President of the World Federation (President) refused stating that this was not in "his constitution". This was a defiance of the normal meeting procedures! It is a commonly accepted practice that when a ballot is demanded, it is granted. In this case the President was even told that the voting would not be fair if it were by a show of hands because of the fear amongst the delegates of 'funding' reprisals against their Jamats and organizations. The President did not budge. We are informed that as a matter of fact, one Jamat had asked its delegation to vote against the amendment but the delegates voted for the amendment!!!

Then we come to the theatrics of the former Secretary-General. He is known to be a good orator, an intellectual and possessing many qualities of an effective leader. But what was not known was that he could stoop so low to conquer! Even if he had personal problems with the former Chairman of the Africa Federation, his dramatization was off-base. Had the constitution of African Federation not restricted the number of terms, the former Chairman would still be the Chairman. So what was he trying to prove? What he really proved was that it was better to have a limitation on the number of terms any individual could serve.

For the record, the former Chairman of Africa Federation achieved formidable results with excellence even in the face of opposition from World Federation in some instances. Perhaps that was so galling to him.

On the part of the Africa Federation I was flabbergasted at the degree of misplaced tolerance shown by its delegation - or was the delegation frightened by the awe of the President? The Chairman was shouted at by the President and ordered to sit down when the Chairman raised a point of order. This was when a delegate from Wessex was making inappropriate remarks based on the rumours he had heard that Africa's delegation was not truly representative. The President conveniently forgot that only a little while earlier the President of London Jamat (Stanmore) had categorically stated that he had received the mandate to do what he felt like when he was elected and that he did not have to consult anyone. Now when Wessex was questioning the composition of Africa Federation's delegation and a point of order was raised, which obviously was not palatable to the President, the Chairman was shouted at to sit down. The President had absolutely no powers to shout.

When a point of order is raised, the procedure is to hear out the point and then give a ruling. The Chairman should have refused to sit down even if it had meant the disruption of the proceedings.

Then another delegate from Africa went to the podium and asked for this incident to be noted in the minutes. The President refused. The delegate humbly sat down.

(continued on page 16)

.....postmortem of an
Extraordinary Conference

(....from page 15)

The last straw was when the Chairman raised the issue of the President having a vested interest in the result of the vote. The President exploded, left the chair, knowing well that he would be "persuaded" to resume the chair. Then he insulted Africa in the most undignified manner, unbecoming of his position.

When the Chairman was insulted, the delegation from Africa should have walked out. It didn't. When the President refused to have a ballot, this was another occasion to walk out for this was a violation of the principle so important to all of us (vote without fear of reprisals). But Africa continued to sit. When the President refused to have the matter related to the insult of the Chairman recorded, this was another valid reason to walk out. And finally when Africa was insulted in the most derogatory term, not only Africa did not walk out but its delegation participated in the subsequent Council meeting where, we understand, that it was further humiliated.

We should now deal with NASIMCO. According to the information we have, the issue was not discussed at its conference but very conveniently discussed at a subsequent Council meeting and NASIMCO supposedly agreed to support the amendment. However, watching the video, one gets the impression that in addition, to its President, the constitution is a toy to be played with. This was obvious from his remarks - amend the constitution now and when the incumbent had enough of World Federation, amend the constitution again, bringing in the two-term clause.

The purpose of carrying out this autopsy is not to the ridicule powers that be, but because of genuine concerns. Most of the time we complain that we are not progressing,

that we are divided and are duplicating our efforts, especially in India where everyone wants to be the benefactor of the poor souls. This review, I hope, tells us why. Those who have absolute power (no comparison with power of the Supreme Being), want to cling to it. Those in other positions are not fully equipped to confront these authoritative behaviour for they lack the means. Had there been true leadership shown, the President would have handed the Chair to the regional Presidents/Chairmen. He should have most categorically rejected the notion of the amendment. He could have continued even while not holding the position of President, to provide guidance. Then collectively the duplications of efforts could have been avoided for all the regions would then be working in partnership and avoiding overlaps. Then those duplicating the efforts could have been effectively reprimanded.

Although this is ALL water under the bridge, the President could have achieved better results by delegation and showing leadership. May Allah (swt) give him a long life and good health, but God forbid, if either of them is taken away, are we to assume that the bells will toll for World Federation? This is the feeling one gets from the conference.

The time has come to show decorum and respect to the delegates that attend these conferences at considerable expenses and inconveniences to most of the delegates. They participate because they care for the community. Let us not waste such abundance of goodwill by the this kind of outrageous behaviour. Let there be a unity of purpose and mutual respect for each other. Only then can we achieve meaningful results.

Analyst
North America

Dear brother,

Circular was well written

I wish to express my admiration for the craftsmanship which went into the Supreme Council's report (Circular JMT/97/97) on the World Federation Extraordinary Conference that was held in London on 7 June, 1997.

The conciseness with which the information was expressed is highly concentrated yet eminently comprehensible. It is noteworthy that Africa Federation stand in preserving the unity.

Mohamed F.J. Moledina
San Diego, USA

Sayings of Hazrat
Muhammad (S.A.W.)

Behaviour

Deal gently with a people, and be not harsh; cheer them and condemn not.

Much silence and a good disposition; there are no two works better than these.

Suppression of Anger

Whoever suppresses his anger, when he has in his power to show it, God will give him a great reward.

He is not strong and powerful, who throws people down, but he is strong who withholds himself from anger.

Sympathy

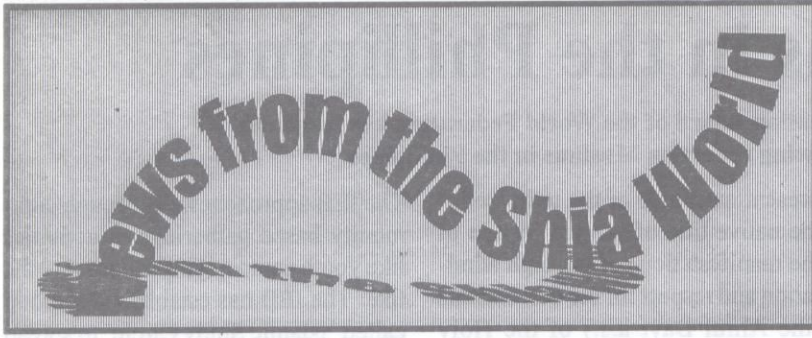
God is not merciful to him who is not so to humankind. He who is not kind to God's creation and to his own children, God will not be kind to him.

Education

To acquire knowledge is binding upon all Muslims, whether male or female.

The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.

Acquire knowledge, because he who acquires it, in the way of the Lord, performs an act of piety; who speaks of it praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God, who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God.



Mayor Bill Bell lauds Toronto's Crescent Village



At the opening of the annual summer barbecue, the Mayor of Richmond Hill, Bill Bell with Municipal Councillor, Vito Spatofora along with some members of the Village Board of Directors and invited dignitaries.

Speaking at the annual barbecue programme of the Crescent Village on Saturday 9 August, Richmond Hill Mayor, Bill Bell lauded the residents of the Village for living in a clean, peaceful and harmonious surrounding. He said "this is a community within a community". Municipal Councillor for Ward I, Vito Spatofora said "this is a large community within a community" A visitor from Dar es Salaam remarked that "it is a large family within a large community." Residents gathered at the play ground to enjoy the barbecue and to meet other residents on a warm afternoon. The place looked colourful and the sound of laughter and chattering punctuated the atmosphere as the children played and the adults talked.

Special sitting arrangements were made for the seniors who spent long hours discussing the tranquil passage of one year so soon since the last the barbecue. The barbecue was hosted by the Board of Directors and guests were welcomed by the Board's President, Sajjad Ebrahim. This annual event is always cherished as a memorable event and is looked forward to every summer.

Mulla Asghar declared President

The World Federation received written nominations for the post of the President of the World Federation of KSIMC for the term 1997-2000 from its following members: Nasimco; Federation of Kutch KSIJ; KSI (South London) Jamaat; Muhammadi Welfare Association of Australia; K SIMC of Milton Keynes Wessex Jamaat; Anjuman-e-Jafariya, Watford; Council of Gujarat; KSIMC of London Mehfile Zainab (Paris); MKSI of Leicester; MSIJ of Essex and KSIMC of Leeds. These members have nominated Mulla Asgharali M. M. Jaffer for the post of President.

With no other person being nominated, Mulla Asgharali was declared President of the World Federation of KSIMC for the stipulated term.

Birmingham 25 years on a call for papers

As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Birmingham Jamat and the opening of a new extension, the Jamaat there plans to host an International Conference in March, 1998 to discuss on "Our Marriage Ways - Will They Survive The Next Millennium?" This will cover the topical issue of *our ways, arrangements and systems of match-making and marriages within our communities. In particular, will our present ways survive the next millennium?*

This issue affects the whole strata of the community, as almost every age group is involved in this process: from the elderly to the teenagers, from the female to the male; from the community social workers to the private community member; from fathers to sons; from mothers to daughters.

The Jamaat has invited all members of our communities world-wide to contribute papers to be presented/printed at the Conference. A contributor can personally present the paper at the Conference or have it read. Due to the sensitivity of some subjects, the Jamaat has permitted anonymous contributors.

Papers, not exceeding 300 words, are invited on any area related to the Conference title. Suggested themes are: *Cousin marriages; When best to marry; Love marriages are the best; Is 'mutah' legalised adultery?; Polygamy - is it fair on women?; Marriage before or after University?; Items and forms of marriage contracts; Who is doing what in an Islamic marriage?; Jewellery set' - is it affordable to the young?; Traditional arranged marriages are the best; Partners should be matched for wealth parity; Change the custom - let girls propose to boys; Can both partners pursue a career in marriage?; Our marriage ceremonies - religious or customs?; A 'saree' and a suit - a must on a wedding night?; Women in marriage - their rights and obligations; Decent 'courtship' is preferable before marriage; Partners should be matched for education parity; Is 'hijab' a barrier to a more informed choice of partner?; A dating agency system should be introduced in the community.*

The deadline for submission of articles is 31 October 1997. Summaries should be sent to: **The Conference Co-ordinator, KSIMC of Birmingham, 17 Clifton Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham B12 8SX.** Accepted papers will be published in the Conference proceedings published by Birmingham Jamat which will be available to delegates and to contributors.

Muslims in the Phillipines

The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation has prepared the following report on Muslims in the Phillipines.

Brief Background

Of the various linguistic groups that inhabited the Philippines at the time of the Spanish conquest in 1521, the Muslims of the South (Mindanao) had the most developed social stratifications reflecting concepts acquired from their economic and religious contacts with Muslims of neighbouring regions. The fact that they could adopt some of the institutions of their more advanced neighbours proves that their economies had reached levels capable of supporting an emerging ruling class.

If history had taken its course undisturbed, the Muslims might have Islamicized the whole archipelago. They could have obtained the leadership in nation-building. As a matter of fact, Manila and its environs were already outposts of Bornean principalities.

But the development of the Philippines took a reverse course. Instead of the more developed society expanding its influence over the others and diffusing its culture and social organization throughout the less developed ones, Spanish conquest aborted this historical trend, developed the other regions, and froze the evolution of what had once been the more advanced society—the Muslim South.

Since the Muslims of Mindanao and Sulu had already attained a higher level of social organization than the small, scattered communities of Visayas and Luzon, they were never completely conquered by the Spaniards.

Although the Muslims maintained their independence, centuries of fighting off Spanish military expeditions were a drain on their society's material and human resources. Moreover, the Spaniards comprise the large minority group in the Philippines numbering more than two million.

Traces of Shi'ism

It is a common knowledge that Islam came to the Philippines long before the coming of the Spaniards in 1521. The

present existence of the term 'salip' the native title of 'sayyid' is one of the manifestations of the high admiration and respect for the descendants (the Ahlul Bayt a.s.) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by the Muslim populace in Mindanao. It is believed by some that the missionaries who came to the Philippines to propagate Islam were mostly descendants of the Prophet (SAW), bringing with them the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

Some practices of the old that have survived up to the present generation and some oral traditions attest to this fact and the following evidence is worth noting:

- Ashura is widely observed. People in the community offer something to drink and they would slaughter goats to feed the poor. They also have a community Dua asking God to protect them from danger.

- Meelad un Nabi: people in the community bring food, drinks and gifts to the Mosque where people are invited to narrate the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and to recite 'magbassa baljanji' - praises and salawat for the last Prophet.

- Nisfu Sha'ban: People slaughter goats for community thanks giving, known locally as 'Dua salamat'

- The name 'Yazid' is a curse word used to address an untrustworthy and hard headed child.

- Visiting of Graves is a common practice.

To revive the teachings of Islam according to the Ahlul Bayt in this country, the following points need to be considered:

Challenges

For the past few years the above practices are gradually being ignored, if not totally forbidden, through the efforts of Wahabi Ulama.

Alhamdulillah a handful of followers of the Ahlul Bayt have been helpful in maintaining these practices and at times, reintroducing them in light of Shia Teachings.

The IEB approaches are through community based gatherings in activities like youth camps, symposiums and the like. The IEB has established a group called 'Islamic Study Circle' to spread Islam to the public not in a confrontational way but culturally and intellectually without undermining the unity of Muslims.

Postscript

MORO: Spain was under Muslim rule for eight centuries. In 711, an army of Arabs and Berbers under a commander named Tarik landed on the rock which now bears his name: Gibraltar, from Gebel Tarik, meaning the mountain of Tarik. The Spaniards called their Muslim Conquerers, Moros. So when they encountered Muslims in Mindanao, they called them Moros too.

Australian applicants endorsed into World Federation

During the 9th Meeting of the Executive Council held on 7 June 1997 at Husaini Shia Islamic Centre, Stanmore, United Kingdom, the Executive Council considered and approved applications for membership of the World Federation received from The Panjatan Society of Victoria Inc. Melbourne, Australia and Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Community of Australia, New South Wales, Australia.

The Panjatan Society was formed in 1990 and has around 40 families. It holds all religious functions and up to 35 children attend Madressa regularly. On 14 Shabaan (25 December 1996), the society opened a new complex - The Panjatan Centre in Melbourne, Australia. The World Federation contributed almost 50% of the cost of the Centre.

The Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Community of Australia is based in Kograh, New South Wales, Australia. This Southern most Khoja Jamaat was founded in 1992 and presently has 14 families. The Community arranges religious functions in hired halls and runs a Madressa.

Delegates from Gujarat (India) visit *Dar al Tableegh* in London

The Delegates and Councillors from Gujarat (India) who were in the UK for the Extra-ordinary Conference visited *Dar al Tableegh* on 9 June, 1997 to discuss matters relating to *Tableegh*. The Session started with Semiz Seper (Incharge of Bosnian Desk at *Dar al Tableegh*) reciting a few Verses of the Holy Qur'an, following which Muhsin Jaffer, on behalf of the Islamic Education Board, welcomed the delegates and councillors.

Semiz Seper (himself a Bosnian) gave a detailed report of tablighy activities among Bosnians - both in Bosnia-Herzegovina and among Bosnian Refugees all over the world. He showed the visitors, publications by the Islamic Education Board in Bosnian language, which also included the Holy Qur'an in Bosnian. He also showed them the bi-monthly *Zhivot* (My Life) in Bosnian which he was editing and explained the subjects covered in the bi-monthly magazine.

The visitors then inspected the facilities of *Dar al Tableegh*. They also viewed the Photo-Exhibits of some of the activities of the Islamic Education Board and visited the Arabic Reference Library. The librarian pointed out to them that there is a plan to install a computer and to order CD-Roms of Shia literature currently available in Iran. This will make it easier for researchers to look for a reference in any of the thousands of Shia Books in Arabic.

Islamic Softwares and Archiving

It was pointed out to the visitors that the Islamic Education Board is in search of Shia Software Engineers to produce Islamic Softwares. The non-Shia Muslims have produced a number of softwares and there is a demand and need to produce Islamic softwares for children and adults from a Shia point of view. India has some well qualified and experienced Computer (hardware) and software experts and an appeal was made to the visiting delegation to scout for individuals who can assist to this effect.

A number of Islamic Softwares produced mostly by non-Shias (exhibited at the Centre) were shown. The programme of Archiving both the history of our Community and materials useful for Madressas and Muballigheen was also explained to the visitors. The Islamic Education Board holds many books in Gujarati on the history of the Community which are now archived and put on CD-Roms, with Search Facilities.

Delegations Visiting Gujarat (India)

It was observed that the delegations visiting Gujarat are concentrating more on social and welfare projects rather than on the religious educational needs of the Community thereby creating a false impression there that religious matters are not essentially important.

This was brought to the attention of the delegates, to which the President of the Council of Gujarat, Hassanali J. Merchant, stated that he would ensure that future visits from overseas delegations would also cover visits to Madressas and will include discussions on the religious affairs of the community there.

Islamic Books in Gujarati

It was pointed out to the visiting delegation that most of the Islamic Books in Gujarati are not of a desirable standard. It was suggested that high-quality books be translated into Gujarati and published from Arabic, Farsi and/or Urdu. This would help increase the knowledge of the readers, however small the readership may be. It was suggested that a programme of publishing at least two to three such books in Gujarati per annum be formulated.

Tabligh in Thailand

The visitors were briefed on some of the tablighy activities of the Islamic Education Board in various parts of the World. A detailed report of the history of Shias in Thailand and tabligh among them was given.

The Media

The role and importance of the media in educating and informing our Community as well as conveying a message to others was discussed.

Madressas

It was agreed that Madressa Seminars would be held in India with participation by Madressa Teachers from other parts of the world.

It was also agreed that Madressa teachers from India would be sent together with teachers from other parts of the world to inspect teaching methods in different Madressas world-wide. It was felt that this would enable a healthy exchange of information and views for the benefit of all parties involved.

Zakiri in Gujarati, Hindi and English

It was agreed that the Council of Gujarat would encourage Zakiri in Gujarati, English, Hindi and other languages. In co-operation with the Islamic Education Board, a programme of training and encouragement would be chalked out. To this effect the Council of Gujarat will send audio-cassettes of Zakirs with good potential to the Islamic Education Board.

Khoja Students in Qum

It was indicated that the Council of Gujarat would compile a list of all Khoja Shia Ithna Asheries studying in Qum (Iran), establish close contacts with them, ascertain their needs and requirements, guide and assist them. The Council would keep the Islamic Education Board informed of such activities.

Universities of Iran

It was resolved that the Council of Gujarat would encourage students to undertake studies in Universities of Iran (other than purely religious studies). The Islamic Education Board

[....continued on page 21]



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Delegates from Gujarat visit Dar al Tableegh....

[.....from page 19]

is expected to provide information about courses available, scholarships, etc.

Linguists and Translators

It was agreed that the Council of Gujarat would try to look for people (not necessarily members of our Community) fluent in different languages (i.e. Portugese, Bosnain, Albanian...), with a view to assisting the Islamic Education Board in translating Books into these languages.

It would also try to encourage members of our Community to study these languages. The World Federation would be requested to provide scholarships for such studies.

Liaison Officer

Finally the President of the Council of Gujarat, Hassanali J. Merchant, stated that Mushtaq Ali Farishta - residing in London - would represent the Gujarat Council and liaise with the Islamic Education Board.

Chechnya adopts Islamic Sharia

A Press release on 22 August, 1997 from the Russian News Service (RIA) reported that "Spiritual purity, god-fearfulness, political views and the degree of participation in the resistance movement" will be taken into account in choosing candidates to the members of the Sharia courts which will fully replace secular judicial institutions in Chechnya.

The RIA Novosti correspondent was told about this by the Chechen President's Press Secretary Kazbek Khadzhiyev when commenting on Maskhadov's judicial reform in the republic.

From this time on, the judges will be guided in their activity by the Qur'an, Sunnah (a collection of legends about the life of Prophet Muhammad), the norms of Sharia (traditional Moslem law) and the interpretations of these

MAJLIS-e-ULAMA-e-SHIA (EUROPE) CONDEMNS ATROCITIES IN PAKISTAN

Following the increase in sectarian killings in Pakistan especially amongst the Shia Elites and Ulama, Majlis-e-Ulama-e-Shia in Europe, under the leadership of Moulana Zaffar Abbas Saheb met the High Commissioner of Pakistan (H.E. Riyaz Samie') in London on Thursday 31 July, 1997.

After having presented his case verbally to the High Commissioner, Moulana Saheb presented a memorandum on behalf of the Majlis. The memorandum said:

"For the last several months, a particular group in Pakistan has been conducting wanton killings of Shia Ulama, doctors, engineers, solicitors and civil servants. It is regrettable that the Government of Pakistan has chosen to be a passive observer of these atrocities, leaving the Shias of Pakistan unprotected in their own country."

The memorandum continued to say: "We, the Shias of Europe condemn the rising wave of massacres in Pakistan and urge the Government to take

urgent and effective measures for the security of its own citizens."

The memorandum emphasized the following points:

1. The Government should save the country from total chaos and disorder by apprehending all those guilty of terrorism regardless of the sect or faction they belong to.
2. Instead of remanding the apprehended criminals at secret places, they should be brought to justice without delay.
3. Those innocent people who have been unjustifiably apprehended should be released immediately and the officers guilty of such misconduct be punished.
4. That the present administration in Punjab should come under close scrutiny by the Central Government and not allow the unscrupulous officers to torture innocent men and women.
5. Those spreading unfounded rumours or supplying unfounded rumours to the Government agencies be taken to task.

Diana condoled

The Senior Citizens of London Jamat sent a letter of condolence to Diana, Princess of Wales recollecting that she had visited the Jamaat's Senior Citizens at the Husaini Shia Islamic Centre, Stanmore on 24 January, 1990 as the Patron of Help the Aged.

During her visit, the Princess became so engrossed in the affairs of the Centre that she spent double the scheduled time there. After visiting the ladies and the nursery school, the late Princess requested for a black scarf, which she then wore before entering the men's section. This gesture was instrumental in having the Islamic Hijab allowed in many schools which previously were not very conducive to girls wearing hijab.

Birmingham's Syeda Zainab Project makes steady progress

The Syeda Zainab Project in Birmingham is making steady progress with an all out effort being made to have scheduled work completed in time for the Jamat's Silver Jubilee in March next year. The main part of the structure is now up and plastering and screeding has started. Building of the roof structure is meanwhile progressing well.

On behalf of the World Federation, Muhsinbhai Dharamsi visited the construction site of the Project in Birmingham on Tuesday 12 August, 1997. Also present during the visit were Murtazabhai Fazel of Dar-es-Salaam, Hassanbhai Dosani of Ahmedabad and Mohamedbhai Bharwani, President of Birmingham Jamat. They were shown around the project by Hasnainbhai Bandali of Al Abbas Associates, the Design Consultants of the Project. After the visit, the visitors were treated to lunch by Husseinbhai Merali, the Vice President of Birmingham Jamat.

The site for the Syeda Zainab Project adjoins the present Mosque and Imambara Complex. The new Complex is expected to ease the shortage of space for Madressa students in Birmingham where about 400 students attend Madressa.

The scheme for the new Madressa Complex involves the building of a new three storey building which will link to the existing three storey building. The two buildings will be joined together by a Central Tower that will also be the entrance to the Complex.

The new Complex will have a total floor area of approximately 20,100 sq. feet and will accommodate the Madressa together with the Playgroup/Nursery School along with 22 classrooms, a library, two small halls etc. Provision has also been made within the Complex for multi-purpose usage including the housing of Jamaat offices.

Construction work is scheduled for completion by the end of December 1997. Inshallah the opening ceremony

Federation Samachar

will take place in the month of March, 1998 at which time the Jamat will also be celebrating its 25th Anniversary.

The total cost of the Project is projected at slightly under 1.5 million pounds sterling. So far some £850,000 has been collected with the balance still being sought.

The breakdown of projected costs is as follows:

Purchase cost of 2 Runcorn Road Building	Sterling 75,000
Renovation and rebuilding of 2 Runcorn Road (8,850 sq. feet)	Sterling 398,250
New three storey building with stair tower	Sterling 697,500
Administration and professional fees	Sterling 146,500
VAT	Sterling 72,138
Fixtures and Fittings	Sterling 110,000
Total	Sterling 1,499,388

In this noble and Thawab-e-Jari cause, the Jamat has appealed to the community at large to come forward and donate generously to any extent, small or big. The Jamat is also prepared to receive interest free loans.

The Jamat has a permission to use 100% of Sehme Imam (AS) money of the Khums portion for the Project. This permission has been given by the President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer.

The donations can be remitted to the Community's address at 17 Clifton Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham B12 8SX, England. Cheques; Standing Orders; Postal Orders; Bank Drafts; etc. are payable to KSIMC-SZ PROJECT. Donations can also be made directly into the Community's Bank Account quoting SZ Project, at the following address:-

Barclays Bank PLC,
Sparkbrook Branch,
P.O.Box 2371,
Birmingham B10 0UZ,
England (UK).
Sterling Account No. 10801372 Sort Code 20-08-98
Dollar Account No. 87257888 Sort Code 20-08-98.

Khatami addresses journalists

In his address to the 1st Convention of the Press Association of Iran in Tehran on 1 October, 1997, Iran President Hojatolislam Mohammad Khatami expressed his personal pleasure on the formation of the Press Association and hoped it would promote the quality of national journalism and enrich the culture of the Iranian nation.

He said the Professional Association of journalists in Iran would offer an opportunity for perpetual interaction between the Iranian society and government administrators, and ultimately ensure cultural and political progress.

President Khatami said the pride and dignity of the Muslim people of Iran and the protection of their cultural independence would depend on the degree of their success to strengthen their cultural capacity and their communicational system nationally.

He expressed confidence that the national Press Association of Iran would help the revival of the Islamic and revolutionary culture in Iran.

Quotable Quotes

Imam Jaffer al-Sadiq (A.S.) has said, "When Allah wants to favour any of his servants He bestows on him the knowledge of religious jurisprudence."

The above saying was taken from AL-KAAFI SELECTIONS VOL-1

Imam Ali (A.S.) has said "Knowledge is of two kinds — that which is absorbed and that which is just heard. The heard one does not benefit unless it gets absorbed."

Imam Ali (A.S.) has said "The biggest wealth is that one should not have an eye on what others have."

NAHJUL BALAGHA.

An Islamic oasis in Hong Kong

"Allah ho Akbar", a deep, rich voice of Imam Cheung floats through the afternoon air calling the faithful to Friday prayer in Hong Kong's bustling Nathan Road.

Amidst crowded walkways, neon-lit tailor shops and pounding pile drivers, squats a large white Mosque, testament to the twists of history which brought Islam all the way from Arabia to the south China coast.

The elderly, slightly stooped Chinese scholar who is aged 82, has a web of wrinkles on his face. He speaks fluent Arabic and has spent his life as a devout Muslim, with due regard to the teaching of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Muslim communities have existed in China for more than 1000 years, swelled by Arab traders who plied their wares along the Silk Road connecting China to the West.

In Hong Kong, Islam gained momentum when Indian and Pakistani soldiers of Muslim faith employed by the British army settled in the territory. Their numbers were boosted by Chinese ethnic minorities known as "Hui".

The very existence of Imam Cheung and his late father and grandfather who were also Imams, is said to have begun some 1400 years ago when Prophet Muhammad (SAW) sent three of his contemporaries to far-flung China to spread the word of Allah (SWT).

According to Cheung, two of them died on the way while one arrived and built three mosques, one of which is in Guangzhou where Imam Cheung leads the congregational prayers.

'Kalam and Kalaam' Award for India's Akbar Tejani

The Haji Naji Memorial Trust of Bhavnagar conferred a 'Kalam and Kalaam' Award to Akbar Tejani of Pune in appreciation for his services rendered to the Gujrati speaking Shia Muslim Community and the followers of Ahlul Bait (A.S) in the field of religious and community affairs.

Extracts of the felicitation read: "... You are in the Governing Board of *Tanzim-Ul-Makatib, Lucknow* and assist the *Idara* for its development. You have also expanded your *Tabliqi* activities by establishing a *Charitable Trust* in the memory of *Late Khatib-e-azam Maulana Sayed Gulam Askari Saheb (T.S)* at *Poona*.

You have been *Joint Editor* of *Shia Ithanaasheri Monthly Magazine* published by *Anjumane Himayatul Islam, Bombay* and contributed many soul searching articles on *Islam*. Not only that, you have published 4 religious books in *Gujrati* namely:

- 1) "99 Pearls"
- 2) *Rays of knowledge*
- 3) *Subhanallah and*
- 4) *Fragments of Jewels of True, Religion*

Besides your above achievements, you have as a *Philanthropist* lectured on the stage of different educational, social and religious institutions and have played a very significant role in the development of both, religious and social field.

We are proud to announce that the *Allama Haji Naji Trust of Bhavnagar* is also serving the *Gujrati Society* immensely in the field of religious writings and speeches and we are today felicitating you in his memory and conferring upon you a "*Kalam and Kalaam Award for 1997*" and pray to *Almighty Allah* with *Tufail of Ale Mohammed*, that he may give you more and more *Taufiq* so that you continue to serve the community in all respects with robust health and long life. *Ameen.*"

In the features section of this issue, we have reproduced an article sent to us by *Akberbhai Tejani* which refers to animal references in the Holy *Qur'an*. **Editor**

Mulla blames BBC for portraying Muslims negatively

The President of the World Federation, *Mulla Asgharali M. Jaffer* wrote to the BBC to express disappointment on the negative portrayal of Muslims in France in the the programme *Planet Islam* on *BBC2*. We reproduce a copy of his letter hereunder:

Dear Sir,

My friends and I were glued to the TV waiting patiently to view the *Planet Islam* on *BBC 2*. *Alas!* we were greatly disappointed to see that the programme had been pre-set to present the Muslims in France as an unruly and criminal crowd. The whole programme aimed at justifying the iron-fisted treatment France has been meting out to the Muslims since last several years, and the impression it has left on the viewers is that Muslims are of the same sinister and violent type everywhere in the world.

We know of certain very refined and polite Muslim scholars in France, who were subjected to humiliation by the French authorities simply because they were practising Muslims. Some of them were deported without giving them a fair hearing.

As it is, Muslims have suffered enough discrimination and injustice everywhere, with England as no exception. Your programme has added fuel to the fire.

Yours faithfully,
Asgharali M.M. Jaffer

Mulla Asghar disproves Internet accusations against Shia Faith

The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asgharali M. Jaffer has disproved accusations that have been circulated on the Internet against the Shia faith by one K.Zafar of the Sipah-e-Sahaba, USA.

The accusation letter against the Shias read as follows:

**"Bismillah Ir Rahman Ir Raheem
As-Salaamu Alaikum
Waramatullah Wabarakatuh..**

How powerful can propaganda be in this age? Flooded by publication in so many language, the Shi'a, for so many years, continuously uttered falsehood as truth. For those who are ignorant of the Shi'a Beliefs, as every Muslim's duty, Sipah-e-Sahaba-USA intend to enlighten our brothers and sisters especially the REVERT MUSLIMS trying to understand the difference between being a Muslim and being a Shi'a.

Shi'a Beliefs according to their own BOOKS.

1. Belief of the Imamat. The standard of Imamat is higher than the Prophethood. (Hayatul Qalooob Vol. 3 pg. 10) 2. Angels bring WEHI to the Immamas: every Friday, they go to MIRAJ (Asool-e-Kaafi pg. 135, 155) 3. Every year the BOOK reveals on the Imamat of the Time of the night of the Qadr (Comt. Asool-e- Kaafi Vol. 2 pg.229) 4. Their Immams got higher status, that can't be achieved by the Angels nor the Prophet. (Khomeini . Hakoomatil Islamia pg.52) 5. Alteration in the Qur'an. A big part of the Qur'an is missing (Sani Comt. Asool-e-Kaafi Vol. 6 pg. 75) 6. Like the Torah and the Bible, they claim that the Qur'an is also corrupted and there were changes made in it. (Fazal-ul-Katab pg.70) 7. Shi'a beliefs of 17,000 ayats (verses) in Qur'an (Asool-e-Kaafi pg 671) 8. Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umer were never became true Muslims according to the Shi'a. (Jal'l Ayuoon pg. 45) 9. After the Prophet (Sallallahu Alayhis Wasallam) passed away, all the Sahabas left Islam except

for three. (Qur'an Kaafi Vol. 3 pg. 115) 10. Mutt'a (temporary marriage) In the name of Mutt'a, Shi'a faith allows its followers to commit adultery. They allow man and woman to have sexual relations without having the NIKKAH. Mutt'a is a temporary Nikkah whereby you do not need witnesses. If the man and woman agreed, they can do Mutt'a. Mutt'a could be performed for ONE hour, ONE day, ONE month or whatever time limit was agreed upon by the two consenting parties. Mutt'a could be done with any women even professional prostitutes. (Froaiy Kaafi Vol.2 pg.189) Mutt'a is higher than SALAT, FASTING, and HAJJ. When after performing Mutt'a , man and woman take Ghussul (bath), Allah(swt) forgive their sins in the amount of the hair in their bodies those became wet during the Ghussal (Minal Yahderul Faqih pg. 431) 11. TAQIYYAH (lying) is an act of IBADAH (worship) in SHI'ASM. One who hides the faith (Shi'a), will be disgraced by Allah(swt). (Asool-e-Kaafi pg. 485) Taqiyyah is wajib (mandatory) . One who does not do Taqiyyah has no iman (faith) (Asool-e-Kaafi pg484)

Who can say these above mentioned aquaid (beliefs) to be Islamic? This is nothing but KUFRA... Do not be misled ! To the Muslim Ummah , SIPAH-e-SAHABA-USA, Inc. (guardians of the SAHABA) urge all Believing Muslims to participate in this GREAT JIHAD, that Shi'a are not MUSLIMS.

In service to Allah (swt)."

**K.Zafar
SIPAH-e-SAHABA-U.S.A. , Inc.
P.O.BOX 795
BROOKLYN,
NEW YORK 11230
TELEPHONE: (718) 390 8816**

In response to this Mulla Asgher refuted the allegations in his reply which follows:

"In the name of Allah, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful, Was Salam Ala Mani'Tabaa'l Huda

A write up by K. Zafar of Sipah Sahaba (U.S.A.) entitled 'Are Shia Muslims?' has found its place on the internet, loaded with the time worn objections and arguments against the Shia sect of Islam. These have been adequately and amply answered time and again by the Shia scholars, but the zeal of Sipah Sahaba to create dissention and disunity among the Ummah of Islam remains unabated.

Two cardinal points have to be clarified before we proceed with answering the objections raised by the writer:

1. It must be borne in mind that according to Shia belief, every book authored by a human mortal can be subject to error, and, therefore, unlike the Sunni brothers, they do not consider their books of Ahadith as 'SAHIH' or fully authentic and sound. While the Sunni school has 6 books labelled as 'SIHAH', eg SAHIH OF BUKHARI and MUSLIM etc., the Shias believe that the only book which can be classified as pristine and un-sullied is the Book of Allah, the Holy Qur'an.

2. The quotations given by K Zafar are wholly inadequate. She does not quote from Usool al Kafi by giving Chapter and Hadith numbers, and contents herself by giving page numbers. As there are various editions of Usool al Kafi and the other books quoted by her, it is indeed difficult to verify their accuracy.

K Zafar says:

(1) "Belief of the Imamat. The standard of Imamat is higher than the Prophethood".

It is impossible to find anything objectionable in this belief, because it is based on the Holy Qur'an, see verse 124 of Sura Al Baqarah: "And when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with certain Words, and he fulfilled them, He (Allah) said: Surely I will make you an Imam to the people,..."

(continued on page 25)

(...from page 24)

This verse clearly states that the elevation of status to Ibrahim, peace be upon him, came in the form of a WAHY (a revelation). This means that he was being promoted from Nubuwwah to Imamah.

(2) "Angels bring WEHI (sic) to the Imams: every Friday they go to MIRAJ(sic)".

The writer may like to consider the following verses from the Holy Qur'an: "And your Lord sent WAHY to the bee to build its cells in hills...." (al Nahl, verse 68) "So We sent WAHY to the mother of Musa that suckle him...." (al Shua'raa, verse 7) "And we made them Imams, guiding men by Our command and We sent WAHY to them to do good deeds..." (al Anbiya', verse 73).

From the verses quoted above, it is evident that WAHY is used by the Holy Qur'an to mean inspirations, intuitive knowledge, apart from the WAHY in the form of a revelation to the Prophets. WAHY to Imams came as the inspirations as vouched by the Holy Qur'an. That is the meaning of revelation on the night of Qadr, coming to the righteous Imams.

(3,4) "Their Imams got higher status, that can't be achieved by the Angels nor the Prophet"

This objection is very surprising. For both Sunni and Shia schools agree that not only the Imams, but also an ordinary MU'MIN, following the Shariah of Islam can achieve higher status than the angels. Angels do not have emotions, passions and desires. Humans have to combat all the evils to achieve purity. Therefore, when he frees himself from base desires and obeys his Master, he has a higher place.

As for our Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, no Shia scholar has ever claimed a higher status for any Imam.

(5,6,7) These deal with quotations from Shia sources saying that the Holy Qur'an has had omissions or changes.

At the very outset, I made it clear that

such reports are not accepted as sound. We, Shias, unlike our Sunni brothers do not accord the status of 'SAHIH' to any book other than the Holy Qur'an. Every report is subjected to a meticulous study, based on the laid down standards of RIJAAL and SANAD. Time and again we have reiterated that the Holy Qur'an as it exists is the WHOLE book, having no interpolations at all.

It might interest K' Zafar and other partisans of Siph-e-Sahaba to consider the following reports from SAHIH books of Sunni school:

"Reported from Caliph Umar(Rad.) who said from the pulpit: Surely Allah sent Muhammad, peace be upon him, with Truth, and sent down to him the Book, and among the things revealed therein was the verse of RAJM. We read it, understood it and assimilated it. (That is, the verse about stoning the adulterer: tr.) The Prophet stoned the adulterer and we did the same after his passing away. So, I fear that with the passage of time, someone may say that we do not find this verse in the Book of Allah, and thus go astray by not practising that which has been ordained. The mention of RAJM in the Book of Allah is truth for the one who commits adultery." (Al Bukhari, Vol14/120. The chapter of Rajmul Hubla min al Zina. Kitabul Hudood).

According to this report appearing from Al Bukhari, which is SAHIH according to SUNNI school, a verse from the Holy Qur'an is missing.

In the SAHIH of Ibn MAJAH, Ayesha, the wife of our Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, is reported as under:

"The verse of RAJM and about suckling a child at least 10 times, had indeed been revealed and they were written on a page which was under my bed, but when the Prophet died, while we were occupied with the tragedy, a domestic animal entered and ate the page up." (SUNAN ibn MAJAH: Hadith no 1944 and 2553).

Hadhrat Ayesha tells us of the irretrievable loss of a verse from the Holy Qur'an.

In spite of the above reports from their

own sources, which they consider as 'SAHIH', K Zafar and her likes have the audacity of throwing stones while living in glass houses. We, the Shias, believe that these reports appearing in Al Bukhari and Ibn MAJAH are false, and neither SUNNI nor SHIA believe in any change having occurred in the Holy Book.

(8,9) About the SAHABA being true Muslims.

We Shia believe that Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar were MUSLIMS. And the SAHABA who survived the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, were MUSLIMS. The qualifying term "true" is judged by the actions of an individual.

10. K. Zafar's hue and cry against MUTA'H is very amusing. This practice of MUTA'H was ordained by the HOLY Quran is its verse: "And for the pleasure you derive from them, give them their dowers, as prescribed....." (al Nisa, V 24)

In order to understand the verse from SUNNI sources, refer to Tafseer of al-Tabari elucidating the verse from a report by Habib b. Ali Thabit. Also see al Bayhaqi in his SUNAH 7/205, Sharah of SAHIH MUSLIM by al-Nawawi 9/179, al-Kasshaf by Zama Khshari 1/519, Tafseer of Ibn Katheer 1/474, and also al-Durr al Manthoor of Suyuti 2/140-141.

Now, in order to explain to K. Zafar what MUTA'H actually means in the FIQH of ISLAM, I quote herebelow from TAUDHIHUL MASAIL according to the Fatawa of Shia scholars, because she has levelled allegations against the Shias.

"Whether marriage is permanent or temporary, the formal formula must be pronounced; mere tacit approval and consent, or written agreement, is not sufficient. And the formula (Sigha) of the marriage contract is pronounced either by the man and the woman themselves, or by a person who is appointed by them as their representatives to recite it on their behalf.

"If a woman with whom temporary marriage is contracted, makes a condition that her husband will not have

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sexual intercourse with her, the marriage as well as the condition imposed by her will be valid, and the husband can then derive only other pleasures from her. However, if she agrees to sexual intercourse later, her husband can have sexual intercourse with her, and this rule applies to permanent marriage as well.

"A woman with whom temporary marriage is contracted, is not entitled to share the conjugal bed of husband, and does not inherit from him, and the husband, too, does not inherit from her. However, if one or both lay down a condition regarding inheriting each other, such a stipulation is a matter of Ishkal as far as its validity is concerned, but even then, precaution should be exercised by putting it into effect.

"If a wife of temporary marriage goes out of the house without the permission of her husband, and the right of the husband is in anyway violated, it is haram for her to leave. And if the right of her husband remains protected, it is recommended precaution that she should not leave the house without the permission.

"If a man contracted a temporary marriage with a woman, and the period of her Iddah has not ended yet, he is allowed to contract a permanent marriage with her or renew a contract for temporary marriage with her."

From those ramifications, it is easy to observe that MUTA'H is a contract, just like NIKAH in a permanent marriage, it has a formula to pronounce, and it has certain responsibilities. This was ordained to prevent MUSLIMS from committing adultery and fornication, and from demeaning the status of MUSLIM women. Today, this ordinance is even more pertinent and relevant.

In his MUSNAD, Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal reports from Abu Saeed al-KHUDARI, who said: "We contracted MUTA'H during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in lieu of the cloth. (see MUSNAD of AHMAD 3/22).

In the SAHIH of MUSLIM, a report from ATA' appears who said: "JABIR b. Abdillah once came for Umrah, and we met him in his house. People gathered there asked him a few things, and then they mentioned MUTA'H. He said: "Yes, we contracted MUTA'H during the times of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and of Abu Bakr and Umar" (see SAHIH MUSLIM. KITAB AN-NIKAH, Hadith No. 1405, page 1023).

It was Umar b. Khattab, who later forbade MUTA'H, and opened the gate of vices for MUSLIMS. In his Tafsir al-Kabir, Imam Fakhr Al-Razi says: "Had it not been for Umar who forbade MUTA'H, no one would have indulged in fornication except the wretched one". (see Tafseer al-Kabir - 3/200 in the exegesis of the Ayah).

11. K. Zafar has totally misunderstood the meaning of Taqayyah. It is not lying. It is hiding ones faith in a situation which justifies it. The Holy Quran says:- "*A believing Man, from among the people of Pharaoh who had concealed his faith said....*" (al MO'MIN v. 28)

For the one who was concealing his faith, the verse says he was "RAJULUN MOMINUN". So, what is wrong if one has to conceal his faith if circumstances warrant? The early history of Islam is fraught with incidents when the early converts had to conceal their faith. The most glowing example is that of Ammar b. Yasir. And yet, when he came to the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, ashamed of what he had done by way of simulation, the Prophet said: "Faith has covered Ammar from his heed to his toes".

Inshallah, these explanations will allow Sipah Sahaba to understand Shia beliefs dispassionately. Let the Ummah of Islam be saved from the unscrupulous hands, and from the enemies within and without, Amin.

Our final prayer is that "All Praise belong to the Lord of the worlds".

Asgharali M.M. Jaffer

The clarifications offered by Mulla Asgher have to date not been disputed by the source. Presumably quiescence is acquiescence. Editor

Khatami's unprecedented website

The community of net surfers who inhabit the Internet world are not unfamiliar with the bizarre and the unprecedented; and yet, even they would have sat up in some surprise if they had happened to click on a website labelled <http://www.khatami.com/>. For this is the Internet address at which you will find messages and announcements from Mohammed Khatami, the Cleric who was elected President of Iran earlier this month.

Khatami is the first Iranian leader to have a personal website: the choice is entirely in keeping with the man's progressive outlook. Khatami was educated as a Shi'ite theologian at the seminaries of Qum and Isfahan; he combines Islamic theology with a deep knowledge of Kant and an interest in English and German literature.

That Khatami should want to reach out to a potentially global audience through the virtual pathways of the Internet may be one way of getting the true message of Islam to the world which has incessantly misinterpreted Islam in general and the Iranian constitution in particular.

A turban-crowned cleric with an ecclesiastical tome in one hand and a mouse in the other is probably a typical profile of what our new generation of rulers will be. Surely the computer, CD Roms and the Internet are there to stay and soon our Clerics will find out that it will be virtually impossible to be able to operate effectively without access to the World Wide Web.

Quotable Quote

Imam Ali (A.S.) has said "He who agrees with the action of a group of persons is as though he joins them in that action. And every one who joins in wrong commits two sins — one sin for committing the wrong and the other for agreeing with it."

NAHJUL BALAGHA.

The tender sex show their true mettle in Peterborough's Ladies Sports Event

The Husayni Islamic Centre, Peterborough hosted the First Ladies Sports Tournament on 24 and 25 August, 1997. The event, which drew the old and young, was a great success story for the Council of European Jamaats (COEJ). The venue for the event was the Werrington Sports Centre, some four miles north of the Husayni Islamic Centre (HIC), Peterborough.

Seven Jamaats, represented by one hundred and sixty participants between the ages of eight to fifty, competed in their chosen sport. The staff at the Werrington Centre had not seen such flurry of activity before and were impressed by the discipline and organisational ability of our women. Virtually the entire Centre was left to the disposal of our womenfolk.

On the first day, although being a Sunday, most of the participants arrived at the HIC by 8 o'clock in the morning raring to go. They were all transported to the Centre by a specially arranged car and Minibus service, courtesy of Field House. After having had their *Mahambri* and *Chai* the first lot of matches commenced, albeit, slightly delayed due to the rescheduling of the fixtures. As there were a number of replacements from the originally registered names some time was spent re-registering new participants.

The tournament commenced with badminton and table tennis being played simultaneously on eight courts and three tables. In the afternoon five-a-side football matches were played on the two outdoor pitches. Matches were played with enthusiasm and there was a lot of support from onlookers. Soon the organisers had to cater for the first casualties and the ladies First aide's had to resort to enable the injured patient to recover. At one stage a mouth to mouth resuscitation was also required.

Thanks to the Almighty the events went smoothly. There were a few minor cases which called for medical attention and one girl had to be

taken to hospital after a nasty fall. She was however determined to play netball the following day and not letting her arm in a sling deter her from playing, she helped her team win the finals. This attests in a nutshell, the dedication and team spirit of our girls which needs to be cultivated and extended to even our Imambaras.

The games contested were badminton (singles and doubles), table tennis, five-a-side football and netball. Each one participated in at least one game and in some cases in all four.

The event culminated on the evening of the second day with presentation of trophies to the winners and runners-up. The invited Chairladies from various Jamaats honoured the Presentation evening and were asked to say a few words. Thereafter the Team leaders expressed their wish to congratulate the organisers formally. Each participant was given a souvenir plaque to cherish and remember this historical moment.

Teams from Birmingham, Milton Keynes, Hyderi, Leeds, Peterborough, Stanmore and Wessex participated. It was unanimously felt that a similar

tournament be held again next year, with perhaps a little room for improvement. However, the venue and the food got a resounding thumbs-up.

Just before the end of the tournament, the ladies decided to present a trophy each to three outstanding women during the event. One was to a middle aged mother who in spite of her disability participated in table tennis. Another was to a young girl of nine who won everyone's heart for having exhibited courage against opponents nearing her grandmothers' age without complaining and being extremely polite. A trophy was also presented to a mother who brought her year old twins and stayed overnight amongst the hundred plus women. This all went to show that neither age or disability nor motherhood can deter our women if they put their mind to do something.

In the football event some rivalry had built up between Peterborough Girls and Stanmore but at the time of saying farewells, the Peterborough Girls waited at the coach (bus) and greeted everyone embarking for Stanmore. A great gesture with a moral lesson --- vie but don't despise!

Bilal Muslim Mission establishes Trinidad connection

The Bilal Muslim Mission of Americas (BMMA) has embarked on an ambitious project in Trinidad to establish the First Shia Centre there. The property is located in Port of Spain, Trinidad, West Indies. It is a reinforced concrete and steel structure having three floors with a total area of over 12000 sq.ft.

The top floor at present is occupied as Prayer Hall and Teaching Area by our Shia brothers and sisters under the organization called Imam-e-Zamana Mission. The first and ground floors are vacant awaiting renovation. It is planned to run a day care Centre and a vocational training Centre on the first floor with shops on the ground floor. A walk-in library will also be established on the ground floor.

This will be the first Shia Centre of its

kind which will be self sufficient once the shops bring in revenue to offset the expenses to run the property. It will also create employment for our brother and sisters, majority of whom are unemployed at present in Trinidad. The vocational training Centre will prepare our brothers and sisters to enter the blue collar jobs.

This project when completed will cost US\$ 300,000. BMMA has been fortunate enough to receive donations to cover the initial payment to acquire the property, as is. A balance amount of US\$ 150,000.00 is needed to complete the project. Local contractors are being solicited by BMMA to carry out the necessary works to fulfil the planned optimum utilization of the property.

(continued on page 28)

**...Bilal Muslim
Mission establishes
Trinidad connection**

(....from page 27)

The BMMA will establish a local training Centre to train local interested brothers and sisters and the promising students among them will be sent overseas to complete their religious studies. This programme will prepare local muballighs to return and teach within a few years. Presently BMMA sends Zakirs during Muharram to preach, teach and reach the local converts. The response has been tremendous and Alhamdulillah every week Shahada is given to at least one convert. If the convert is a male and not circumcised, BMMA also arranges with a local doctor for the same.

The BMMA has been holding Imam Husayn day Seminars to commemorate the Martyrdom of Imam Husayn (a.s.) for the last two years. In 1996, the Chief Guest speaker was the President of World Federation, Mulla Asghar M.M. Jaffer. This year Sheikh Abdullahi Nassir from Kenya was the Chief Guest.

The BMMA needs help and support to realise this project. Mulla Asghar has agreed to allow BMMA to collect Sehme Imam Khums for this project. BMMA will receive the Khums, deposit it in the account of World Federation so that the receipt from Agha can be obtained. Subsequently the full amount will be given to BMMA to utilize for this project.

Inshallah the message of "*Man Kuntu Mawla Fahaza Aliyun Mawla*" will reach all the corners of the Caribbean and Central and South America and the saying of our 6th Imam(a.s.) "Every Day is Ashura, Every Land is Kerbala" will reverberate in the region.

Donations may be mailed to:

**Bilal Muslim Mission of America
230 Duffy Ave.
Hicksville, NY 11801. USA
Email: kabana@juno.com**

or

**Bilal Muslim Mission of America
101 Cairns Drive,
Markham, ON L3P5T6. Canada.
Email:kermalli@yesic.com**

Federation Samachar



DATELINE TORONTO

from Baqir Alloo in Toronto

MADRASA TEACHERS GRADUATE IN TORONTO

Under the cool shade of the mature trees at 9000 Bathurst on a hot summer morning in Toronto, the younger generation was handed the torch of teaching at the 5th Graduation Ceremony of the Madrasa Teachers Training Programme.

The programme began with recitation from the Holy Qura'n by Zuhair Kanji and translated by his sister Fatima Kanji amid the anxious graduates and their proud parents. Among those who were present were the lecturers who made the programme the success that it was.

In his welcome address, Raza Dato, the co-ordinator of the training, congratulated the students and reminded them not to forget their lesson plans once they acquired the comfort of the classrooms. He also thanked the lecturers who donated their time and talent selflessly, some of whom travelled long distances to come to train the students. Maulana Rizvi, the stalwart of the trainers, warned the students to refrain from experimenting with new philosophies that were not acceptable to Islam and emphasised the need to study more about Islam. In his advice to the graduates, the Principal Nisar Sheraly, reminded the students of the Prophet's prayer when he always asked Allah s.w.t. to increase his knowledge. He reminded them that the more knowledge we have, the more we realize how ignorant we are and that knowledge creates humility in a person. He also warned them to beware of "false knowledge" as it is more dangerous than ignorance. Since the education of the ummah was in their hands, he advised them to treat the students with loving care and respect as the Ma'sumeen did. Sr. Shaista Devji, on behalf of the students, talked about the fun they had with the programme and on their eagerness to practice what they learnt. Mehdi Sheraly thanked the administration on behalf of the parents.

The training programme evolved as an experiment and now has established with two parts to it. Part I, the students receive training through lectures and practicals on current teaching techniques and Part II consists of class room training under a mentor.

This year a record number of students participated and 20 students from East, Centre and West madrasas successfully completed the First part and 10 graduated in Part II. One of the requirements for the first year students is to produce an original Islamic Children story book or any Islamic educational game in print or electronic medium. These will then be deposited with the libraries in the three madrasas. As this experiment has now become an institution, we hope it will be replicated in other parts of the world for the benefit of the future generation. Sr. Masuma Jessa spoke on how the new graduates create some fun in the classroom to provide relief to the students from the serious subjects that are taught.

SENIOR'S NOT DISSUADED BY THE COLD

Summer was interrupted by cold weekend spells yet seniors were able to squeeze in two outdoor programmes. A visit to Canada's world renown Niagara Falls was thoroughly enjoyed by the seniors. The second programme was to see the Moronite Community who live in the style of the past without electricity and other modern facilities. As the place was a few kilometres from Kitchener, the seniors proceeded there to say their day time prayers and partake in a delicious dinner. The Seniors are looking forward to soon visit Niagara Falls again and Buffalo where they hope to be able to do some shopping.

Some details on the US Immigration Lottery Visa

This is an abridged version of information sent by Gulamabbas Dhala of KSII Information Service, Los Angeles. Gulamabbasbhai has been a cordial supporter of the Samachar in North America and in addition to consolidating our distribution network there, he also regularly keeps us updated with news.

Editor

On August 26, 1997, the Department of State released information on the next green card lottery. A sample application and envelope can be viewed on the internet at <http://www.visalaw.com>.

Some questions and answers

What is the "Green Card" Lottery?

The U.S. Congress has authorized the allotment of 55,000 immigrant visas in the DV-99 category during Fiscal Year 1999 (which runs from Oct. 1998 to September 30, 1999). Foreign nationals who are natives of countries determined by the I.N.S. (according to a mathematical formula based upon population totals and totals of specified immigrant admissions for a 5-year period) are eligible to apply. The application period will run from October 24, 1997 to November 24, 1997.

The nationals of some countries are excluded under the scheme. These include Canada; India; United Kingdom (natives of Northern Ireland and Hong Kong are eligible).

What is the allotment this year?

The DV-99 program apportions visa issuance among six geographic regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America (other than Mexico), Oceania, and South America (including Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean). No single state may receive more than 7% (3,850) of the 55,000 allotted visas. The allotment for this year is as follows: Africa: 21,409; Asia: 7,254; Europe: 23,024; North America: 8 (only the Bahamas is included); South America: 2,468 and Oceania: 837.

To receive a DV-99 visa, an individual

must have at least a high school education or its equivalent, or, within the preceding five years, two years work experience in an occupation requiring at least two years training or experience.

Can one be a "native" of a country other than the country in which one was born?

A native is both someone born within one of qualifying countries and someone entitled to the "charged" to such country under Section 202(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Thus someone may be (1) charged to the country of birth of his/her spouse; (2) charged to the country of birth of a parent; and (3) an applicant born in a country of which neither parent was a native may be charged to the country of birth of either parent. If one claims to be a native of a country other than where one was born, he/she must include a statement to that effect on the lottery application and must show the country of chargeability on the application envelope (see discussion of the application form and envelope).

Will applying for the lottery affect one's ability to receive a non-immigrant visa?

Probably not. Technically, filing a visa lottery application is equivalent to filing an immigrant petition. According to source at the Department of State, a consulate will only be notified IF the person is selected in the lottery. An individual who is not chosen is on his honor to state that he/she applied for the lottery.

Do I need to be in lawful visa status to compete?

An individual who is in the U.S. need NOT be in lawful status to compete in the lottery. However, the Department of State has indicated that it will share information with the Immigration and Naturalization Service for the "formulation, amendment, administration and enforcement" of the country's immigration laws. Furthermore, a person out of status may be subject to the new three and ten year bars on admission of the 1996 immigration law and un-

able to take advantage of winning the lottery. Because the laws on this subject are highly complex, it is recommended that out of status persons contact an immigration lawyer to determine their status and an appropriate strategy.

Does it matter whether I am or am not in the U.S.?

Individuals who otherwise meet the requirements for competition in the lottery, may compete whether they are in the United States or in a foreign country.

Are there any limitations on the number of entries I can send in for the lottery?

Each individual is limited to one application in the lottery. If more than one application is received, the individual will be totally disqualified. Note: Hundreds of thousands of applications are rejected every year due to multiple applications.

May a husband and wife each submit a separate application?

Yes. If otherwise qualified, a husband and a wife may each submit one lottery application. If either is selected in the lottery, the other would be entitled to derivative status.

If I win, can I get green cards for my family?

Your spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21 are automatically entitled to the same status as you.

Is there a minimum age to apply for the lottery?

There is not a minimum age to apply for the lottery. However, the education/work experience requirements will effectively preclude most people under 18 from applying.

May I adjust status in the U.S. if I am selected?

An applicant may adjust status (switch to permanent residency in the U.S.) if they meet the normal requirements for adjusting status with the INS (including not having previously been out of

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visa status). Applicants who adjust must first send the forms they receive from the National Visa Center back to the National Visa Center. In order to apply for adjustment of status, the INS must be able to complete action on the case before September 30, 1999.

How does the selection process work?

The National Visa Center in New Hampshire will receive all applications. Upon receipt, the NVC will place the letter into one of six geographic regions and assign the letter an individual number. Within each region, the first letter randomly selected will be the first person registered, the second letter selected will be the second person registered, etc. When a case is registered, the applicant will immediately be sent a notification letter which will give visa application instructions.

About 100,000 persons, both principal applicants and their spouses and children, will be registered. Since it is probable that some of the first 55,000 persons registered will not apply for a DV-99 visa, this figure is assumed to eventually be reduced to about 55,000. However, there is a risk that some applicants will be left out. According to the Department of State, all applicants will be informed promptly of their place on the list. Each month visas will be issued, according to registration lottery rank order, to those ready for visa issuance for that month. Once 55,000 visas are issued, the program ends. Registrants for this year's lottery will have to have their visa in hand by September 30, 1999 at the latest. You must be prepared to act promptly if your name is selected.

How will I know if I was not selected?

The State Department will not notify applicants who are not selected. The only way you will know that you are not selected is if you have not received a registration notification letter before the date the INS officially states that it has stopped notifying people (expected to be between April and July of 1998).

Is there an application fee?

No. There is no fee.

Green Card Lottery Scams

If you or someone you know is trying to obtain a green card—the right to live permanently in the United States—be on the alert for unscrupulous businesses and attorneys who claim that, for a fee, they can increase your chances of winning the U. S. State Department's annual green card lottery.

The Scam: Some businesses and attorneys use misrepresentations and unfair practices to promote services to consumers who hope to win a chance to apply for a green card through the lottery programme. Among the deceptions scam artists use are statements that:

- they are affiliated with the U.S. Government;
- special expertise or a special application form is required to enter the lottery;
- their company never has had a lottery entry rejected, and
- their company can increase an applicant's chances of "winning" the lottery.

In addition, some fraudulent companies jeopardize an applicant's opportunity to participate in the lottery by filing multiple entries; and try to force lottery-winning applicants to pay substantial fees to complete the visa and green card application process. A delay in processing a winner's application can kill their chances for a green card because the State Department select more winners than there are visas available. The State Department awards visas to the winners on a basis of first-come, first-served.

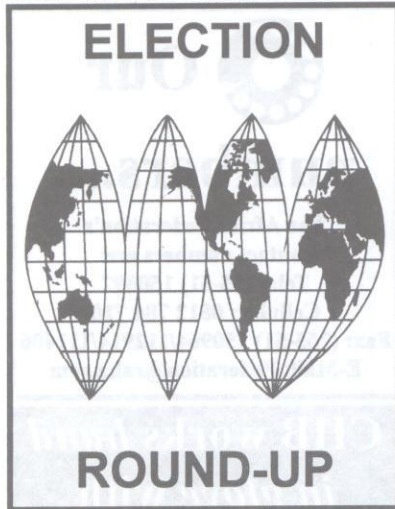
Protecting yourself: The best way to protect yourself from green card lottery scam artists is to understand how the State Department's lottery works.

— Entering the green card lottery is straightforward and costs nothing. You can enter on your own by following the instructions available from the State Department or your local consumer affairs office. There is no entry form. Hiring an attorney or company to enter the lottery for you is your decision.

— Do not submit more than one entry. If you do, you will be disqualified automatically.

— No special techniques or loopholes are available to increase your chances of winning the green card lottery. Selection of entries in the lottery is random. For more information, you may access the State Department's Website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

If you think you are a victim of a green card lottery scam, contact the Federal Trade Commission's New York regional office (212) 264 1207 or contact the National Fraud Information Center (NFIC) on 1-800-876-7060 or surf into www.fraud.org on the Internet.



Dar es Salaam

At the biennial General Meeting of Ithna-Asheri Union which was held at the Boarding House on Sunday, 13 July, 1997 the following Office Bearers and Sectional Secretaries were elected to the office for the term 1997/98.

Chairman	Abdulrasool Shamji
Vice Chairman	Jabir Chatoo
Hon. Gen. Secretary	Fayaz Alloo
Hon. Treasurer-	Shabbir Hameer
Sectional Secretaries:	
Literary	Mustafa Dinani
Volunteers	Khalil Khakoo
Employment	Kassim Bhimji
Scouts	Bashir Dewji
Ladies	Asgher Dhanji
Sports	Mohamed Nathoo

We hope and pray Allah (SWT) successfully guides them to lead the community, Amen.

Mwanza

The following Managing Committee members have been elected to run the Mwanza Jamat for a two year period:

Chairman	Amir Manji
Vice Chairman	Habib I. Rai
Hn. Secretary	Liaqat Rai
Hon. Jnt. Secretary	Mohmd Rafik Parpia
Members:	Bashir Rashid
	Mehboob Abdulrasool
	Mehboob Manji
	Gulam Kara
	Murtaza Aloo
	Mohamedfayaz Fazal
	Sajad Rai
	Liaqat Rai

We congratulate them and may Allah (SWT) give them all success.



Nakuru



The Nakuru Jamaat of Kenya, at its Annual General Meeting held on July 15, 1997, elected in the following Executive Committee Members:

Chairman	Hassan Fazal
Secretary	Munir Wali
Treasurer	Mohammed Jaffer
Member	M. Datto
Member	Mazir Khalfan
Trustee	Hussin A. Jaffer
Trustee	Hassan Fazal
Trustee	Mohammed Jaffer

Others appointed were:

Education Board Rep.	Munir Walji
Health Board Rep.	Mohammed Jaffer
Samachar Rep.	Munir Walji

We congratulate the above members and hope and pray Allah (SWT) successfully guides them to lead the community, Amen.

Trollhattan.

An election of office bearers took place at the Muslim Shia Församling (Community) Trollhättan, Sweden on 6 September, 1997. The following were nominated/elected for the next 2 years:

Chairman	Mahmoud Ladha
Vice Chairman	Sultan Govani
General Secretary	Shahid Abbas Ravjani
Hon. Treasurer	Shabbir Ali Ravjani
Member/Mukhi	Mehdi Bijani
Member	Dr. Ghulamabbas Rajpar
Member:	Hussian Rajpar

We congratulate them and may Allah (SWT) give them all success in their endeavours.

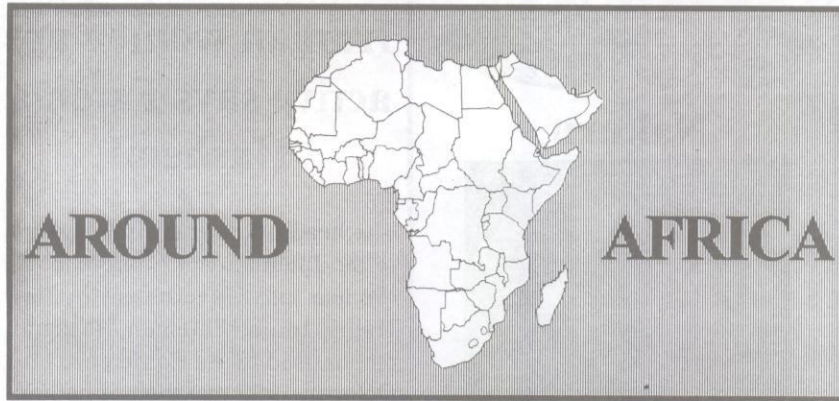
Iranian women are active says Fatema Hashemi

The head of the Iranian delegation to the International Conference on Women and Government in New Delhi, India, Fatemeh Hashemi, emphasised to the Conference on 1 October, 1997 that there is no limitation for Iranian women to choose their occupation.

She made the remark while addressing a Press Conference. She pointed out that Iranian women were not much involved in political affairs before the victory of the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, but that through encouragement by the country's religious and political officials, women are now an integral part of the social and political activities in the country. She said that Iran is trying to enhance the role of women in the social and political affairs of the country. On participation of Iranian women in state affairs, she pointed out that 100 women were on ballot for the fifth term of *Majlis*, a major jump over the 40 competing in the fourth term elections. On literacy rate of women in Iran, she said that only 36 percent of women were literate before the revolution while the rate stands at over 75 percent today.

She stressed that there are no career limitations for Iranian women, and said that women hold more than 50 percent of health and education related jobs in Iran. She also pointed out that the low rate of crimes against women in Iran is attributable to the dress for women which guarantees their safety. On family planning, she stated that Islam does not allow abortion but is not opposed to family planning.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "when a man dies, his acts stop, except for three: (In leaving) a running charity, a benefiting knowledge (for mankind) and a virtuous son who prays for him."



Our

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Local studies emphasised as Foundation Ceremony is held for Nairobi Academy

The Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony for the Nairobi Academy was held on 27 September, 1997. The Ceremony commenced with recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Aliakber H. Rashid, a Heidery Madressa student. The Interim Board Chairman, Ramzan Nanji, then outlined the progress of the project and presented future plans which include the building of a boys school and a nursery school within Nairobi's Lavington Complex. The Chairman of Nairobi Jamaat, Akber Karawalli, said the proposed project has the full backing of Nairobi Jamaat.

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani, commended the project and expressed hope that this would help to enhance both secular and religious education. He stressed on the need for education, especially higher education and made reference to two important new policies of the Federation due to financial constraints:

(1) That School Boards should start accumulating funds for sponsorship of their own students for higher education and that the established Boards at Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam should start such sponsorship with effect from the next fiscal year. The Arusha and Nairobi Boards should follow suit once their secondary level schools are established; and

(2) That the Federation will from the next fiscal year only sponsor students to higher education at local and regional institutes. Upcoming universities in Tanzania and existing universities in the region absolve the need to undertake 1st degree courses in costly western colleges. Students can easily migrate or achieve grants for the 2nd degree course after successful completion of the 1st degree course with excellent results.

The Master of Ceremonies, Mulla Mohammed Kassamali, then introduced the Chief Guest, Kenya's Assistant Minister for Research, Technical Training and Technology, Sajjad M. Rashid who, in his brief address, supported Mohammedbhai on the importance and need for higher education. He also hailed the new Education policy and stated that Educational Trust Funds had already been started in Mombasa to assist deserving students.

Finally the Foundation stone was laid by Sajjad Rashid before refreshments were served following which guests dispersed for Magribaen prayers.

CHB works hand in glove with South African Foundation

The Central Health Board (CHB) of the Supreme Council held a joint meeting in Dar es Salaam on 5 July, 1997 with the delegation from the Ahlul Bait (A.S.) Foundation of South Africa led by Seyyed Aftab Haider. In addition to the presence of the Supreme Council Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani and Vice Chairman, Mohamed Pirbhai the meeting was also attended by Ramzan M. Nanji, Chairman of Medical Board of Nairobi Jamaat and Gulamhussein Mukhtar, Chairman of Jaffery Charitable Hospital in Arusha.

During the meeting, the CHB and the South African Foundation agreed to work *hand in glove* particularly with regard to medical treatment sought by members in South Africa.

Medical facilities in South Africa are of a high standard comparable to any western country and treatment in South Africa is deemed to be cheaper.

Members who require treatment in Cape Town can contact the CHB for further information. The Ahlul Bait (A.S.) Foundation address is:

Dr. Maryam Navsa,
Ahlul Bait (A.S.) Foundation,
P.O. Box 42, Ottery, 7808,
Cape Town, South Africa.
Tel: 27 21 697 4933 (R);
27 21 696 3971/2 (O).
Fax: Off: 27 21 704 1581.
E-mail: Figaro@i africa.com or
AFOSA@global.co.za.

'The Community' continues to serve the community

It is one year since Nairobi's Haydari Madrassah sanctioned the production of a quarterly Magazine, 'The Community'. The magazine reflects on community related affairs and over one year it has improved in both, quality and content.

Produced under the editorship of Mohamedarif Suleman, a former editor of Knowledge Magazine and the patronage of Mulla Mohammed Kassamali, the magazine has touched on pertinent issues ranging from malpractices in the implementation of our faith, to the hosting of sports in Ramadhan and to the conduct of ladies in Khushali majlises. The January, 1997 issue focused on the visit of the then Iranian President Akber Hashimi Rafsanjani to Nairobi. In April, 1997 a comprehensive article touched upon Haj, coinciding with Id Ul Haj. The magazine also allows its readers to freely express their views.

Circulation is currently made to Nairobi, Mombasa, Dar es salaam, Kampala, Arusha, Tanga, Mwanza and New York Jamats. Commenting on the magazine, its editor said that the publication is driven by an urge of becoming an active participant in the dissipation of information, while allowing free expression of thought and views. He said the ultimate aim is to constructively educate community members on significant religious issues and to provide answers to common questions.

A ladies Editorial Board has just been formed under the Ladies Editor, Mrs. Gulbanu Suleiman to cater for the rising involvement of women in the publication's work. Besides communal affairs, the publication also contains articles on health, science, sports, psychology, to name a few. And it is also a children's favourite, what with all the competitions it runs.

Rizwan wins Dar Tennis tournament

Pairing with a new partner, Dar es Salaam's Rizwan Jaffer with Godfrey Teffe won the Mens Doubles event of the De Consult Open Tennis Championship held in Dar es Salaam from 15-20 September, 1997. After an easy 6-0, 6-1 first round win, the unseeded pair were stretched to three sets in the quarter-finals which they narrowly won by 6-7, 7-5, 7-6. In the semi-finals, the pair beat the top seeds 6-4, 6-4 and romped on to win the finals by 6-3, 6-4.

Another community player, Ali Dewji who was seeded one in the event reached the semi-finals of the Mens Singles before losing 3-6, 4-6 to Ugandan Bob Ndimwami (Seed No. 3). Dewji and his partner David Kasanga were top seeds in the doubles event in which they were eliminated in the semi-finals. The singles title was won by Morogoro's Sebastian Mtupili.

Other events contested for were the Mixed Doubles, Ladies Singles and Veterans Singles. The tournament attracted participants from Daresalaam, Morogoro, Uganda and Mwanza.

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Mombasa Jaffery Academy students excel at home and in Japan

Pupils from Mombasa's Jaffery Academy (Junior) scooped three silver awards in the 9th Kanagawa World 1997 Children's Exhibition held in Japan earlier this year. The International World event attracted 209 Kenyan entries out of which five pupils received gold and silver medals. All the three silver medals awarded went to Jaffery.

Three girls, Rehma Salim of Standard six, Zahra Sadak of Standard three and Arwa Juzer of Standard five, satisfied the examiners in this highly competitive world exhibition to scoop the prestigious silver medals.

The Japan exhibition is held biennially in Kanagawa to contribute to the

world's peace development.

In last year's exhibition, Jaffery Academy made its presence felt when Anand Thakkar of Grade 5 obtained a gold medal while his schoolmates Meera Thakkar of Grade 6 and Fehmida Samani, also of Grade 6 pocketed the silver medals.

On the local front, in domestic art, Jaffery Academy has in the past won the Coast Art Competition twice with its students clinching top honours. Three other students of the Academy, Fatema Dossajee (Grade 6), Mustafa Dossajee (Grade 4) and Amit Vasantkumar (Grade 5) on the other hand swept the top three prizes of the Kenya Wildlife Services Art Competition on Conservation of Marine Life.

Aasif Karim captains Kenya



Aasif Yusuf Karim (34) is the new Cricket Captain of Kenya, being the first Captain since Kenya gained One Day Test status (11th Country) in July, 1997 at the I.C.C. Meeting. Prior to that Karim was the Vice Captain in the last World Cup Series played in India when Kenya performed well to beat West Indies. Karim was the 4th Best Bowler (Economy Rate) in the 1996 World Cup.

Aasif undertook his first assignment when Kenya played against New Zealand earlier this month. Prior to this, in the only match Karim captained (as a stand-in) in 1993, he led Kenya to a convincing win against Test playing Zimbabwe. Karim is a wily spinner and a good opening batsman.

Kenya has qualified for the 1999 World Cup to be played in England but Karim's immediate assignment is the triangular tournament to be played in Nairobi from October 10 to 20, 1997 wherein Kenya will play against Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. Thereafter he will also lead Kenya against England A, from December 30 1997 to January 10 1998.

Karim, a former Davis Cup player for Kenya, plays for Nairobi Jaffery and has played for Kenya since 1980. He studied and graduated at Howard University, Washington DC (1985). He is an Insurance Broker by profession.

He is the son of Yusuf Karim of Mombasa Jamat. Yusuf was the Tennis Champion of Mombasa for 25 years (1951-77). Yusuf played Cricket for Kenya against South Africa in 1958 and Tennis in the 1974 2nd All Africa Games.

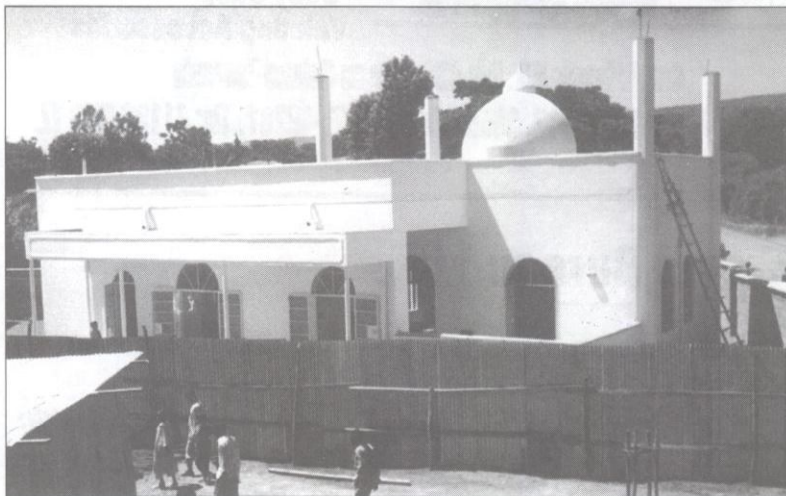
On learning of his appointment, an elated Karim said he was short of words to express his feelings and promised to do his best not to let down the selectors who placed faith in him. We wish him good luck.

A dream comes true in Nakuru

The Nakuru Jamat marked the completion of the first phase of its Development Project with a colourful ceremony on 28 September, 1997 that was attended by the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani along with many brethren from the host Jamaat, Nairobi and Mombasa. Among those who attended was Mombasa's Sajjad Rashid who is also Kenya's Assistant Minister for Research, Technical Training and Technology.

The new Mosque was officially opened by the Principal of Madressa Rasulakram, Sayyid Mourtadha Mourtadha while the plaque for the Imambara, the construction of which has progressed quite well, was unveiled by Sajjad Mohamedali Rashid. The Foundation for the block of flats was then laid by the Supreme Council Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani.

In addition to the Mosque, Imambara and flats, the Nakuru project is earmarked to also include a Musafarkhana and Alim's residence. The land area for the entire project spans over one acre and the cost for the entire project is forecast at about US\$ 300,000.



The new Nakuru Mosque prior to the fence of aluminium sheets being removed

Mumbai Cardiologist visits Tanzania amidst increasing prevalence of heart ailments

Through the efforts of the Central Health Board (CHB), an eminent Consultant Interventional Cardiologist from Mumbai, Dr. Shoaib F. Padaria, visited Dar es Salaam and Arusha from 12-15 September, 1997.

During his visit, the CHB organised a lecture on "Heart Diseases" at the Imambara in Dar es Salaam on 13 September, 1997 after Maghrebain Prayers. The lecture, which was delivered in Gujarati, was well attended. After the lecture, the visiting Cardiologist provided further elucidation on the subject by way of a question and answer session. A video cassette is available and CHB has distributed copies to all the Jamats in Africa, for its members to have access to it.

On the following day, Sunday 14 September, 1997 CHB organised a Medical (Cardiac) Camp at the Dar es Salaam Jamat Office where 33 out of 34 people who registered for this Camp attended and were given appropriate advice.

On Monday 15 September, 1997 Dr. Padaria travelled to Arusha where he delivered a lecture to community members there. The visit by Dr. Padaria came in wake of a warning by the Chairman of the Central Health Board, Aunali Khalfan, of the vulnerability of our community members to heart diseases. He has provided statistics that distinctly show the increasing prevalence of heart diseases in the community and the alarming rate of patients going abroad for treatment in recent years. Khalfan cautioned community members that precaution is better than cure and called upon members to indulge in regular physical exercises and to adopt less stressful lives with healthy diets.

The Dar es salaam programme for the visiting Cardiologist was well convened by Fazleabbas Dhirani who was assisted by Dr. Mahmood Hameer, Mohamed Mulla and Mohammed Sadiq Mandan.

Education Board consolidates Madagascar connection

The Council delegation, led by Chairman Mohamed Dhirani, which visited Madagascar from 15-22 September, 1997 consisted of nine people, three of whom were long serving members of the Education Board from Moshi and Arusha, namely Ahmed Daya, Roshanali Mamdani and Ali Sheriff.

After arrival on Monday 15 September, 1997 at Antananarivo, the Capital of Madagascar, the delegation divided into two groups to facilitate convenient three-day visits to the main Jamats of Mahajunga, Morondava and Tulear. The primary objective of the Education Board members was to meet Executive members of each Jamat, visit various projects and to address other members of these Jamats. The overtures imparted to the youths by the Education Board on behalf of the Africa Federation centred on the need to foster unity and to achieve higher education. The visiting delegation was particularly impressed by the young members serving as leaders of Jamats and their enthusiasm and vigil for development and progress in the field of secular and religious education.

By Thursday 18 September, 1997 all members of the visiting delegation returned from their visits to distant Jamats, well in time to attend the Triennial Territorial Council meeting which extended from 19-21 September, 1997. At the Conference, members of the Education Board were given a good opportunity to address delegates representing the constituent Jamaats of Madagascar, Reunion and Mauritius. The Education Board enlightened delegates about the significance of the Education Board, the services it renders, the comprehensive information on education courses and institutions it maintains and the Board's policy on higher education.

Considering the common goals and efforts being put in by Jamats of Madagascar, Kenya and Tanzania to set up viable Educational Facilities, the Chairman of the Territorial Council was invited to send a delegation of workers involved in the field of education to East Africa to see, analyse and comprehend the school projects in Nairobi, Arusha, Mombasa and Dar es Salaam. Such visits would also help towards exchanging experiences and drafting a uniform policy, probably with some exceptions, for our schools.

In all, the visit by the Education Board members to Madagascar helped to consolidate ties which in due course is expected to increase affiliation.

Ahmed Rattansi notches a hole in one

Its not often that one hears of an accomplished 'hole in one' stroke in golf but so it was for Ahmed Rattansi who will long cherish the moment he putt the ball directly from a stroke off the tee on Hole 12 (119 metres, par 3) of the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club golf course.

It is normally said that half of golf is fun and the other half is putting. But for Ahmed, a former national badminton Champion, the whole of golf that day meant nothing but satisfaction of producing a 'hole in one' stroke. Hole 12 bore witness to his wholesome feat!

When yours truly asked him if he was thinking of repeating his feat, he said, "its not that easy....it could happen again....but one never can say for sure." It appears that even the holes on a golf course have adapted to the saying that "once bitten, twice shy."

Planning to study in Kampala?

Professor Syed Abidi of Makerere University, Kampala (Uganda) has informed us that a good number of students from our Community applied for admission to Makerere University this year but most of them could not get places as their "A" level results were not available.

It is therefore important for all concerned to note that the normal admission process for selecting foreign students at Makerere University starts around April and May each year. The last date for submission of applications for admission is 31 May and the first meeting of the Admission Board takes place in mid-June. No applications for admission are entertained if certified "A" and "O" level results are not enclosed with the applications.

Those students wishing to join Makerere University in 1998 are advised to attempt GCE "A" Examinations in January, 1998 so that their results are available in good time to apply by 31 May, 1998. If their results are good, candidates can apply directly or through the Board by 20 May, 1998. Admission forms can be obtained from local Jamaats or the Board and should reach Syed Abidi by 31 May, 1998.

For further information, prospective candidates may contact the local Board representative, Career Library (if established), Hon. Secretary of KSI Education Board or Syed Abidi on the following address:

Prof. Syed A.H. Abidi
Director, East African School of
Library and Information Science,
Makerere University
P.O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda.
Tel: Off-041 531530
Ref:-041 554342
Fax: 041 235002
E-Mail: easilis@inul.com

For quick response and to facilitate clarifications (when and if needed), candidates are advised to give their telephone, telefax and e-mail address in their communications.

Girl students wishing to study at Makerere will be pleased to know that the Kampala Jamaat has agreed to provide free basic accommodation for at least two girls (at any one time) from our community who wish to undertake Degree courses at Makerere University.

However if only one girl manages to get admission, she may be advised to stay at the girl's hostel within the campus (where Syed Abidi and his family are also resident). Accommodation sought at the campus will however be at a girl's own expense.

The months of June and July, 1997 were busy months at the Arusha Shia Centre with seven Majalis being held there. Also organised during these months were the Maulidi event for males, which was held on 20 July, 1997 with Allama Seyyid Akhter Rizvi and his son Murtadha attending. The Maulidi function for women was held on 22 July, 1997. Both functions were well attended. On 26 July, 1997 the adult female Class from the Shia Centre along with a selected Qasida Group, all numbering thirty, were invited by the Arusha Jamaat ladies group to participate in their weekly session. This was unprecedented and noteworthy was the fact that the entire programme was conducted in Kiswahili.

The Shia Centre's madressa has meanwhile proved popular with students. Despite resistance to accept more madressa students, owing to persistent

Mehfil-E-Murtaza Elections

At the last Annual General Meeting of the Mehfil-E-Murtaza held on 3 May, 1997 the following were elected into the managing Committee for 1997-99 term:

President	Hussein I Haji (Shaney)
Vice President	Mohamed Jaffer K.G.
Hon. Secretary	Hassan A. Hussein
Hon. Treasurer	Muslim Hassanali
Mukhi	Ramzanali Y. Morbiwala
Kamadia	Iqbal M. Jaffer Khaku
Member	Anverali M. Rajpar
Member	Aliraza T. Lakhani
Member	Hussein M. Alibhai
Member	Mohamed Fazal

The Jamat can be contacted on the following E-mail address: mehfil@khi.compol.com

Islamic Laws book available

A further supply of Risalas of our Marja Ayatullah Al uzama Syed Ali al-Husaini Seestani, Islamic laws (English Version of Taudhihul masae'l) has been received by the Secretariat.

This can be obtained from the Africa Federation Secretariat at the price of T. Shs. 5,000/= per copy.

Arusha Shia Centre excels but could do with some financial assistance

parental pressure, more students have now been enrolled. There are now 50 boys and 53 girl students studying in the madressa. The two class rooms are inadequate and arrangements are being made to accommodate the extra students. For the students, 150 metres of cloth material has been donated for uniforms which were expected to be stitched by the Shia Centre's own adult students during their dress making classes-- in a true spirit of self reliance!

Meanwhile the Centre's borehole project has been delayed owing to absence of reliable drilling facilities. The Centre's dispensary Project has also been kept in abeyance pending a good donor. To encourage donors, the Centre now plans to maintain an explicit breakdown of its ever increasing recurrent expenditure so that specific areas where funds are lacking are made known to potential donors.

From the Education Board...on selecting one's university

There is no doubt that good degrees from reputable western universities (WU) do carry more weight than those from local, regional or Indian Universities (LR&IU). But the fact remains that students with excellent results from these LR&IU are absorbed in WU for their 2nd degree with 75-90% grant/scholarship awards.

WU are between two or three times more expensive than LR&IU and for those who cannot afford the costs but have achieved high grades, it would be advisable to seek admission in these recognised LR&IU in order to stretch the available financial resources of their sponsors.

To elucidate this, the Supreme Council's Education Board Secretariat has quoted two examples:

1. An Engineer got his 1st degree in the University of Nairobi and the 2nd degree in the UK. He practised in Nairobi for over 15 years and was very well conversant in British standards. He migrated to Australia, where they use British Standards but still his degree and experience was not recognised. He managed to get employment at a very low salary for the initial period of 18 months and at the same time he sat for the local registration exams which he passed with flying colours. Only after getting the local Australian registration was he able to get a better job. In essence, his UK Certificate was not really useful in Australia.

2. Another Engineer did her 1st degree in Norway and the 2nd degree at Makerere University in Uganda. She got a good job with a Norwegian based company in Kampala, Uganda. When asked why she did her 2nd degree in a third world country, she admitted that she got

Education Board plans ahead with careful eye on finances

In its third year of the current term, the Education Board of the Supreme Council is facing serious financial difficulties. The tight financial situation has been aggravated by the fact that some students who have completed their studies have not been expeditious in repaying their loans despite actually being in a position to easily effect repayment. To undertake its activities effectively, the Board has hence been compelled to rely on philanthropists, that is until the Foundation Fund launched by the Supreme Council is available for financing students.

The current financial situation of the education loan scheme is as follows:

Total loan to 27 students from 1985	US\$ 375,000
Full/partial repayment from students to date	US\$ 75,000
Loan to students who were studying up to 1996/97	US\$ 220,000
Expected loan amount to ALL students during 1997/98	US\$ 150,000
Outstanding Loan amount as at the fiscal year 1997/98	US\$ 670,000

These figures indicate that unless repayments are made promptly and other drastic measures are taken, the loan scheme will very soon become a serious financial burden on the Education Board and the Federation. If this trend continues, the Board and the Federation will have to award annual loan amounts in excess of US\$ 250-300,000 i.e. US\$ one million every 3 to 4 years. This certainly cannot continue and serious steps must be undertaken to alleviate the financial constraints.

The Education Board and the Africa

more experience at Makerere than in Norway.

From the above it is evident that as long as a student really wants to study and not migrate, there is no justification for selecting WU against LR&IU. To optimise the usage of its limited financial resources, the Education Board is now encouraging deserving students to seek admission in LR&IU

Federation are trying their best to alleviate this problem and have embarked upon two major schemes detailed below, amongst others, to reduce the financial onus:

1. Collect and invest the Foundation Funds (anticipated amount is US\$ 2 million). The maximum returns are expected in another 3-4 years time and would approximately be US\$ 120,000 per year considering an annual return of 6%. Not all will be utilised for education but the bulk of it could be used for the loan scheme.

2. Implement the Education Insurance Policy Project during this fiscal year. This is expected to earn an approximate amount of US\$ 40-50,000 per year after 3-4 years.

Under the circumstances, it is evident that something serious has to be done to enable the Education Board to continue at its present pace. The Board has called upon community members to air their views and opinions on this subject so as to enable them to formulate a policy for presentation at the next Supreme Council Conference to be held in April, 1998. In the absence of any views, the Secretariat of the Board will present its recommendations to the Conference for implementation.

Views and opinions should be submitted to the Education Board Secretariat by 20 December, 1997. Suggestions should be sent to:

The Education Board,
P.O. Box 66545,
Nairobi, Kenya.

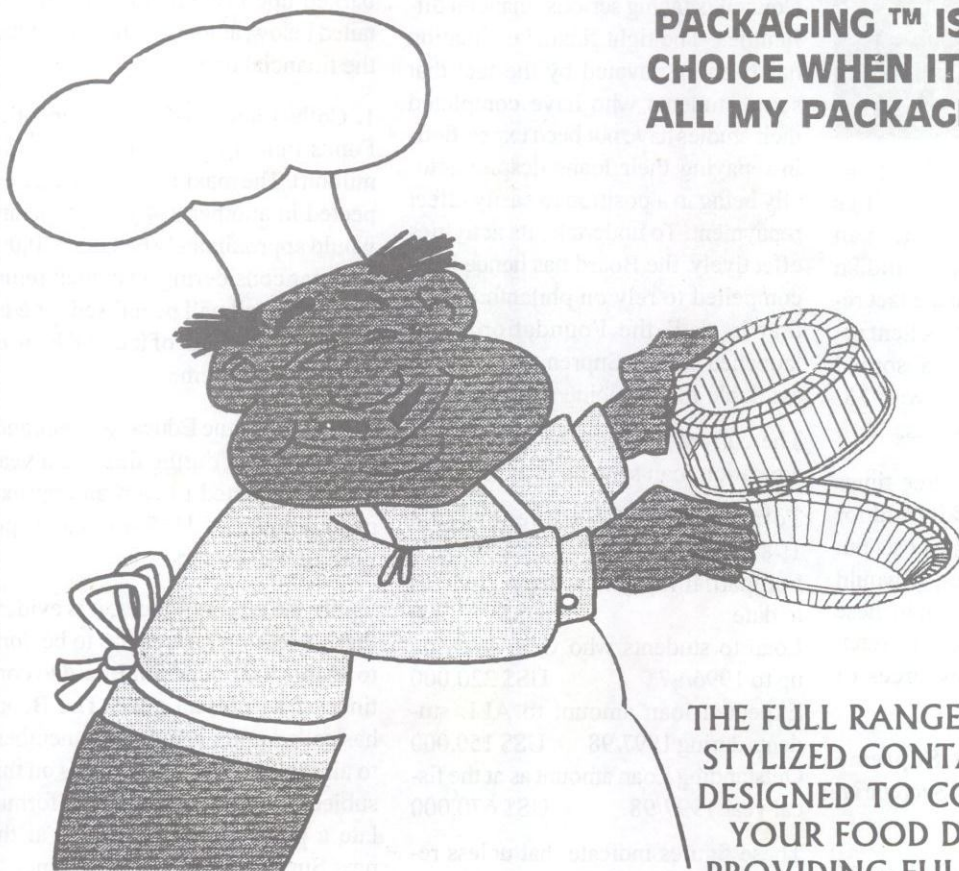
FAX: 337703, 448948, 335435

to enable the loan scheme to support more students. For example, a loan of Stg 2,000 (US \$ 3000) is very small for WU but is nearly 50% of the total cost or more for the LR&IU.

The Education Board is pleased to report that some deserving students who have already selected LR&IU are getting good support from the Board.

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SABIRA prevails on Tanzania ladies golf scene



Sabira being presented with the Tanzania Open Amateur Golf trophy at the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club

Sabira Dewji, Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club's two handicapper, established herself as a leading lady golfer in Tanzania when she won the 28th Tanzania Amateur Open golf championship in Dar es Salaam for the second consecutive year. Fifty golfers took part in the championship with Uganda and Zambia fielding six golfers each.

She had a stiff challenge from last year's runners-up, Sophia Viggo from Moshi who also managed to retain the runners-up title. Sabira finished the 36 holes tourney with a gross score of 150 against Sophia's 152.

Sabira has featured prominently on the local ladies golf scene and her major achievements date back to 1995/96 when she emerged runner-up in the Nigeria Open. She has contested twice, in 1996 and 1997, in the Nissan UAE Ladies Amateur Open events. In 1996 she was fourth while this year she emerged in third place.

In 1996 she also participated in the Dubai ladies Open where she emerged fifth and in the same year she took third place in the Kenya Open. Her best round of golf has been 4 *under par* at the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club golf course. Another good round she has had was 1 *under par* in Lagos, Nigeria at the Ikoyi golf club.

Dar braces for Eighth Sports Festival

Preparations are well underway in Dar es Salaam to host the Eighth KSISC Sports festival which will be held in Dar es Salaam from December 22-28, 1997. The response has been tremendous and 22 Jamats from around the world have confirmed participation. These are Dar es Salaam (host), Mtwara, Kigoma, New York, Tanga, Morogoro, Moshi, Zanzibar, Songea, Nairobi, Arusha, Mombasa, Mwanza, Kampala, Karachi, Aden, Toronto, Allentown, Dubai, Birmingham, Stanmore, London.

The events to be contested for are cricket, volleyball, football, squash, golf and table tennis.

The Organising Committee is working hard to ensure that participants are well catered for. The Committee, which has met six times, has confirmed the availability of grounds for all the games and is making final preparations to accommodate participants. The Committee consists of Bashir Tejani (Convenor), Mahmood Panju (Secretary), Kassamali Bhalloo (Treasurer),

Mahmood Rahim (Grounds), Afzal Peera (Accommodation), Shabbir Esmail (Catering), Shabbir Hameer (Transport) and Hussein Dato (Fund Raising).

The Participation Fees for the event are as follows:-

- a) Participants requiring accommodation = \$ 100
- b) Participants not requiring accommodation = \$ 50
- c) Non-participants requiring accommodation = \$200

The Organising Committee has meanwhile prepared new forms (finally revised) to update information relating to outside teams in order to facilitate final preparations. The detailed revised forms (earlier sent by Jamat) calls for information on the number of participants in different sports, number of participants who will require accommodation, name and details of contact person, some additional information for the preparation of the Festival brochure, etc. The deadline for submission of these forms is

31 October, 1997.

Communication by participating Jamaats or any information sought pertaining to the Sports festival should be addressed to:-

The Secretary
Organizing Committee
KSISC Sports Festival
Mahmood A. Panju
Tel: 0811 324 885
Fax: 866001
E-Mail: MIL786@Raha.com.

The idea of organising a sports festival involving our youths was first conceived in 1984. Since then there have been seven festivals and while the original intention was to organise this event annually, this was found to be difficult because of the major costs involved and extensive preparations required for each festival. As a result the event is now organised biennially.

Dar es Salaam now looks forward to the forthcoming event which once again will see the best of our sportsmen contesting for glories.

Inna Lillahi wa Inna Elaihi Rajioon

Hussein Mulla (HM) Nasser, Mombasa

The sad death of Alhaj Hussein Mulla (HM) Nasser of Mombasa occurred in London on Monday 1 September, 1997 (28th Rabi ul-Aakhar, 1418). He was buried on Tuesday 2 September, 1997 at Watford Cemetery, London. Marhum had undergone a major heart surgery at the Papworth Hospital in Cambridge prior to his death.

Marhum Hussein H.M. Nasser was a great scholar and fluent in many languages including Farsi. He tutored many of our Communities alims and zakirs. Marhum also took a keen interest in Astronomy and for many years calculated the probable date for crescent sighting. This valuable information was beneficial to all Islamic Calendar printers, Jamats and the Supreme Council.

Rajabali Kassamali Ramji "RAKARA" Tuliar, Madagascar

We have been notified by Conseil regional des khojas of India Ocean that Alhaj Rajabalibhai passed away on 14 June, 1997 in Tuliar. Rajabalibhai's death is not a loss to his family only but to the entire Community.

He was the President of Tuliar Jamat for fourteen years and had worked very hard for the development and progress of our brothers in Madagascar as a whole. His excellent achievement in various fields of Community work earned him a Husainy Medal from the Conseil Regional.

In his capacity as President of Conseil Regional des Khoja of India Ocean for three years he contributed tremendously to the well being of all Jamats in Madagascar and earned valuable support from all Jamats during the tenure of his office. Marhum Rajabalibhai was also a well known figure among non community members who looked at him with great respect. The Government of Malagasy even bestowed the title "Shevalier de Lorthar" on the late Rajabalibhai for his exemplary services to the Governmen.

Moulana Syed Muhammad Zaki, Lucknow

On Tuesday 29 July 1997, the eve of 24 Rabi-ul-Awwal, 1418, **Tajul Ulama Moulana Syed Muhammad Zaki**, Mujtahid passed away in Lucknow after a short illness. He was 88.

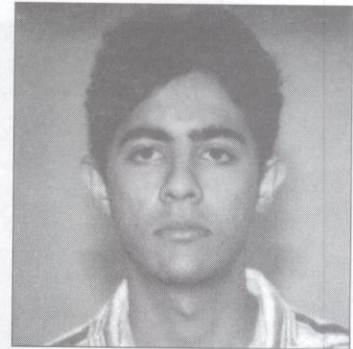
He is the father of Syed Hamidul Hassan Mujtahid, the Principal of Nazmiya College, Lucknow. Marhoom was buried on 30 July, 1997.

Hujjatul Islam Wal Muslimeen Shaikh Abbas Ali Najafi, Sindh, Pakistan

Hujjatul Islam Wal Muslimeen Shaikh Abbas Ali Najafi passed away on 1 August 1997, 26 Rabi ul Awwal 1418. Marhoom was the representative of Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali Al Hussaini Sistani in the interior of Sindh, Pakistan. He was also the Principal of Danishgah-e-Jafferiah, Vaghreji, Sindh.

We pray to Allah (s.w.t) behakke Chaharda Masummen (a.s.) that He grant Marhum maghferat and rest the souls of all the above deceased amongst His chosen ones and that He grant their families solace to sustain their great loss. Let us remember all the Marhums with Sura-e-Fateha.

Sajjad Mamdani excels



Sajjad Anwer Mamdani (19) of Dar es Salaam has been notching a string of achievements in his educational career. Born in Dar es Salaam on 18 July, 1997, Sajjad studied at the International School of Tanganyika (IST). He completed his Grade 12 in May, 1996 following which he pursued the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma at the same school for a further two years.

The courses he took at the higher level were psychology, kiswahili and geography while at the subsidiary level he studied environmental systems, english, maths and philosophy. He passed the IB Diploma and graduated on 18 May, 1996.

From August 1996 to February 1997 he undertook Pilot Training for a Private Pilot License (PPL) with the Flying Angels Flight Academy Ltd. He then obtained a 80% Wittenberg University scholarship and in January, 1996 under the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, he achieved bronze and silver awards.

On the sporting side he was designated the Most Valuable Player (MVP) title for School Softball team in May 1996. In February, 1997 he climbed to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro and has a certificate to support his claim. He is also a member of Union Sports Club, Dar es Salaam and the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Sports Club.

Africa Federation bolsters Madagascar nexus

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani accompanied by seven delegates travelled to Madagascar from 15 to 22 September, 1997 where they visited various Jamaats and also attended the annual Conference of the Council regional Des Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Jamats de L'Ocean Indian at Antananarivo.

The delegation travelled from Nairobi on 15 September, 1997 to Madagascar and the following day they divided into two groups in order to be able to visit more Jamaats. One group was led by Bwana Ali Sheriff which travelled to Morondava and Tulier where they addressed the Jamaats and visited the new schools at both places. At Tulier, they also visited the new Musafarkhana and Madressa which are expected to be officially opened on 30 October, 1997.

The second group was led by the Chairman, Mohamedbhai Dhirani. This group travelled by air to Majunga where they visited the construction site of the new public dispensary being built by the Jamaat as well as our Community school which commenced operating this year. The Jamaat has also constructed a *Bewakhana* (home for widows) with 21 self-contained rooms, each of which has all the basic essential amenities. At present 11 widows are accommodated there which is well below the available capacity and in view of this the Chairman advised the Regional Council in its Conference not to build a new *Bewakhana* anywhere else until the existent one enjoyed good occupancy.

The delegation also visited the Council's printing press and the Al-Noor Madressa along with the extension being carried out to the Imambara there. At night, on the same day, the Chairman addressed the Jamaat and conveyed to them the solicitude that the Africa Federation has for the people of Madagascar.

The following day the Chairman's group travelled by car to Marvai which is about 90km away from Majunga. In Marvai there is a small Jamaat. Our Mosque there is historic, being the first Mosque to be built in Madagascar. After the visiting delegation met community members, the delegation travelled a further 150km to Maivatana rice producing centre where the small Jamaat has all religious facilities in place along with a resident Alim. Here the visiting delegation spent the night after meeting Jamaat members.

On the following day the delegation returned by car to Antananarivo for the Conference that was scheduled to begin on Friday. At the Conference, the retiring Chairman, Asgher Hirani out-

lined the activities of the Council in his opening address. Following the opening address, the agenda included the presentation of reports by the Education Board, Bilal Muslim Mission along with reports on Tabligh and on properties belonging to the Council.

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamed Dhirani emphasised on the advantages that accrue from a united community in Africa and praised the Madagascar Jamaat for its efforts towards secular and religious progress.

With Asgher Hirani retiring from the Chair, the elections were contested by two contestants namely Roshan Walli

(continued on page 42)



The new Chairman of the Madagascar Regional Council, Moajiz Kamis with the Africa Federation Chairman, Mohamed Dhirani on his right and former Chairman, Asgher Hirani (face partly turned) on his left.



Delegate of Majunga Jamat addressing the Conference

Retrospective jottings from the Madagascar Council and Bilal Muslim Mission

The Association Council Regional Des Khoja Shia Ithnaashery Jamates De L'Ocean Indian - Antananarivo, Madagascar has undertaken various tasks to improve living standards and enhance religion within and outside the community.

After a four man delegation consisting of Asgher Jaffer, Baqir Vasram, Razaali Kaday and Aqil Jaffer participated in last year's Supreme Council Meeting held in April, 1996 in Nairobi they then travelled to India where seven Maulanas were recruited for Madagascar Jamaats.

On 20 August, 1997 the Madagascar Council organised a crash course in religious knowledge at the Antananarivo Imambargah and thereafter arrangements were also made for some students to attend a crash course in Nakuru, Kenya in December, 1996.

At the Musafarkhana, the Council has now made it obligatory for ladies to dress in a hijab and meanwhile its Education Board has opened computer classes for girls.

In Majunga, the Widows and Orphans home was opened on 15 December, 1996 by the family of Janmohamed Kermali in the presence of also the Tabligh Committee. The Council awarded a 'Huseini Medal' to the President of Majunga Jamat, Munis Nura for his great involvement in this project.

The President of the World Federation, Mulla Asghar visited Madagascar in May, 1997. He was taken around to different Jamats including Tamataw, Majunga, Tulear and Morondava. During his visit, Mulla laid the foundation stone for a dispensary which is located adjacent to the community's cemetery in Majunga.

A reception was held in honour of Mulla Asghar at Antananarivo where he was awarded the 'Mohammadi Medal' in appreciation of his 40 years of service to the community.

At Morondava the family of Jiwanbhai Premji donated a large piece of land

on which the family of Esufali Din Mohamed built a beautiful madressa and a flat. On the occasion of the opening ceremony of these buildings, the Council presented Huseini medals to the President of Morondava Jamat, Iqbal Kamis and Ali Husein Dinmohamed. It also presented the Mohammedi medal to the widow of Marhum Jiwan Premji, Hajiyani Kulsumbai. At the same occasion, a foundation stone for a dispensary was laid on land donated by the Hasham Ramji family.

Among the important projects in the pipeline are the building of a Hawzah, schools and construction of a new building to replace the old one at Majunga.

Bilal Muslim Mission

The Institute Islamique de Madagascar (NISMA) --the Bilal Muslim Mission in Madagascar has during the past one year increased its centres from 20 to 24 while converts have increased from 2800 to 6685.

In the past year, NISMA has built three mosques and schools in Tsarinetso, Nato and Andranotsara while a fourth school will soon be opened at Anchirabe. In Tulear a mosque, Imambargah and a Teacher's quarter are under construction.

In August this year, NISMA arranged a crash religious course for adults at Mahavelo. A Seminar for Muballighs was also held in July this year under the leadership of Syed Ali Ashraf Saheb and it is now planned to hold a competition in November, 1997 on recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Meanwhile tabligh over radio which was stopped in 1995 is now aired over Majunga and Anchirabe radio.

Other activity reports include:

Madressa Fatematu Zehra (A.S.) --- this is a girls madressa where typing, dress-making and cooking are also taught. 134 girls have qualified here and the madressa is functioning well.

Al-Mustafa Centre -- this is a big complex consisting of a library, namaz and

Conference hall. This was opened by Mulla Asghar in May this year.

Islamic Centre Al-Noor (Hauza)-- some 28 Muballigh have qualified from this Hauza and it is expected that seven more teachers will qualify following which they will be posted to different centres.

This year NISMA was also actively involved in providing financial and moral support to victims of the cyclone that hit Madagascar.

AF bolsters Madagascar

nexus.....

(...from page 41)

and Moajez Kamis. A secret ballot took place in which Moajez won by a majority of votes.

During the visit, the visiting delegation conferred with local officials on various issues of strategic importance. Prior to leaving Madagascar, the Africa Federation Chairman accompanied the new Chairman of the Madagascar Regional Council to the main port city of Tamatavo where the new Chairman resides. There they were met by members of the Jamat and a reception with lunch was arranged at the Jamaat's temporary centre.

The two Chairmen then visited the new Mosque, Imambara, Madressa, Musafarkhana and Molvis residence which are currently being constructed and fully sponsored by the new Territorial Council Chairman. The Complex, which has two minarets and a blue dome, is expected to be ready for use in a couple of months.

The visit by the Africa Federation to Madagascar helped to foster and consolidate relations. The delegation included the Vice Chairman of the World Federation, Manzoor Kanani, both the Hon. Secretaries of the Supreme Council, Mohamed Somji and Asgher Dhanji along with Bwana Ali Sheriff, Arusha, Ahmed Daya and Roshan Mamdani, Moshi, Gulamabbas Merali Alibhai, Dar es Salaam and Barkat Rajani, Nairobi.

Minhal Kara passes away



A dedicated volunteer and active youth of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Minhal Mustafa Kara (16) passed away in a tragic car accident on 16 September, 1997, 13 Jamaad ul Awwal 1418 in Glasgow, Scotland.

Minhal had the charisma to enliven the atmosphere with his presence and his enthusiasm in serving fellow community members was always an encouragement to other youths.

He was studying in Glasgow's Park Mains High School, Erskine at the time of his death. A friend who survived the accident said, "he was a dead brainy student."

We pray to Allah (s.w.t) behakke Chaharda Masummen (a.s.) that He grant Marhum maghferat and rest his soul amongst His chosen ones and that He grant his family solace to sustain their great loss. Let us remember Marhum with Sura-e-Fateha.

Amir Somji heads Arusha's Education portfolio

The Arusha Jamaat has nominated Amirali Somji to be the Chairman of its Education sub committee following the death of past Chairman., Bashir Lalji in July this year.

Amir is a long serving member of Arusha Jamat, having served it in various capacities. He has also patronised various schools in Arusha district thereby making him an ideal choice for this important position.

And now a word from the Editor: *Amir is a golf addict. Listen to everything he says but don't be tempted into pursuing a career in golf!*

Federation Samachar

"Enjoy your medical rights" Khalfan tells community

The Chairman of the Central Health Board (CHB) of the Africa Federation, Aunali Khalfan has reiterated to all community members that special facilities and rates can be availed to them when they need to go overseas for medical treatment.

He expressed disappointment that despite adequate publicity of the existent special arrangements available for medical treatment overseas, some community members are still unaware and continue to endure difficulties when seeking treatment overseas. He also expressed regret that despite special rates being arranged in some hospitals, members travelling independently continue to pay through their nose for treatments.

The CHB Chairman has said that the following institutions in England, India and South Africa should be contacted directly or through the CHB Zonal Representative or even through the CHB itself for assistance and guidance:

Dr. Mohamed Taki Walji
Chairman, Medical Advisory Board
World Federation of KSIMC
106/108 Anderton Park Road,
Moseley
Birmingham B13 9DS
United Kingdom.
Tel: (44 121) 449 2788
Fax: (44 121) 449 5988

Alhaj Mohib Ali Nasser
Chairman, Imaan Foundation
Palekar Chambers, 1st Floor
12 First Marine Street
Mumbai 400 002
India.
Tel: (91 22) 201 8378/209 0360/206 8800
Fax: (91 22) 209 0400/373 8703

Dr. Mariam Navsa
Ahlul Bait Medical Support Group
(S.A.)
P.O. Box 42, Ottery, 7808
Cape Town
South Africa.
Tel: (27 21) 696 3971/3972
Fax: (27 21) 704 1581

Thank you Mohamedtaki Rawji Educational Trust

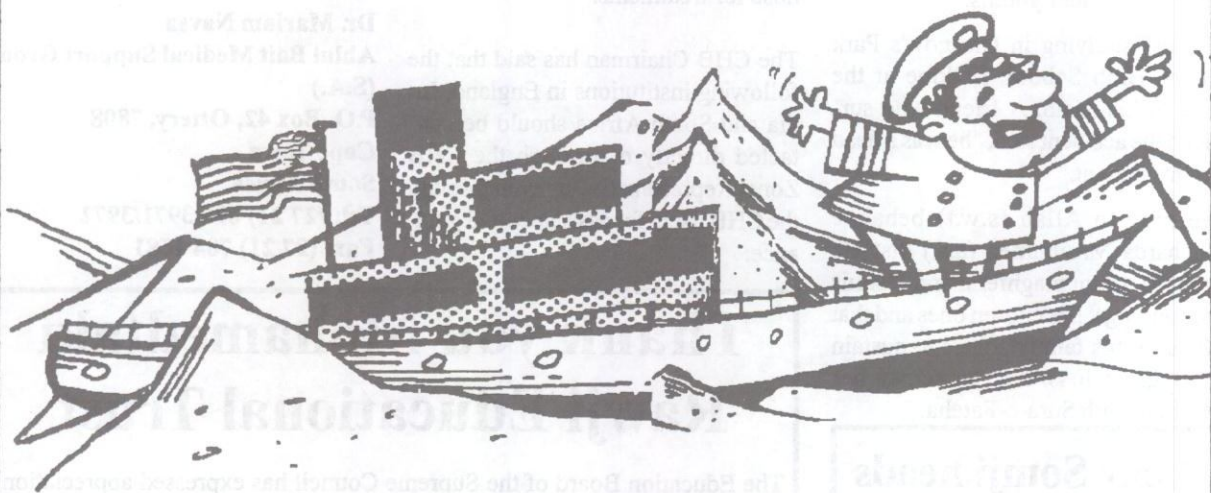
The Education Board of the Supreme Council has expressed appreciation to the Mohamedtaki Rawji Educational Trust for its altruistic financial support to deserving community students pursuing higher education. The appreciation made by Chairman, Husein Rashid on behalf of the Education Board reads as follows:

"The Secretariat of the Education Board of the Africa Federation wishes to record its deep appreciation to the Alhaj Mohamedtaki Rawji Educational Trust for the excellent and timely financial support accorded to the Board.

The Secretariat has enjoyed a very cordial relationship with Brother Rizwan Rawji, a trustee of the Alhaj Mohamedtaki Rawji Education Trust and acknowledges his prompt financial assistance for deserving and bright students who are unable to secure grants elsewhere. Brother Rizwan has fully entrusted the Secretariat of the Education Board to exercise its discretion with regard to selection criteria, course, duration and college so as to ensure optimum utilisation of funds."

There is an old Epitaph (inscription on one's grave) which says: "What I gave, I have; what I spent, I had; what I kept, I lost." There are so many ordinary situations in life for us to do good; why then wait for the extraordinary circumstances?

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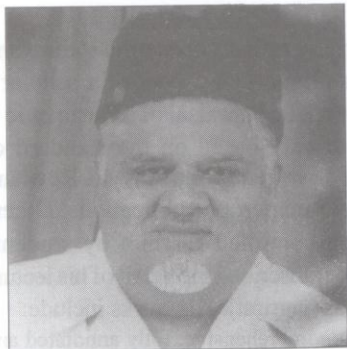
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Inna Lillahi wa Inna Elaihi Rajioon

Rustambhai Ladha, Bukoba



A well known community personality, Rustambhai Ladha passed away on Saturday 9 August, 1997 at Bukoba. He was well known not only to our Community but also to non-community members including Government officials.

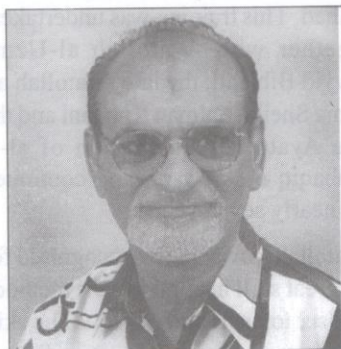
Rustambhai started his services to the Community at an early age when he joined the Volunteer Corps. Thereafter he worked with various committees of the Jamat before eventually becoming the Chairman of the Jamat.

He was a driving force behind many Jamat projects for which he not only contributed generously but also spared much of his valuable time. The deceased also assisted in building mosques and madressas for our many brothers in Islam.

His benevolence, valuable counsel and vast experience in many fields was of great benefit to one and many in Bukoba and elsewhere. Much of his generosity came to light after his passing away.

Rustambhai made his presence felt on any occasion be it a sorrowful or joyful one. His death at age of 61 years is not only a loss to the Ladha Family but to Kagera Region in general and to the community at large. We pray to Allah (s.w.t) behakke Chaharda Masummen (a.s.) that He grant Marhum maghferat and rest his soul amongst His chosen ones and that He grant Marhum's family solace to sustain this great loss. Let us remember Marhum with Sura-e-Fateha.

Mohamed Virani Dar es Salaam



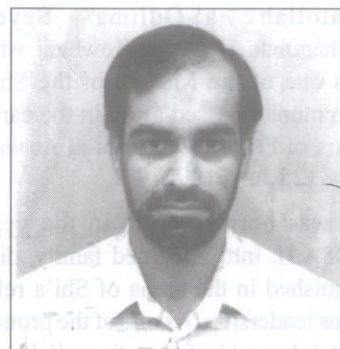
A prominent community philanthropist, Mohamed F. Virani (68) passed away on 13 September, 1997 in Dar es Salaam. Many find it hard to comprehend that a household name within the community is now no more.

Late Mohamedbhai served the community in various committees and was once a member of Dar es Salaam Jamaat. He was an ardent supporter of soccer in the country having sponsored various football clubs including one of the best teams in Tanzania, Young Africans. He was also one of the country's top Motor rally drivers, a sport which won him many trophies over the past few years. His last meritorious performance, when he emerged overall winner, was in the Pepsi-Cola 500km Rally in February, 1996.

Marhum Virani who owned the Bobby Soap factory, Zahara Bottlers and Rocky Cooking Oil factory had a very pleasant personality. His amiable nature naturally drew him towards the needy and he also supported many community projects including those of the Africa Federation.

Born in Ndanda in Masasi district, Mtwara region on 30 July, 1939 Virani is survived by a widow and two sons. His death was prominently covered by local newspapers and television stations which acclaimed him for his contribution towards sports development in Tanzania. We pray to Allah (s.w.t) behakke Chaharda Masummen (a.s.) that He grant Marhum maghferat and rest his soul amongst His chosen ones and that He grants his family solace to sustain this great loss. Let us remember Marhum with Sura-e-Fateha.

Bashir Lalji Arusha



It was with great shock and sadness that the community received the death of Bashir Mohamedhusein Lalji of Arusha on 3 July, 1997 (27 Safar, 1418). He will be sadly missed by his family, Arusha Jamaat and the Community at large.

Marhum Bashir was born in Zanzibar on 19 December, 1952. He attained his primary education on the island and migrated to Arusha in December, 1967 where he completed his secondary education in 1970.

Late Bashir took a very active part in Community affairs. He served Arusha Jamaat in various capacities and was its Vice-Chairman in 1983/84. In May 1995, he became Chairman of the Educational Institutions of Arusha Jamaat, a post which he held until his death. Late Bashir previously also taught at the madressa and he was an assistant headmaster at one time. He was also an active member of Golden Crescent Group, having even served the Group as a District Director for one year.

Late Bashir was a very keen sportsman. At the time of his death, he was the Captain of Kilimeru Gymkhana and his sporting abilities were acknowledged by the Supreme Council which honoured him with the Annual Sportsman of the Year Award (Abul Fazal Trophy) in 1974.

Bashir was the third born in a family of six. He is survived by a wife, three sons and two daughters. We pray to Allah (s.w.t) Behakke Chaharda Masoomen (a.s.) that He grant Marhum maghferat and rest his soul in eternal peace. Let us remember Marhum with Sura-e-Fateha.

Inna Lillahi wa Inna Elaihi Rajioon Ayatollah al-Odlima Seyed Mohammad Hossaini Rowhani passes away

Ayatollah al-Odlima Seyed Mohammad Hossaini Rowhani who was one of the Marja'e of the Shia Community passed away in the early hours of Friday 19th Rabi-al Awwal, 1418 (25 July, 1997).

He was born in Qum in the year 1338A.H. into a learned family, distinguished in the arena of Shi'a religious leadership. As one of the prominent 'ulama his father, in collaboration with Ayatollah al-Uzma Sheikh 'Abd al-Karim al-Ha'iri al-Yazdi, played an active role in the establishment of the Hawza 'Ilmiya in that city. He was renowned for his asceticism and scrupulous piety.

HIS EDUCATION

Around the year 1355 A.H. he resolved to go to Iraq to complete his religious education. Leaving family and relatives behind, he set out for Karbala' to complete his intermediate studies under that great marj'a, the late Ayatollah al-Uzma Muhammad Hadi Milani. After the istikhara of a venerable 'alim in Karbala had confirmed his suitability to pursue his chosen career, Sayyid Rowhani proceeded to Najaf to study at a higher level.

There he attended the lectures of the most eminent and distinguished scholars of shari'ah such as Sheikh Muhammad Husayn al-Isfahani al-Gharwi and Sheikh Muhammad Rida Al Ya Sin. His teachers, sensing their student's penetrating intelligence and unusual academic maturity took particular care over his training. Despite Sheikh al-Isfahani's well known reputation for never repeating anything, he once delivered an entire lesson a second time for the benefit of his pupil Sayyid Rowhani who had not been present on the first occasion

He later requested permission to pursue his studies at advanced levels under his eminence the late Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khu'i. So began the relationship between student and teacher and the initiation of the serious mental training which was to develop Sayyid Rowhani's skills in

ijtihad. This training was undertaken, together with Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Bihishti, the late Ayatollah al-Uzma Sheikh Salman Khaqani and the late Ayatollah Yusuf, son of al-Muhaqiq al-Ayrwani, and continued for nearly seven years.

Ayatollah Rowhani was recognised for his great skill in applying the methods of Usul to the realm of Fiqh. The skill known as fiqahah. This was reflected in the character and methodology of his lessons.

Unique as a theoretician in the field of Usul, he was also of singular eminence in Fiqh. At the start of his most recent cycle of lectures, he told his students that, 'Usul should be studied to the extent that it is needed in Fiqh. Extraneous matters should be left aside or summarised without elaboration. This will save years, even lifetimes from being wasted in the pursuit of that which has no relevance to Fiqh.' Such views are apparent from the 'lecture notes' transcribed by his students (taqirrat).

HIS STUDENTS

The venerable Sayyid's remarkable intellectual abilities and mesmerising skill as a teacher profoundly influenced and inspired the students and scholars who attended his lectures. Students of other teachers who attended were impressed by the accuracy and profundity of Sayyid Rowhani's expositions and the eloquence of his delivery. Sayyid Rowhani's gift was the ability to explain in minutes complex theories, which often took other professors a lesson or series of lessons.

Among his eminent students were:

- The martyr - Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Sadr
- The martyr Sayyid Abd al-Sahab al-Hakim
- Sayy'id Muhyi al-Din al-Ghurayfi
- Sheik Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din al-Muhaqiq,
- Sheik Muhammad Rida Jafari
- and Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadhel Allah.

HIS WRITINGS

Writing reflects academic stature and is an important aspect of a scholar's work. The appraisal of an academic is invariably based on the standard of one's written work. Sayyid Rowhani wrote numerous publications. Others were compiled for him by students who transcribed the detail of his lecture notes (tagrirat). His works include:

1. A comprehensive, fully annotated and documented commentary on the Makasib of Shejkb Ansari.
2. A comprehensive, fully annotated and documented commentary on "Kitab al-Taharah" from 'Urwat al-Wuffiqa.
3. A comprehensive, fully annotated and documented commentary on "Kitab al-Salah" from tUrwat al- Wuthqa.
4. Risalah fi istishab al- adam al-azali,
5. Risalah fi furu 'al-'ilm al-ijmali.
6. Taqirat in Usul compiled by Ayatollah Shahid Sayyid 'Abd al-Sahab al-Hakim in 7 volumes entitled Muntaqa al-Usul which comprise conclusions of researches concluded over 30 years.
7. Taqirrat in Usul compiled by the Hujjatul-Islam Say'yid Muhammad Rida Jalali.
8. Kitab al-Zakah compiled by Ayatollah Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq Ja'fari, forthcoming
9. Kitab al-Khums based on Shara'i al-Islam compiled by Ayatollah Shahid Sayyid 'Abd al-Sahab al-Hakim
10. Kitab al-Sawm compiled by Ayatollah Shahid 'Abd al-Sahab al-Hakim.
11. Buhuthfi al-makasib wa al-bay' wa al-khiyarat compiled by Ayatollah Shahid 'Abd al-Sahab a'-Hakim
12. Kitab al-Zakah based On Shara'i al-Islain compiled by Sayyid 'Abd al-Sahab Al-Hakim

There also are many taqirrat compilations in Fiqh and Usul by his students. The following Rasa'il 'Amaliyyah were compiled in the period following the death of the late Ayatollah Khu'i: 1. Minhaj al-Salihin 2 volumes in Arabic; 2. al Masa'il al-Muntakhaba in Arabic; 3. Muntakhab tawzih-ul-masael in Persian; 4. Tawzih-ul-masael in Persian; 5. Manasik a'-Hajj. Arabic, Persian and English editions.

Moreover some rasa'il 'amaliyah and numerous brief treatises have also been translated into foreign languages.

Breath of fresh air....

...as Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina speaks to *Samachar's* Munir Daya on his book *Islamic Messianism: The idea of Mahdi in twelver Shi'ism*



The following questions were raised by our Editor, Munir Daya, to Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina, author of the book ISLAMIC MESSIANISM: THE IDEA OF MAHDI IN TWELVER SHI'ISM (Albany: State University of New York, 1980) which has been the subject of discussion in the past five issues of the Federation Samachar. The questions seek to obtain the author's clarifications on controversial issues that continue to raise concerns in our community. Dr. Sachedina has reiterated in no uncertain terms his belief in the Twelver Shi'a faith in public and even in the conclusion of this book. More importantly, in the recent written communication received from the Ayatollah Safi Gulpaygani (see below), he has repeated his commitment to the Twelve Imams. We raised these questions in the context of our readers' letters published in the past five issues and requested Dr. Sachedina to respond to these in all sincerity, thereby availing him with a fair opportunity to clarify matters.

(1) What was the primary objective of writing the book ISLAMIC MESSIANISM?

Any person in my position as a believer wants to know more about his/her religion. As it is well known in the community, from the very early age I was interested in our religion and I was captivated by the belief in the invisible existence of the Twelfth Imam (peace be upon him). It was precisely during my studies in Mashhad, Iran in 1966-71 that I began to plan my research on the subject of the Mahdi in Islam and to collect the necessary books from Iran and Iraq to take with me to Canada.

In University of Toronto I was introduced to the Western studies of Islam and Shi'ism. As I began to read these books on the subject I quickly realized their prejudices against Shi'a religion in general and the Hidden Imam of Twelver Shi'ism in particular. My advisor wanted me to do my research on historical topic dealing with Shah Abbas Safavi's relationship with Ottoman Empire. But I resisted that suggestion. Instead I insisted that I wanted to do my thesis on the subject of the future Restorer of Islam.

If ISLAMIC MESSIANISM is studied in the background of the Western studies on Shi'ism, mainly produced by Jewish and Christian authors (e.g.

Ignaz Goldziher, Dozy, Darmesteter, Margoliouth, Bernard Lewis, Henri Lammens and other), then the book is in many important ways a correction of their negative and prejudicial views based on Sunni sources about Shi'ism.

(2) Was this book targeted at a selective readership or was it meant to be read by all Muslims to reflect the Shi'a viewpoint on the Idea of Mahdi, as the future restorer of pure Islam?

Academic books, unlike journalistic works, by the very nature of specialized research and technical language, are targeted to a limited audience in the universities.

The subject matter of ISLAMIC MESSIANISM is dense and written in an academic style. Hence, it is hardly a book that anyone can pick up and start reading without proper intellectual and methodological preparation. The book is in many places defensive of the Shi'a view point, and written with respect and reverence. One just needs to compare it with some other books on the Hidden Imam and the Idea of the Mahdi in English, French and German. In addition, the approach of ISLAMIC MESSIANISM is historical and based on sources that were historically produced both by the Shi'a and the Sunni authors.

Accordingly, it had in reality a limited audience in mind. It is not surprising to note that in the seventeen years, since it was first published in 1980, its publisher, the State University of New York Press, has sold only 1,268 copies in all. This number is extremely low, considering the large market for academic books in North America. Majority of these copies were bought by the university professors because of the title that suggested some comparative relationship to the Christian idea of the messianic return of Jesus Christ.

(3) Over the years, certain paragraphs in the book have led to allegations against you and have raised doubt about your belief in the existence and the occultation of the 12th Imam. Do you concur?

I totally disagree. I have at no stage of writing any part of the book doubted or indicated other than the religious truth about the existence and the occultation of our Twelfth Imam for his followers, including myself.

My discussion is focused on the way the religious truth about the existence and the occultation of the Imam has been explained in the Shi'a sources that were written in tenth-eleventh centuries. I have engaged my intellectual

(continued on page 48)

(.....from page 47)

and methodological resources to explain how at different times the Shi'a scholars had strived to explain the invisible existence - the ghaybat - of the Imam and the reality of his prolonged occultation. Undoubtedly, because the book was being written for the academic audience there was no way for me to use the language of personal faith and declare my own conviction about both of these religious truths. I regard these religious truths as facts for the community of the believers, including, of course, myself. These truths are based on our conviction in God's constant guidance available to us through the presence of our Imam (peace be upon him).

Consequently, I reject any charge of raising doubt in the matter of the presence and invisible existence of our Twelfth Imam (peace be upon him), which I myself take to be factual and central to my identity as a Muslim following the school of Ahlul-Bayt.

(4) It is also purported that in the name of objectivity you have, in certain passages of the book (like on pages 2 and 3), indirectly ridiculed some eminent personalities in the Shi'a faith. Please comment.

To the contrary, careful reading of these two pages do not support such conjecture. As a matter of fact, on these very pages, after negating any connection of the Islamic idea about the future Restorer of pure Islam with the Jewish and Christian messianism, I have tried to relate the belief in the future coming of the Mahdi with the brilliant career of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny). The reason for doing so was prompted by the usual criticism levelled in the Western and Sunni writings against the Shi'a belief in the Mahdi, namely, that it does not have an Islamic basis. However, in doing so I have treated the Twelver Shi'a Islam as if I was a disinterested 'outside' observer (if this is what is meant by 'objectivity'). But I have at *NO POINT* in the entire book ridiculed my own belief or the scholars who wrote about that in the history of Shi'a Islam

..breaking the silence on the Open Forum

(5) On page 6 of your book, an excerpt reads: "Shi'a doctrine of Imamate was formulated during Imam Ja'far Sadiq's time" which gives rise to the question: "What happened from the first Imam to Imam Muhammad Baqir(a.s.)?" Does this not undermine the Prophet's (S.A.W.) hadith of his twelve successors?

Let me explain the difference between the Prophet's declaration about his twelve successors (peace be upon all of them) and the doctrinal formulation of this declaration. The Prophet's declaration simply designates his twelve successors after him. It does not provide the theological elaboration (e.g., qualifications, type of Prophetic designation, whether explicit [jali] or implicit [khafi], the requirement of exemplary behavior and perfect knowledge, and so on). These details are provided by Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. It is in this sense that the formulation of the doctrine is attributed to him.

It is important to keep in mind that Imam al-Sadiq in providing the detailed proofs for the Imamate was responding to the attack on this fundamental belief of the Shi'a. This was the period when the Khilafat was changing hands, and the Umayyads were being replaced by the 'Abbasids. In fact, each Imam following Imam al-Sadiq (see, e.g. the longest hadith on Imamate by Imam 'Ali Rida in USUL AL-KAFI) provided further details of the Prophet's brief declarations about his successors, just as our ulama do the same in each period of the community's progression in history. This is the meaning of the statement describing the process of formulation by Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him).

(6) The Open Forum held in Toronto (which has been a subject of heated debate over the past five issues of the Samachar) was held to resolve the controversy surrounding the book. There Mulla Asgher is quoted to have said, "You have rendered your book indefensible" and you were asked not to defend the

book because it could misguide. To this you remained silent, thereby leading to different interpretations of your silence. To stop further deliberations and interpretations, please advise whether your silence was meant to concur with the request not to defend the book or not?

Your question has put me in a delicate position. I have avoided saying anything about the Forum in public to forestall further evil in our community. I believe in peaceful resolution of all our problems facing the community, because I believe that there is abundant good will to lead us to a civil behavior. It seems the time has come to break this silence and allow our reasonable people to judge for themselves the obvious actions of those involved in this episode. I will be brief and avoid providing detailed exposition that might lead to further dissension.

During the preparation for the Forum one early morning in August of 1995 I received a call from Qumm from Ayatollah Amini, who had been informed by someone from Canada that such a forum was going to take place in Toronto. He urged me to cancel this. I informed him that the matter was in the hands of Mulla Asgher. Ayatollah Amini called up Mulla Sahib and urged him to use his good office as the leader of the Khoja community to put an end to this. The preparations had been under way for some time. When I received a letter from Mulla Sahib informing me of the call from Qumm and seeking my views, I responded to him by asking him not to cancel his trip and pointed out that this was the opportunity for both of us to bring about peace in the community. I was informed later on that he was still hesitant to attend. So I called him up and reminded him that the community was torn and people's religious life was suffering, which as a community leader he had the obligation to put an end to this situation once and for all. After a lengthy discussion he expressed his fear that this forum could turn into a personal contest between

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(.....from page 48)

the two of us. I assured him that I would fully cooperate with him not to allow that to happen. We agreed to meet before the Forum privately to set the form of our conversation and the goals we needed to achieve. That meeting never took place.

At the Forum, I felt, no moment was spared to discredit and humiliate me personally before the very community that I had served for decades. I can recollect that when excerpts of the book were read (which 90% of the audience had not read), accusing me of not even believing in the Prophethood, the reading was done from the middle of the paragraph to dramatise the situation.

At that time I constantly sought help by consulting the Qur'an and I was consistently being guided to remain patient. At the forum there were various errors of citations or muddled conceptual explanations immediately by actually showing people how many hadith Usul al-Kafi had on the subject of ghayba and other related matters (33 hadith in all, and not "hundreds" as claimed there).

I consulted the Qur'an for the last time during the break after which I was going to respond and I was again reminded of observing patience. I made a firm decision to keep the peace and not let my personal humiliation by Mulla Sahib arouse my anger and cause further dissension in the community. My sole purpose of asking for the Forum and allowing myself to go through the process was to give peace a chance to return in this community. I wanted to see the community return to its normal life of providing religious guidance at this critical moment in our history in the West.

Regardless whether ISLAMIC MESSIANISM was defensible or not, my defense of the book under those circumstances was not only unnecessary; but it would have led to further dissension in the people among whom were some intent to use the book to cause sedition and strife. It is also important for me to restate that I had not come to the Forum to suggest, however

....an attestation from Ayatollah Safi Golpaygani

remotely, that the book I had written was free of errors of interpretation. There are sentences in the book (especially page 2-3) that if I were to rewrite the book I would express them differently than what I have done there. Since I have no plans to release a second edition that proposition is irrelevant.

(7) At the Open Forum, Mulla Asgher also said "the Minbar needs you". However in reference to the book, Ayatollah Safi Golpaygani has said that "If he insists on the correctness of what he has written in his book and does not unambiguously announce the falsity of those writings, he is not fit for the Minbar or tabligh." The question then is, do you still insist on its correctness?

I believe that the statement, "the minbar needs you" was merely a precipitate deal which at that time was carried out more as a result of the pressure that Qumm had exerted on Mulla Sahib. Ayatollah Amini had asked him specifically to spare 'character assassination' of a fellow believer in the Twelfth Imam.

Following the Forum, during my seven months in London in 1995, I believe 'faith' obstacles were created for me to appear on the minbar in Stanmore. One pretext for blocking my appearance on the minbar was Ayatollah Safi Golpaygani's response to the question submitted by Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

The fact remains that I have NEVER insisted to go on the minbar (I do not earn my living by performing that service); NOR have I insisted on the correctness of the book that was produced by a mere human like myself. I am not that imprudent to insist that researches done in the universities are free of error or that they are produced impeccably as the works of the scholars in the hawza 'ilmiyya are produced. My humility and sincerity was evident to the Ayatollahs Amini and Golpaygani. The latter's recent response to my request is being cited

with the full text for my fellow believers in the community:

Sachedina's letter to Ayatollah Safi Golpaygani

"In the Name of God
His Excellency Ayatollah al-'Uzma,
Respected Safi Golpaygani

Following the greetings of peace and to you, I had sent you a copy of the translation of DADGUSTAR-I JIHAN, authored by the Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini. After careful reading of this

book I found it appropriate and beneficial to render it into English as an explanation of my own belief about the twelfth Imam, al-Hujjat ibn al-Hasan (may God hasten delivery through his honorable appearance), and as a defence against the doubts raised by the willfully obstinate people. Since I found the book in accord with my own personal belief, I undertook to render it into English.

Now, with God's help, this book has been published in North America and has reached many English speaking countries.

I pray to God that may He accept this humble service from me. In light of the above, I request your excellency that if you see it proper, then endorse this service which bespeaks of my inner faith so that [such an endorsement of my service] may prove effectual in solving some of my social problems and enhance my ability to spread Islam and the school of Ahlul Bayt (peace be upon them all).

In the end, I pray to the Benefactor God for your safety and felicity."

**Signed: Abdulaziz Sachedina
United States of America
Dated: 25 September, 1996**

Ayatollah Golpaygani's response

"In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Respected gentleman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina (may God, the Exalted, confirm him).

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Assalamu alaykum wa rahmatullah!

Your letter [which came with the English translation of Ayatollah Amini's book] speaks about your strong ties and unwavering faith in the matter of the Imamate and Wilayat of the Twelfth Imam, our master al-Mahdi al-Hujjat b. al-Hasan al-'Askari (may our spirits and the spirits of the entire world be a sacrifice for him). The translation of the valuable book *DADGUSTAR-I JIHAN (AL-IMAM AL-MAHDI: THE JUST LEADER OF THE WORLD)* has made us extremely happy. The pains that you have taken to translate this noble book evidently demonstrate your faith and respect for the threshold of the Guardian Angel, the Sahib al-Amr [the twelfth Imam,] (peace and blessings of God be upon him). May this endeavor become a source of felicitation and immense gift for you. This servant of God congratulates you for this success and not only do I endorse this endeavor of yours, but I regard it worthy of praise and tribute. It is my hope and confidence that this service will be accepted by that Lady of Light [Fatima Zahra] (may our eyes be smeared by the dust from her feet) and you will be among the highly valued servants of her court. [Moreover] by the good welcome and high regards of brethren and sisters [in the community for you] all that complain and bad feelings that these good and faithful people had in their hearts will be removed. In your speeches in the gatherings [of the community] and in your writings you will, God willing, always remember the merits and excellences of the twelfth Imam, reciting the pertinent verses and traditions that give the good news about the appearance of this Imam (peace be upon him) and the establishment of Islamic justice under him.

May God confirm you and us in firm, true faith and make us among those who await the appearance of the Imam and become his helpers.

...on the translation of "Al-Imam Al-Mahdi: The just leader of the world"

Let me conclude this letter by thanking God, the Lord of the Universe, and may God bless Muhammad and his pure progeny.

First of Dhilqa'da, 1417 [March 10, 1997]

Signed and sealed: [Ayatollah] Lutfullah al-Safi Golpaygani

(8) It is believed that the book is currently being used as a reference guide for students in American universities. If there is a risk that the book could misguide, would it not be appropriate to withdraw it from circulation or alternatively to come up with a revised version without the paragraphs that could influence readers to go astray? Would withdrawing the book lead to legal complications in the USA or would it serve a paradoxical purpose of drawing more attention to the book?

This claim was put forward to alarm less informed people in our community about the universities and their courses on Islam. I wish some of these individuals engaged in spreading such misinformation would undertake the necessary research in the universities across the Western world to examine the curriculum in religious and Islamic studies and then draw some valid and convincing conclusions about which books are being used to serve as a 'reference guide' for the study of Shi'a Islam. The fact remains that there is no evidence to support such speculation about ISLAMIC MESSIANISM. This is another way of telling our community who, by and large, have no access to statistics or the syllabi that are used to teach courses on Islam in the American universities that this book has indeed done a lot of harm to Islam and Shi'ism. Our community should know that Shi'a Islam is not taught as a subject in majority of the programs in Islamic studies.

I was recently asked by Dr. Sajjadpour of the Iranian Mission at the U.N. if I could undertake to write an easy and

authentic introduction to Shi'ite Islam that can replace the WIDELY used Moojam Momen's INTRODUCTION TO SHI'ITE ISLAM in general courses on Islam. Momen is a Baha'i physician whose book has been published by the prestigious Yale University Press. This book is WIDELY used in courses on Islam and cited in the works of Western scholars. There are plenty of journalistic books on Shi'ism available in the U.S. and Europe for general educated readership. I hope our community will undertake to study ALL those books that are in the market today and see for themselves whether it is the ISLAMIC MESSIANISM or other books written by Jews, Christians and Baha'is that are capable of causing harm to the understanding of Shi'a Islam.

(9) I have been given to understand that you recently completed the translation of AL-IMAM AL-MAHDI: THE JUST LEADER OF THE WORLD on the request of Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini. What is the theme of this book? Is it true that in the translator's introduction you have defended ISLAMIC MESSIANISM?

I usually avoid translation projects because I am more interested in original research. But when Ayatollah Amini approached me for the translation of his book I told him that I would first read it and see if it is something that would be interesting to the English speaking Muslims in general. I studied it and found it to be sound and convincing. In many places it challenges some popular ideas and stories about the Twelfth Imam (peace be upon him) widespread even among our people.

More importantly, it responds to the Sunni criticisms of our belief. It is for this reason that I undertook the translation. It was also an opportunity for me to express my own faith in relation to this book and my academic conclusions about the Shi'a belief in the Mahdi.

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However, whatever I say or write is twisted to mean defense and evil intention on my part. The introduction that I wrote to the translation of AL-IMAM AL-MAHDI is a case in point. I have said nothing more than comparing the method of his book and my book and affirming the conclusion of both books as being the confirmation of the Qur'anic idea of justice through the appearance of the Just Ruler towards the End of History. After all, in ISLAMIC MESSIANISM I did not stop writing after the introduction; I also wrote the conclusion in the end to affirm my own personal conviction in the most subtle way an academician can do. Overall, my approach to ISLAMIC MESSIANISM is regarded by my colleagues, BOTH MUSLIMS AND NON-MUSLIMS, to be reverent and sympathetic - a position that is usually criticized for being less 'objective'.

(10) And how would you describe the communal reaction to your book?

The communal reaction to the book has been of two kinds: *informed-intelligent* and *uninformed-political*. The *informed-intelligent* reaction is based on the study of the book and understanding of its academic context and limits. It is at times critical but also sympathetic in view of its approach to the study of religious belief. The *uninformed-political* reaction is based on some ulterior motives of those who fan negative attributions simply to use the book like the 'shirt of Uthman' during the Khilafat of Imam 'Ali b. Abi Talib, to discredit and to cause harm to someone like me who is intimately known to this community for the love of his religion and community. Probably there is a fear that I might stand for the community leadership and may emerge as an important person, respected for his honesty, integrity, and learning. Let me assure people in our community that I shun politics. Nothing will deter me from abandoning my present position through which I serve my Creator and my community.

(11) Finally, looking back in per

....and to conclude

spective at the reaction to your book, do you feel it would, after all, have been better if you had not come up with it?

I am indeed grateful to God that He gave me the opportunity to learn through research and writing. Each episode of learning is growing and maturing. If I had not written this book, however imperfect and erroneous in places, I would not have grown intellectually and mature in my faith in God. Since the unkind treatment that I have received in the hands of my own people (and I am not alone in this), I have never felt more close to God and in the constant presence of the Twelfth Imam in my humble life. I am grateful to all those individuals in the community who, with good intention, undertook to evaluate the book and thereby made me aware of

how much more I need to learn. I seek forgiveness from the most forgiving and most compassionate God as I travel towards the goal of life, the Hereafter. I trust in none other than God, and I seek help from none other than God. To Him I turn in repentance for any pain that I may have caused anyone through my speech or writing.

Let me conclude this interview with an appeal to my brothers and sisters in the community: It is time to move forward. Do not let anything come between you and your search for true guidance in the matters of your faith. Let this episode become a moment of growth and maturity in the community, rather than back-biting and politicking in the name of our religion. Let God guide us in Truth and Justice.

Greetings of peace and love to all my brothers and sisters in faith.



SMILE CORNER

A pregnant woman to her husband: Darling what's the difference between truth and belief?

Husband: Your pregnancy itself is a truth but the fact that I am the sole person responsible for it is a belief.

Boy: Give me a cigarette?

Friend: I thought you have stopped smoking.

Boy: I am just in the first stage. I have stopped buying.

Girl: My friend's father always whistles as he works

Mother: He must be a happy man.

Girl: Not really, he is a traffic policeman.

Son: Daddy, give me your car. I am old enough to drive.

Dad: Yes, but my car isn't old enough to be given to you.

Q: Why did the teacher wear dark glasses?

A: Because the class was so bright.

Q: What is the difference between a girl and a postage stamp?

A: One is fee-male, other is a mail fee.

Q: Which is the laziest mountain in the world?

A: Ever-rest.

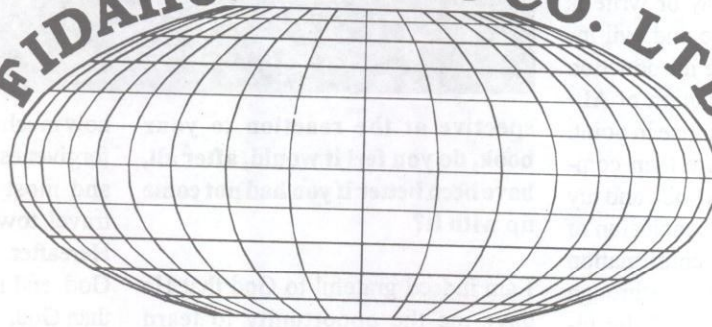
Q: What is management by a lady called.

A: Mismangement.

Q: A synonym for raincoat.

A: Thunder-wear.

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Council of Gujarat's, Aunali Salehmohamed talks to the *Samachar*

The *Samachar* Editor, Munir Daya spent time with Council of Gujarat's, Aunali Salehmohamed in April, 1997 when the Supreme Council meeting was held in Kampala. Here Aunalibhai expresses his views on certain relevant issues and provides further elucidation on the activities and functioning of the Gujarat Council. This interview could not be carried in our previous issue because of a few pending answers.

1 You have been representing the Kutch Federation and the Council of Gujarat in various meetings of the Community around the world. Can you briefly outline your association with the Council?

A. I have been representing the World Federation as its liaison officer in India. My assignment includes supervising the World Federation activities in Gujarat, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

2. You have regularly attended the Africa Federation Meetings since 1991. What impels you to attend every year?

A. What happens in East Africa is of particular interest to Khoja Shia Ithna Asheries all over the world - where ever they may be. Furthermore, the Federation of Africa is among those who initiated the formation of the World Federation and continued to take keen interest in its development. It is, therefore, appropriate that I should regularly attend meetings of our East Africa brothers, to share their joy and problems, to contribute, at least in ideas, whatever I can and to inform and advise them of our needs and requirements to alleviate poverty at our end.

3. The Kutch Federation was registered in 1989 and the Council of Gujarat was registered in 1987. What are the primary services being rendered by the two organizations. What led to their formation and what, in your opinion, have been the major successes and pitfalls since their establishments?

A. Ever since the time of Haji



Ebrahim Sheriff (Marhum), the Africa Federation has persuaded our Jamats in India to federate. Towards this goal Haji Mohamedali Meghji (Marhum) also worked strenuously.

When it was found that the Federation of India would take very long to come to existence, it was decided by the people of Gujarat that they should at least federate as far as Kutch and Kathiawad Jamats were concerned. This was blessed by the then President of Bombay Jamat, Haji Sultanbhai Moloo who generously paid 5000 Rupees towards the first Conference held in Bhavnagar in 1979, where the Gujarat Federation was formed and became a member of the World Federation. Due to unavoidable reasons, after a few years, the Gujarat Federation could not carry on but then, in 1987, the Council of Gujarat was registered in Mahuva. The Kutch Federation was registered in Bhuj-Kutch in October, 1988.

The primary services rendered by the two organizations for the welfare of the community are mainly in the field of education, medical assistance, relief of poverty, housing for poor and needy and also for social reforms. The

reason for forming two distinct Federations, inspite of having common aims and goals, is purely geographical. An easy example of this is the formation of the regional Territorial Council in Madagascar.

4. What are the main objectives of the Kutch Federation and the Council of Gujarat?

A. The objectives are to render common services in various fields within a religious sphere.

5. In the ongoing sessions of the Supreme Council meetings, the Clause 20.1 of the World Federation was upheld through vote. The Council of Gujarat has supported the change in constitution regarding this clause. After yesterday's deliberations where the Africa Federation voted against changing the constitution, do you now have a different opinion?

A. The decision taken by the Africa Federation emanates from the opinion of its members and I have my own.

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6. How many Jamats and members does the Council of Gujarat and the Kutch Federation have? With regard to members, is the figure based on a census?

A. The Council of Gujarat has 44 Jamats as its members. The Kutch Federation has five Jamats as its members. The recent census carried out in Gujarat which comprises both Kutch and Kathiawad Jamats reveals that we total to nearly 15000 heads.

7. Are the Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation registered as Charity Organisations in India, and if so do they face any Government restrictions which encumber normal operations?

A. Both Organisations are Registered Charities in India. The only restrictions we have are related to foreign fund contributions.

8. How would you define the relationships of the Gujarat Council and Kutch Federation with other regional Federations like the World Federation, Africa Federation and NASIMCO? Can you briefly outline the involvement of these Federations in the upliftment of living standards in Gujarat?

A. As far as the World Federation is concerned, the Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation are its members and, therefore, relationship is cordial and mutually cooperative. The relationship with other organisations like NASIMCO and Africa Federation are also very good. By the Grace of Allah s.w.t., the co-operation given to Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation by the World Federation has enhanced greatly the economic situation and educational standards of our community. My feelings are that all Organisations and individuals should work in India through the World Federation for the upliftment of the community in India.

9. At the World Federation Triennial Conference held in October 1994, various delegates opined that the manner of operation of the World Federation and its member

ship had to be reviewed and that restructuring has to be undertaken. A resolution was passed to appoint a special sub-committee of qualified and experienced persons to examine, evaluate and make recommendations on the institutional, structural, workings, accountability and the effectiveness of the World Federation and to recommend on changes required. Subsequently, it was decided to appoint regional committees to enhance the resolution. To what extent has the Council of Gujarat and the Kutch Federation been involved?

A. On the special sub-committee Rajabali M Dossani was appointed from the Council of Gujarat but no body was appointed from the Kutch Federation.

10. Let us talk about Khums and other Charities. Is there much charity sourced from within India or do most of your funds come from outside? What do you think is the best way of channelling funds to needy areas ----- through centralisation whereby all money is channelled to the World Federation and subsequently disbursed or through Regional Federations where money collected in each Regional Federation is disbursed by each Federation?

A. If you look back into the history of Africa Federation, you will realise that we in India are in the same situation as East Africans were more or less until late 1950's. It was the efforts of Marhum Haji Ebrahim Husein Shariff, may Allah (SWT) bless his soul, as President of the Africa Federation that the Community realised the need and importance of paying Khums and other Charities and utilising it for the Community.

Our Community in India can be said to be divided into three categories: one-third are rich, one-third middle class and one-third poor and needy. We have succeeded and persuaded our brothers in India to contribute so that they gradually become self-sufficient and stop depending on outside help. It will take time but we have to educate our people.

We strongly believe in centralisation as we have seen the damage done when this principle is not adhered to. As members of the World Federation, I would expect the Africa Federation to channel all funds and undertake all projects outside Africa through the World Federation.

If every regional body was encouraged to act independently outside its region, then the need for a Central World Body would cease and it would be a great step backwards.

11. When it comes to charities, do the Council of Gujarat and the Kutch Federation hold an Ijaza from the Marja for spending Khums. How does the Council of Gujarat monitor funds received from within India and from outside?

A. The Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation depend upon the Ijaza of the President of the World Federation.

12. There are various other Shia Charitable Organisations and Trusts in India. Do you work hand in hand with them or do you doubt on the sincerity of some of these organisations?

A. There are other Shia Charitable Organisations and Trusts which are either Private Trusts or the aims and objects are restrictive or the working methods differ very much from the way we operate. Our Councils are elected and answerable to all the members of our Community. We, however, do try to co-operate and work with any individual organisation which has aims and objectives like ours.

13. You have had visits at Federation level from the World Federation, Africa Federation and NASIMCO. Do you think such visits are helpful?

A. We have had visits from organisations and from individuals. They have been able to see for themselves the progress we have made under the World Federation. Such visits

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(.....from page 54)

are very helpful and necessary too.

14. What public relations do the Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation undertake to propagate Islam. Do you have access to TV, radio networks, schools, colleges, publications or the like?

A. Recently, the Chairman of Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme, Haji Muhsin Dharamsi, visited India. We had very useful discussions with him regarding religious education and some of his ideas have already been implemented. So far, we have been concentrating on religious education of our Community only. We believe we have still to learn a lot from the Africa Federation. There are about 100 Madressas in Gujarat only and we feel we have to put in extra efforts towards religious education. We are in contact with the Chairman of the Islamic Education Board, Mulla Muhsin Jaffer, about tabligh both within and outside the Community in India. The possibilities are great and Inshallah in co-operation and with assistance of one and all we hope to embark on it shortly. We have few publications coming out from Gujarati, the main one being the *Labbaik Mask*.

15. On religious awareness and tabligh, enlighten us on the status of our youths, madressas, schools and general religious infrastructure. Does the Council of Gujarat organise any youth programmes?

A. In India, the concept of youth camps is not new. Many religious outbound camps have been regularly held by other organisations. After seeing the type of work carried out by the other organisations and also after getting information from Africa, Europe and North America where lot of good work is being carried out for the youths of our Community, Inshallah the Council of Gujarat and Kutch Federation will soon decide to

embark upon such programmes.

16. Do you believe the leaders of our institutions should have the quality of Taqwa and only those who do so should be given the office?

A. There can be no two opinions about the virtue of Taqwa being an essential ingredient of leadership.

17. Do you find any aspect of the running of the Africa Federation noteworthy for it to be emulated elsewhere?

A. The situation in which Africa Federation functions totally differ from the situations in Europe and North America. The question of emulation for us in India is related to the World Federation and NASIMCO only for they function in wider perspective and broader horizon.

Education is the key to success

by Fatema Azaad Khimani, Age 13 years

Education to the human mind and soul is as necessary as a drop of water to a thirsty man. It is the key to success in life. Success in life does not only mean success in secular education but success in personal development and understanding. It is necessary for all to learn and develop good virtues which ultimately leads to success and happiness.

Education provides the main difference between an animal and a human being. Real education is the education of soul. True education teaches students to have courage to stand up in unity to fight for their freedom. It also teaches students to stand on their own feet and to be free to speak their thoughts.

In the present world, virtues are dying out and corruption is increasing. Education has gained much importance compared to what it was in the years before. In the present modern age, where every minute is precious and every drop of knowledge is important, education thus plays a very important role.

Today we are living with so much comfort and this is surely due to education, without education we would not have been so advanced. Education also makes us work hard for better achievements and as we work harder, we create more responsibilities and as the responsibilities increase and lead to results, we get our satisfaction out of life. Lack of education is today a disability which leaves one vulnerable in the competitive world of today.

Education makes an individual mature in thoughts and not only does it help in enhancing one's career but it also helps one to handle one's family life with more responsibility. Many successful marriages have been attributed to good education and many well brought up and educated children owe their success to educated parents.

The main defect of modern education is its laxity towards religious values. Knowledge without morals is dangerous because it could create tyrants out of educated people with the greed for power and wealth. To protect our youths from straying, secular education must therefore be supported by religious education which teaches one on the importance of moderation irrespective of one's education and wealth.

A virtuous human being is one who, after attaining good education and acquiring wealth does not get egoistic with his possessions but rather uses these God given attributes altruistically. It is said that a tree with fruits will always have its branches bending forward while the branches of a fruitless tree will always be erect. The same is the case for those with the fruits of education!

Islamic method of animal slaughter and its biological applications

by Professor Sayyed QMM Kamoopuri Ph.D., Dar es Salaam

"Whatever the judgment of reason, is also the judgment of Islamic shariah." It is an incontrovertible axiom. All Islamic laws are based on natural laws. This is true in principle because the one who created the universe and subjected it to definite laws is also the One who ordained Islamic laws. Since the laws of nature and shariat laws have the same origin of execution, there can never be any clash or collision between the two sets of laws. It is a pity that we have not been able to explain scientific clues of most of the Islamic laws. The natural laws are the primary source of understanding the benefits of Islamic laws. The profound knowledge of science can provide justifiable explanations of arguments such as why shariat has made certain things haraam and other things halaal. The general rule of Islamic shariah is: *what is haraam by shariah is also harmful and what is made halaal by shariah is safe and useful*. The Holy Quran says "they ask you what is lawful to them. Say; the good and pure things are lawful to you. (5:4).

This rule of Islamic law can be judged on empirical standards. For instance, Qur'an has permitted Muslims to slaughter animals in a prescribed way. To use any method other than the prescribed one makes the meat of halaal animals haraam i.e. unlawful. To this effect, we are obliged to think why a special method of slaughtering has been described in Islamic shariah. Is this special method of animal slaughter just a law or is it backed by a scientific principle?

A deep study reveals that the Islamic method of animal slaughter has special biological significance to render many benefits. Essentially

there are four essential conditions laid down by shariah for animal slaughtering.

1. The person who slaughters the animal must be a Muslim.
2. The name of Allah must be pronounced before incision is made, facing the animal in the direction of the Holy Kaaba.
3. The instrument being used for slaughtering should be extremely sharp.
4. The incision should be made in the neck just below the glottis, cutting the throat and esophagus, the jugular vein and the carotid artery without cutting the spinal cord.

Apart from these four conditions, the person slaughtering the animal must bear in mind that he should not interfere with the carcass before convulsions have completely ceased and the animal is pronounced biologically dead. Skinning or dismembering the animal just after the slaughtering (while breathing or body movement has not yet ceased) is not recommended in Islam.

The prescribed method of Islamic slaughtering has many benefits. It saves the animal from pain that can occur in other slaughtering methods due to muscle contractions and suspension of respiratory and other organic functions. In animal slaughter by the prescribed method of incision, the animal's major blood vessel in the neck is abruptly cut off thereby producing an immediate stunning effect. This causes a sudden massive hemorrhage of blood which immediately cuts the supply of blood to the brain, thereby rendering the animal unconscious.

The advantage of not cutting the spinal cord (a specific feature of Islamic slaughtering) is that the brain continues to send its electrical impulses to the heart, with even greater frequency than normal, demanding blood. The brain cannot tolerate short supply of blood and therefore sends frequent warning signals to the heart to increase the blood supply. Those who are experienced in slaughtering animals must have noticed that after incision, blood comes out slowly but then flows profusely after a few seconds. This is the direct result of brain's electrical impulses to the heart for urgent supply of blood. That is why the animal convulses violently, pumping blood ever more vigorously and so speeding up the hemorrhaging process, until all the blood of the body is drained off.

The brain repeatedly sends signals to the heart for more supply of blood. The heart complies with the brain's special instructions and stops sending the blood to the lower part of the body in order to pump more blood towards the brain. But because the pipeline which takes blood to the brain has already been cut off, the apparently violent convulsions which result from muscle contractions, are not painful because the animal is already in a state of unconsciousness. The body's rapid shaking is just in response to the brain's frequent messages to the heart demanding more blood supply.

The Islamic way of slaughtering allows the maximum benefit from the body's natural mechanism.

(continued on page 57)

(.....from page 56)

By cutting the major blood vessel without cutting the spinal cord, the body's own mechanism is used to drain the carcass of blood --- the important feature of Islamic slaughtering is to cut the blood supply to the brain without interfering with the communication links between the brain and the heart.

In slaughtering other than by Islamic way (modern and other conventional methods) the natural body mechanisms do not work. The blood drainage is not as thorough by these methods as in case of Islamic slaughter. This seriously affects the colour and taste of the meat. It has been acknowledged by people who eat both halaal and haraam meat that the halaal meat is much better in taste and appearance than non-halaal meat.

Apart from this there is a great medical significance of halaal meat identified by medical researchers. We know that blood performs many important functions in the body. It carries essential nutrients during its round the clock circulation to feed all tissue cells and carries away waste products left after the useful consumption of nutrient constituents. During its circulation in the body, blood also goes to the kidneys (the processing plants) which purify it for further work.

Two researchers, Gucel and Erbil narrate that blood that carries nutrients also nourish organisms which are responsible for disease. These organisms do not show any clinical symptoms in a healthy living body. But as soon as they are separated from the body, these disease carrying organisms become extremely harmful. It is for this reason that the consumption of blood is forbidden in Islam.

Blood in carcass is the principle breeding place of all kinds of bac-

teria. If the carcass has not been adequately drained off, which is almost always the case in unIslamic slaughtering, it petrifies the meat thereby making it dangerous for health. The convulsions of a slaughtered animal are therefore the most rapid and efficient method of making the carcass free of disease-carrying blood. We also know that Qur'an has forbidden the meat of that animal which dies as a result of massive shock. *"You are forbidden (to eat) that which dies of itself, blood, and the flesh of swine (and) also any flesh dedicated to any other than Allah. You are forbidden the flesh of strangled (animals) and of those beaten or gored to death, of those killed by a fall or mangled by beast of prey, unless you find it still alive and slaughter it; also of animals sacrificed on stones (to idols)."* (5:3).

The medical reason that expounds the rationality of Islamic law has been studied by many researchers in separate and independent works. Their studies reveal that in living organisms, when exposed to intense fear, special hormones and chemicals are released into the body and blood stream to do what is needful. But these hormones and chemicals also do a lot of damage to the tissues thereby rendering them unfit for food consumption.

In Islamic slaughtering, the 'killing by first shocking' approach is refrained from. It is for this reason that shariat has prescribed the following precautions to be maintained during the slaughtering process:

1. The knife must not be sharpened in front of the animal.
2. The animals should not be slaughtered in front of each other.
3. The animals should be given water to drink before slaughtering.
4. The animal should be laid on its sides, soothed and should be stroked gently on its back.

All these conditions help to reduce

the fear of an animal prior to being slaughtered.

In modern methods, mechanical or electrical techniques are used to produce a stunning effect in order to make the animal paralyzed. They argue that these new techniques are less painful and fearsome comparing to the Islamic slaughtering. But this is not true. The paralyzed animal feels terrible pain and experiences fear but cannot express it because it is motionless. This creates a wrong impression that the animal is not suffering when as a matter of fact it is.

By the Islamic way of slaughtering, it seems that the animal is having terrible pain but in reality the animal does not feel it because of being in a state of unconsciousness. In addition to some of the above biological applications, there are many psychological factors involved in Islamic slaughtering. This is mainly associated with the first two conditions laid down by Islamic shariah namely, that the person slaughtering be a Muslim and the name of Allah (SWT) be pronounced before the incision and when facing the animal in the direction of the Kaaba. The motive behind these two conditions is that the person slaughtering must be in full awareness that he is taking a life with permission of Allah (SWT). This is meaningful because frequent slaughtering can reduce the sanctity of life.

The Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.) has said:

"Knowledge enables the possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; lights the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our companion in solitude, our companion, when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as an armour against our enemies. With knowledge the creatures of Allah rise to the heights of goodness and to noble positions, associate with the sovereigns in this world and attain the perfection of happiness in the next."

Wonders of Creation and animal references in the Holy Qur'an

contributed by Haji Akber Tejani, India

(1) *Fish*: So the big fish swallowed him (Yunus), while he blamed himself. (Saffat, 142)

(2) *Sheep and Goats*: Eight in pairs-two of sheep and two of goats. (Annam, 143).

(3) *Ewes*: This man is my brother, he has ninety nine ewes and I have one. (Swaad, 23).

(4) *Apes*: So we said to them: Be (as) apes, despised and hated (Baqarah, 65).

(5) *Swine*: He has only forbidden you dead meat, and blood and flesh of swine and that over which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked. (Baqarah, 173).

(6) *Elephant*: Did you not see your lord deal with the people of the Elephant? (Feel, 1)

(7) *Dog*: His example is that of a dog; if you attack him he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he still lolls out the tongue. (A'raaf, 176).

(8) *Ass*: And be moderated in your pace and lower your voice; for the harshest of sounds is the braying of the ass (Luqman, 19)

(9) *Horses, Mules & Donkeys*: And (He made) horses and mules and donkeys for you to ride, and for show, and He created things you do not know. (Nahl, 8)

(10) *Camel*: Do they not see the camel, how it has been created. (Ghashiya, 17).

(11) *Cow*: (Musa) said: 'He says, surely she is a cow not submitted to ploughing the land, nor has she irrigated the tilth; sound, without a blemish in her'. (Baqarah, 71).

(12) *Wild beasts*: It is forbidden you to eat the meat of an animal which dies itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that of which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled animal, and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall, and that killed by being gored with horn, and that which wild beasts have partly eaten unless you are able to slaughter, and that which is sacrificed on stones set up for the idols. And it is forbidden to divide the meat by raffling with the arrows. All that is impiety. (Maedah, 3)

(13) *Cattle*: Do they not see the cattle We created for them, fashioned by our own hands, so now they are their masters. And we have made some of these cattles submissive to them, some they ride upon, and some they eat. (Yasin, 71).

(14) *Spider*: The example of those who take guardians besides Allah is as the example of the spider that makes for itself a house (a web); and most surely the frailest of the houses is the spider's house; only if they knew. (Ankaboot, 41)

(15) *Lion*: As if they were asses taking fright, which had fled from a lion. (mudassir, 50)

(16) *Locusts*: They will go forth from the graves, with eyes cast down, as if they were scattered locusts. (Qamar, 7)

(17) *Serpent*: So he (Musa) threw his rod - and it was a clear serpent. (A'raaf, 107)

(18) *Frogs*: So we sent upon them a widespread calamity, and the lo

custs and the lice and the frogs and the blood: which were clear signs: but they behaved proudly, and they were a sinful people. (A'raaf, 133)

(19) *Birds*: Do you not see that all beings in the heavens and on earth celebrate Allah's praise? And also the birds with outspread wings? Each one knows its own mode of prayers and praise - And God knows well all that they do. (Noor, 41)

(20) *Crow*: Then Allah sent a crow digging up the earth so that he may show him how he should cover the dead body of his brother (Ma'edah.31)

(21) *Ants*: At last when they came to a valley of ants, one of the ants said: O ants, get into your habitations, lest Sulaiman and his hosts crush you without knowing. (Naml, 18)

(22) *Bee*: And your Lord taught the bee to build its hives in the hills, in trees and in what men build. Then to eat of all the fruits, and walk in the path of your Lord submissively. From within their bodies issues a drink of varying colours, in which there is healing for men. Most surely there is a sign in this for those who reflect. (Nahl, 69)

(23) *Fly*: O people, a parable is set forth, therefore listen to it. Surely those whom you call upon besides Allah cannot create a fly, even if they all gather for it. And should a fly snatch away anything from them, they could not take it back from it; both, the invoker and the invoked are feeble and weak. (Haj, 73)

Migraine ---when your head is your worst enemy

Migraine, a common neurological disorder — an unbearable headache, for laymen — is among the most underdiagnosed, underestimated and undertreated of ailments. It is not possible to completely alleviate this head-splitting agony, but with proper treatment it can be brought under control. However, what a lot of patients and doctors are not aware of is that it is not so much a psychological ailment, as a biological one.

Migraines occur in 18 per cent of women and six per cent men. Only one-third of all migraine sufferers consult a doctor, while the remaining do their own patchwork cures with pain-killers.

Unlike the flu, malaria or jaundice, this cannot boast of instant results. There is no magic here and since it involves a lot of patience, by both patients and doctors, most people drop out in the middle of the treatment. The three types of headaches are: migraine, tension type headache and cluster headache. There exists a grey zone between the first two kinds.

Migraine is a one-sided unilateral throbbing headache, where one has feelings of nausea and an aversion to light and sound.

During a migraine attack, changes in various brain chemicals, particularly *serotonin*, occur. There is also an inflammation of blood vessels, following which changes in the blood flow to the brain are also noted. As a result, chemical changes cause dilation and inflammation of the blood vessels around the brain, which trigger off the headache.

The treatment of migraine has significantly changed in the last 20 years. The goal of a doctor is to reduce the frequency, intensity and duration of the headache. It should be treated as any other chronic ailment, such as high blood pressure or diabetes. With today's treatment, 70 to 90 per cent of patients can be helped.

It helps the patient a great deal if the

person accompanying them shows some interest in the treatment as well. The doctor also has to listen carefully. The pain can be reduced if the right drug is taken at the right time. Scientists abroad have formulated a drug, *Sumatripton*, for acute cases of pain. Other drugs are *Cafergot* and *DHE*. These again should be taken only when prescribed.

Educating the patient about headaches also helps in the treatment of migraine. The patient should be informed of the various headache triggers that can be avoided or modified. A change in lifestyle can also be helpful.

Migraine is a major health, social, economical and personal problem. Often, over-the-counter and prescription pain medications are ineffective. Over the last few years, all over the world, physicians with a special interest in headaches have supported the recognition of chronic headache as a major health problem, which has led to the the concept of a headache clinic.

The purpose is to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the headache patient, to make an appropriate diagnosis, to initiate prophylactic or preventive treatment, and to provide continuity of care. This approach is somewhat different from that of a busy physician who, because of time restraints or other factors, may not be able to

provide comprehensive headache management.

A patient with an occasional headache or headache due to cold or fever is best managed by a family physician or internist, and may not require headache evaluation. However, referral to the headache clinic may be considered when:

- * Diagnosis is uncertain or doubtful
- * Chronic recurring headache does not respond to conventional therapy
- * Relief from headaches is frequently sought by emergency
- * habituation and tolerance to pain killers is suspected
- * Headache occurs with neurological symptoms
- * Comprehensive headache management cannot be provided by the family physician

In conclusion, migraine headache is perhaps one of the most common, yet least understood medical disorders. Despite being a chronic disabling condition, it has received neither the recognition nor the attention it deserves. Migraine is not a psychological disorder, it has a biological basis, and can be diagnosed and effectively treated. Migraine sufferers do not have to live with pain, agony, despair and frustration. Instead, they should seek medical attention and proper treatment, which can change their lifestyles for the better.

Beware of Yellow Fever

Yellow fever, an untreatable viral haemorrhagic disease with a high fatality rate, is a re-emerging disease with the potential for explosive epidemics. In the 1995 outbreak in Peru there were 440 cases and 169 deaths over a six-month period. Today there are fears that the disease could surface among the poorest populations of the teeming megacities of Latin America or tropical Africa.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the disease — transmitted by mosquitoes — was kept at bay by mass vaccination and widespread vector control. Today yellow fever has come full circle. Urban poverty, overcrowding, and massive population movements coupled with poor immunisation coverage and the abandonment or failure of vector control programmes have created the ideal conditions for explosive outbreaks in urban areas.

A safe and highly effective vaccine against yellow fever has been available since 1937. A single shot protects against the disease for at least 10 years, and probably for life. The problem is that many of the countries where yellow fever is endemic are among the poorest in the world. Of the 33 African countries at risk for yellow fever, more than two-thirds are classified by UNICEF as needing ongoing external support in obtaining vaccine because they cannot afford to buy the vaccines even at the UNICEF discounted price of \$0.17 a dose. The cost of supplying the vaccine to the 21 million children born in these countries each year would be an estimated \$4.6 million.

Caution against Cancer

In many cases people only suddenly find out that they suffer from Cancer, in some cases when it already is too late to control further spreading. Medical personnel and health magazines advise yearly medical check-ups to ensure that one's health is fine and for Cancer they have some early warning signs which should make people beware to the extent of at least visiting a doctor to cross-examine them.

Among the Early Warning Signs of Cancer are:

1. Change in bowel or bladder habits;
2. A sore that does not heal;
3. Unusual bleeding or discharge;
4. Thickening or lump in breast or elsewhere;
5. Indigestion or difficulty in swallowing;
6. Obvious change in wart or mole;
7. Nagging cough or hoarseness.
8. Abnormal loss of hair.

Any of these could also arise due to other ailments and there is no need to be unduly alarmed. However in the spirit of 'precaution is better than cure' it is good to visit a doctor to find out the reasons for the abnormalities.

To protect oneself from Cancer, doctors recommend:

1. Stay away from cigarettes and cigarette smoke;
2. Take more fresh fruits and vegetables;
3. Overweight? Exercise regularly and eat less fatty foods;
4. Prevent sunburn — avoid overexposure to sunlight;
5. Comply with safety regulations if you are exposed to cancer-causing substances at work;
6. Avoid alcohol, which in any case is *haram*;
7. If you notice any unusual lumps, sores, moles or bleeding see your doctor;
8. If you suffer from constant cough, hoarseness, indigestion, weight loss, diarrhoea or constipation see your doctor;
9. For a woman, examine your breasts once a month;

10. Regular pap smears detect cervical cancer early;

11. Eat more cabbage family vegetables. These include broccoli, cauliflower and all cabbages;

12. Add more high fibre foods. Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, and also cereals and rice;

13. Increase vitamin A & C foods like carrots, apricots, peaches, oranges, strawberries and tomatoes;

14. Trim fat from your diet. Cut over-all intake. Eat low-fat dairy products and lean meats;

15. Subtract preservatives. Choose salt-cured, smoked and nature-cured foods only occasionally.

Health on decline worldwide Report says smoking is top factor

One would think that with all the advances in medicine over the years, we'd be seeing less cancer, less heart disease and less diabetes worldwide. But we're not. In fact, a recent report by the World Health Organization (WHO) predicts the number of cancer cases will double in most countries over the next 25 years. The same is true for diabetes. WHO suggests simple solutions with a message telling all not to smoke and to take a healthy diet rich in vegetables and fruits. The Organisation has also warned against obesity and has strongly recommended physical exercises.

The report expresses worry on the worldwide spread of smoking. It says that while smoking rates are down in the United States, that's not true for the rest of the world. It gives an example of France, saying that about 60 percent of 18-year-olds there smoke. With regard to smoking, it cites that the situation in Eastern Europe is even worse, reporting that they have now reached levels of lung cancer rates that are the highest ever reported in the history of man. China, with its large population, has for many years provided tobacco companies with lucrative profits but the Chinese government has now recognised that smoking is a big problem and is trying to gradually induce legislation banning smoking in public places.

The same report also says the solution to the global smoking problem should come from the United States, since American tobacco companies have exported the problem to the rest of the world.

Anaemia.....

Anaemia, a result of the adverse effects of iron deficiency, is one of the main causes of maternal deaths in developing countries. Iron deficiency may be due to inadequate diet or poor absorption of iron due to morbidity. The paleness seen in the nails, tongue, inside of lower eyelids and complaints of weakness or dizziness are visible signs of anaemia. Anaemia can be confirmed by checking the haemoglobin level.

While prevalence rates in developed countries for iron deficiency anaemia range from 10 to 20 per cent, two-thirds of women in developing countries are estimated to be anaemic. For example in rural India, prevalence of anaemia among women of ages between 15 and 44 ranges between 34 per cent and 99 per cent.

The prevalence rates of anaemia are even higher among pregnant women. The estimated haemoglobin levels of pregnant women are less than 11 g/dl. During pregnancy, growth of the foetus and of the uterus, and other changes taking place, lead to an increase in the demand for many nutrients, especially iron and folic acid. Hence, pregnant women require iron to replace basal losses, to allow for the expansion of the red cell mass, and to provide for the needs of the foetus and placenta.

Various studies have indicated that iron deficiency anaemia impairs resistance to infection, cognitive performance, physical capacity, and work output which eventually is likely to affect economic development and social welfare. Workers become more willing, intelligent, and effective — reflecting overall increase in work capacity — with iron supplementation. Additionally, severe anaemia with foliate deficiency also increases the chances of delivering low birth-weight babies which is an important underlying cause of death in newborns and infants. As a result there are also many newborn babies with low birth-weights.

Distribution of IFA tablets to pregnant women is a part of essential care that should be provided.

If the 12th Imam (AS) were to knock on my door

by Zishaan-&-Fatima Karim, Moshi

If the 12th Imam is at my door, my first reaction would be, "oh my God, is he really here? What should I do now?"

A sudden idea flashes in my mind. He can sit in the sitting room. That does not have to be altered. Being a good Muslim, my sitting room contains a poster of Ka'aba on the wall, a sura-e-yaseen and ayat-ul-kursi hanging in beautiful frames and the Qur'an, nahjul balagha, sahifa and so on in the book shelf. I have always made it a point that my sitting room makes it obvious that I am a good Muslim. That is not hypocrisy, or is it?

I will tell Juma to welcome him and tell him to sit in the sitting room till I appear, and tell him "mama anaoga" in the meantime. That gives me a neat quarter of an hour to go through the rest of the house and make the emergency changes in case he plans to stay for a day or two.

I will switch off the music, hoping that he hasn't heard it, and turn off the video -- what a good movie it had been. A pity to stop it halfway. I will try and hide all the video cassettes and magazines I'd been reading. Oh my Lord! where should I dump them? Surely he wouldn't look under the mattress. There they go.

Now to go to the children's room. I pull down their posters of the actresses, actors and wrestlers. Now there are marks on the wall. What should I put up? The yearly planner from the World Federation? That will be impressive.

I hope my children don't appear now for will they realise that the guest in the sitting room is the 12th Imam and they should say *salaam* to him or will they take him as an ordinary friend and say *hi*?

I pray that the baby does'nt wake up now for the musical alarm will go on if she does and it will go on for five minutes since I never came round to learn how to switch it off. Oh, why do I find the music so pleasant?

Now to change my middy and put on my hijab. Do I have my black hijab or have I thrown it out since it is no longer in fashion? What will he think of my coloured hijab? And I do not have even a single plain scarf. Well, there is nothing I can do about it now.

My feet shaking, my stomach fluttering, my eyes too ashamed to meet his, I enter the sitting room. Will he know the exercises I have gone through in the last fifteen minutes? I gaze up and see there is no one there. He has left saying he was busy and shall come some other time.

I curse myself. Only if I had been a Muslim in the true sense. Then I would not have gone through all the changes and would have welcomed him as a sincere Muslim. I made him wait and he surely must have known that it was only my tongue in action when I asked after every salah, for him to come — my heart, mind and actions said otherwise. The baby has woken up. There goes the alarm and with it comes up the sound of that cursed horrible music.

On Education the Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

To acquire knowledge is binding upon all Muslims, whether male or female.

The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.

He who travels in the search of knowledge, to him God shows the way of Paradise.

The Infinite Illumination

By Munir A. Chagpar, Nairobi.

In the heart of the Arabian Desert
There rose an eminent chosen Leader
Amongst the inane and ignorant folk,
exalted in excellence, pure in prayer
Master of the magnanimous;
Perceptive in forethought, patient in nature

Light to the ignorant, Leader of the virtuous

Fear to the oppressors, fountain of knowledge

Kind in words, exemplary in good character.

Resort to orphans, widows, lost ...

Never has there been a Leader
Who can equal this man.

So high was his stature; this Leader,
A king yet a common mortal
Shared with his people their joys and troubles

Assisted the weak, homeless and needy,
against immense iron hands
never once did his faith falter.
Under tense unbearable spheres
Called the people of the world t Unity of God.

This Leader taught to speak truth;
Foreguard the rights of human worth.
This Leader was **Mohammed (SAW)**.

Finding the world sunk deep in
Ignorance, superstition, and cruelty;
Disunited and perpetually in discord
Breaking the chaos was his order
Belief in God he establish.

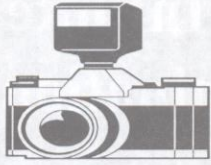
Made the people think
Not only of this transient world
But beyond the grave on a
Higher, pure, and divine plain.
A mission miraculously achieved.

Such was Mohammed (SAW), Guide to humanity

He interpreted the Divine Revelation
Which portrayed the final Word
To last till the day of Doom.

An example was he to us
To contemplate, to accept, and to follow.
He left us to ponder on the revelation
And his family's' humble character.

All the words in human history
have struggled to paint a picture
Of this illustrious figure,
But none have and none will ever
Achieve that elusive task.



DOWN MEMORY LANE



1952

A group of about 150 zawars from East Africa went for the Ziyarath of Imam Muse-Raza (A.S.) to Mash'had, Iran. Some of them are gathered above in the yard of the Musafirkhana



Wayside Wisdom

by Munir Daya, Dar es Salaam

Death is another chapter of life

*With death there is no sight
or sound,
No touch, taste or smell,
No love but only fear.
But why the fear if one's
deeds are always good?*

Death not only comes suddenly but hovers everywhere, even over the cradle. Death, in any form and at any age, stretches human imagination into zones of fear as it deals with the unknown and mysterious. Many philosophers, metaphysicists and theosophists have attempted to define the nature of the soul but have not reached a consensus but then the holy Qur'an asserts: "And they ask you about the soul (rooh). Say: The soul is one of the commands of my Lord, and you are not given of the knowledge but a little." (Qur'an, 17:85)

In life, one's general expectation, to which there have been unlimited exceptions, is that the young will die after the old. Thus while the young hope to stretch their years, the old are expected to face death with equanimity.

After 70, one begins the last lap to oblivion, the inevitable downward trajectory which takes us inexorably to the icy terminus of death. But how much consciousness of our own death can we bear? And should we live in fear of it?

The holy Qur'an and many of our duas remind us of our mortality at all times. These duas express wonder as to how human beings, despite seeing so many of their close ones pass away, forget their own mortality and indulge into incessant wrong-doings in life.

With age, as death becomes a more compelling reality and less of a distant and unlikely prospect, the elderly

become different beings, separated from others by the knowledge of their approaching mortality. On the threshold between existence and non-existence, their grasp on life, provisional and insecure at the best of times, becomes exceedingly tenuous. The nights take on a more sinister and alien power as thoughts of going into permanent obscurity make them actually wonder whether it is worthwhile to live up to an age where one constantly suffers the trauma of how to face death.

Rather than unduly fearing death, the sensible and pious adopt a lifestyle of piety irrespective of how old they are. For the elderly, irrespective of how they lived through their heydays, the best option is to spend more time towards religious activities and to ensure that previous unfulfilled wajibats like Qaza namaaz, Qaza fasts, khums etc. are adequately recompensed. The elderly can also spend time towards providing guidance to the younger generation on how to adopt virtuous living reminding them that they too will ultimately have to face death, that is if they are spared from pre-mature death. In essence, the guideline of virtuous living is to adopt an ethical, moral, responsible, sensitive and conscientious conduct.

The irony however is that in our short lives, we often try to forget about death by drowning ourselves in temporary temptations. We forget that these temptations, many of which are unIslamic and sinful, are the very ones that will go down as our misdeeds in life thereby leading to punishment in the hereafter. Temporary attractions are actually a distraction in life and vices are their own punishment!

Human beings get entangled in the material world due to desires. We

suffer and cry for so many trivial things in the world but it is a rare person who cries in agony because of separation from God. God has been described as an ocean of mercy, ready to rescue His devotees from their problems. One of the doubts raised by some is, "If He is really so compassionate, why not He protect them of His own volition? Does He not know their difficulties? Where then is the need for their prayers or appeals?" A fitting reply can be given for this doubt. God is ever anxious to help those who seek His help. A river flows near a village carrying copious water. Anyone who requires water can go to it and fetch any quantity. But a person cannot expect the river to flow to him and fill the pitchers in his house. So too, God is to be approached through prayers and worship as He is readily accessible to all, without discrimination.

The worship to Allah (SWT) by following his guidelines would however be artificial if it is done simply out of fear of death. The worship to Allah (SWT) should be done because He is worthy of worship and moreover because the lifestyle that he has prescribed for us is for our own good. Thus, we should voluntarily focus our energies in elevating ourselves spiritually and following the legal-moral-ethical guidelines of Islam with certitude and conviction.

When, through advanced age, there is no longer enough energy or even enthusiasm to think of fulfilling one's dreams, human beings become like spent dynamos that turn infinitely slowly, fed by a mere trickle of electricity. The shadow then falls upon the ego and one can ostensibly be seen to have little regard for petty considerations.

At this stage of life the mind does not need to develop an austere detachment from constructive involvement but has to accept that Allah (SWT) has made life and death a continuing process with death being yet another chapter of life.

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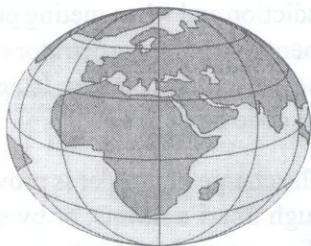
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The third part of
"Why Islam abhors
yet allows talaq"
will inshallah be
continued in our
next issue

The two big questions beg answers

by Anon

I recently came across some comments which were quite revealing on the subject of religion in general. These were from two separate readers published in a recent issue of a popular U.S. weekly magazine. They were in response to a feature article on a certain faith within the pale of Christianity which had appeared earlier in the magazine.

One of the readers who commented, believed that religious scholars, by failing to offer the right concept of God, reduce Him to a low level for easy human comprehension and, in the process, often portray Him as One Who can be equalled with an earthly mortal.

While the other reader thought that religious scholars undermine the self-trust of the followers to gain psychological control, perhaps meaning that wrong beliefs are imposed in the mind of the followers.

According to the comments the result is "a religion", which is a man-made, but not divine faith where glorification and submission to God only is central enough to quench the human thirst for spirituality.

Where God has survived displacement from the centre, then He is assigned a son or the company of the beloved among the holy saints to share with Him glorification and worship - never to be left Alone as the Absolute One - the Only One.

In terms of vulnerability, the comments appear to apply to all faiths. Was it not basically Islam which was the faith taught by all the Prophets before the Holy Prophet? Yet, it was reduced to the level of "religions" for mass acceptance by the mind that surrendered itself to the whims of the religious scholars of the time along the path of human history.

After the departure of the Holy Prophet even Islam could not remain immune to the attempts of subversion of its principles, but it has survived in its purity regarding "shirk" with the great majority of its followers. Beliefs and rituals along the border-line of "shirk" were paddled before, and new ones will, however, continue to appear through the distortion of the teachings of Islam.

The trend commented upon by the two readers appears to be an ongoing competition on the part of religious scholars in offering such beliefs as would guarantee an easy access to Paradise so as to entice converts. In almost all faiths therefore, intercession on easier terms is central in such beliefs.

It is no wonder that Islam demands conviction to be cultivated by the constant individual exercise of reasoning for one to be accepted as "Mu'min". One is then able to question and reject any parts of the preachings which are not according to the the basic teachings of Islam. The question is whether we all do so.

Our Ulema and Molvis also on their part assume an immense responsibility with an accountability in the Akherat when or if any of them paddle those beliefs which are contrary to the Qur'anic teachings and with no support of authentic ahaadis of the Ma'sumeen a.s. Here too, the question is whether they all are truly conscious of their responsibility.

CURRENT LEGAL ISSUES

English Version of
(Al-Mustahdathat Minal Masaa'il Ash-Shari'a)

According to the Edicts of Ayatullah al Uzama
Syed Ali al-Husaini Seestani

Q. Is it permissible to steal from the unbelievers in their countries, or defraud them as they themselves do?

A. It is not permissible to steal from their private and public property, neither cause any damage to such property, since the said acts could tarnish the reputation of Islam and Muslims in general. Notwithstanding the above, it is not permissible, for it amounts to treachery and breach of implicit trust, when applying for entry visa or residence. Treachery and breach of trust directed against anybody is *haraam*.

Q. Is it permissible for a Muslim to give false information to government departments in Europe to gain some financial or abstract benefits, through proper channels?

A. It is not permissible because it is lying; what has been mentioned in the question does not fall within its justifications.

Q. A person has entered a country as a visitor and his passport was stamped that he was not allowed to work. If he works illegally and gets the money 'under the table', is it *halal*?

A. If the visa was granted against an undertaking that the person should not engage in any sort of employment during the period of his stay in the country, his infringement of the undertaking is *haraam*. However, this should not deny him the wages for the work; it is permissible that he has the right of disposal over it as he deems fit.

Q. Is it permissible for a Muslim to

attend gatherings where alcoholic drink is served?

A. Eating and drinking in such gatherings is *haraam*. As for attending *per se*, its being *haraam* is based on *ihhtiyat luzumi*. However, there is no harm in attending with the aim of forbidding evil, if it is possible.

Q. What is the ruling on playing chess using the commonly known equipment? Is the ruling different if the play is conducted on a computer, using symbols?

A. Playing chess is *haraam mutlaqan* (absolutely or under any circumstances) even though betting is not used. There is no difference between the two methods of play.

Q. Some publications have this sentence printed on them, "All rights reserved for the writer or publisher". Should one observe such prohibition? With the assumption of heeding the warning, is it permissible to print such material [without taking the publishers' permission] when social or religious good is at stake?

A. Compliance is not obligatory, yet it is most befitting if permission is sought, especially that of the author. Allah is All Knowing.

Q. Modern science and technology have developed a way of blood test [DNA] to determine [for example] if the child is legitimate. A husband suspected his wife of having an affair with another man and bore him a child. The result of the test showed that the child was the other man's. It is worth nothing

that this test cannot go wrong. Can the result of blood be relied on, or the principle of *al waladu lilfirash* (the born child belongs to the bed where it was conceived) should be paramount?

A. *Al waladu Lilfirash* is a principle devised for the husband who suspects the loyalty of his wife. However, whomsoever shall attain certainty through other means, be it through blood test or any other means, should feel free to act upon it. Of course, such a proof is not a means to determining adultery, and the Islamic penal code shall not apply, except with one of the means stipulated in the Shari'a. Allah is All Knowing.

Q. Modern science and technology have developed a method by which a killer could be nailed down, using blood test [DNA]. It is so accurate and reliable that the crime weapon could also be identified. Is such a proof valid in a criminal jurisdiction and when meting punishment out to the perpetrator of a crime, or should common Islamic penal code be applied?

A. The charge of murder is proven through Shari'a means, or by scientific means that is not swayed by personal judgement. If the description in the question falls within these parameters, it is permissible for the Marji' to pass judgement in the light of such a proof. Allah is All Knowing.

Q. In the field of organ transplant surgery, it has recently been discovered that a pig's liver can be used for a human being to cure their liver disease. If a person's life can be saved by using a pig liver (or any other animal's organ), can this be allowed, even though pig is considered *haraam* animal in Islam?

A. It is permissible to transplant a pig's liver into the human body. Allah is All Knowing.



Against Homosexuality

by Sadiq Alloo, Los Angeles

There has been a lot of discussion lately on the issue of Homosexuality. There is a tendency, ever so slight, among some of us to make this behavior acceptable in the name of fairness and tolerance. On the other hand there are those who would suggest summary execution of those engaging in homosexual behavior. This confusing message can be a danger in that it can erode and dilute some of our basic values. Let me preface my suggestions to develop an effective way to address this very sensitive and critical issue, with some background information.

Homosexuality is, of course, not a new behavior. It has existed in practically all cultures and among all people, but usually in fewer numbers and in secrecy, not with an "in your face" attitude as it does in the west now. Unfortunately this is the reality of the times we live in, especially in the western societies, and we need to deal with it.

The Homosexual, or the gay as they call themselves, in an attempt to polish their image, constitute a very active and powerful lobby group. They have strong political and social ties and access to the elites of the society, especially in the US, up to and including President Clinton. Even though majority of the people in the US believe that homosexual behavior is wrong, it is intriguing, but never the less remarkable, that the homosexuals have gained public acceptance for their behavior in a very short period of time. This acceptance by the US public is a reflection of people who are committed to their cause and give due thought, time, money and effort to achieve their purpose, though a wrong one. The homosexual's agenda is a very simple one to make their behavior acceptable as NORMAL, and in the process recruit more to their ranks. They have a sophisticated and multifaceted campaign to achieve their goals. These include active participation in social and political issues other than their immediate ones, like feeding the hungry and dealing with

human right issues. They promote their agenda through legislation, presenting themselves as victims of prejudice and discrimination, helping to enact the gender discrimination act, legalizing and securing full benefits for same gender marriage, funding research similar to the hypothalamus issue (which shows a genetic propensity to homosexuality), teaching at even kindergarten level that the two-male or the two female can make a family unit which is an acceptable alternative that is even comparable to the traditional MOM and POP family, religious and moral blurring on the stand by establishing gay churches and synagogues, etc.

They have been known to protest at churches and mosques who have dared to even mention that homosexuality is a deviant behavior and is morally wrong and all this in a successful effort to intimidate and silence their critics. No politician now dares take a clear stand against homosexuality, even if it contradicts his belief and values, for the fear of incurring the wrath of the homosexuals. No one wants to be labeled as "homophobic." Since politicians as such are not known for having a strong backbone or taking a strong stand on moral grounds in the first place, this entrenches them dangerously to the wrong side of the issue.

The most effective milestone in the homosexual movement, was probably when in 1976 the American Psychiatric Association (APA) declared that homosexuality was no longer to be considered an illness but was to be regarded merely as an orientation or a sexual variant. The rest, as they say, is history. This made a lot of people very suspicious of the scientific community, who went against known scientific data that the homosexual behavior can be changed. Even though the APA has taken an official stand, this debate continues and many prominent members of APA oppose this stand. Again this has happened and continues to happen even in religious circles, amongst Muslims and others, where experts or priests make pronouncements in favour of those from whom they stand

to gain favors at the expense of the masses and against clear moral and/or scientific stands supporting the contrary or opposite views.

The strength of the movement was demonstrated by the outbreak of AIDS. Up to that point in history, there was a standard to deal with ALL communicable diseases. The scientifically developed and tested system that is in place to contain communicable diseases was bypassed with political muscle. As a result, the disease spread very rapidly and affected many innocent lives through blood supply and other preventable methods whose implementation was suppressed politically. AIDS, a communicable disease up to that point that mainly affected the homosexuals, was forced to become a political issue and became the exception to the rule. The innocent were put at risk and their lives made a living hell, some were even lost just for a political gain. The lie that is being promoted is that AIDS is equally rampant amongst the heterosexuals as it is amongst the homosexuals. Statistics contradicts this statement.

The homosexual movement has a strong network of support groups who encourage each other to "come out of the closet", thus advancing and actively promoting this behavior. They thrive on conflict amongst the family and/or community members. They have been known to provide moral, psychological, social, and financial support to any one of their own who is making the transition into their lifestyle or who is "coming out of the closet", so to speak.

They use proven methodologies in changing social acceptability and behavior towards themselves. Like the shows on television, they will introduce the radical issue which will provoke a hue and cry from all quarters the first time out, the second time there is less and in subsequent times the opposition will die out. They then discuss, or frame the issue as it is known, to convince us of their legitimacy and how wrong, narrow minded and bigoted

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(...from page 67)

all these moralists are. The trick is to say it enough times, and what was once a taboo to even talk about is becoming normal, acceptable, and even desirable to more and more people.

They now have an annually "Gay Pride Parade" in many US cities with full fledged TV coverage. A "Gay Pride Month" has been established in some school districts to remove bigotry and prejudice.

Additionally, colleges and universities have a profound impact on the intellectual development of our young people. It is the time in their lives where new and independent thoughts are introduced, incubate, and develop. However, most of these institutions are a bedrock of secular extremism and promote all other values except the divine ones. In these circles, it is politically and socially acceptable to talk about, promote and experiment with all behaviors, homosexuality included, but to discuss and further divine values is considered being close minded and narrow. The argument from some of the elites of these institutions is that we need to adhere to the separation of church and state, which has historical merit. Infact, it is obvious to most observers that what is meant is to take God out of the equation and confine Him to the walls of homes, mosques, churches, and synagogues only. We, the youths and the parents, all need to be aware of these trends so as to enable us to develop an effective way to deal with these issues and inoculate ourselves against harmful behaviors.

This is a summary of our study of the homosexual movement that we undertook to try and understand various movements, religious and those based on other various causes, that have succeeded to transform themselves from being the abhorred or persecuted groups to becoming key players in the American society. Homosexual movement is one of them, the others are the Irish Catholics, the Quakers, etc.

The reason for providing the background information here is to first to come to grips with the sophisticated nature of the problem, and know who we and our youths are dealing with.

The second is to enable us to formulate an effective response to it.

Our discussion here of homosexuality is a reflection of the success of their movement to force us to address this as an issue, even though we would rather not. We do not know how many can claim, with any degree of certainty, the pervasiveness of this behavior amongst our community members. We are for sure affected by the society in which we live, however I think on this score, we as a community, have not yet been too adversely affected. In our studies of the youths of Toronto, which was subsequently published in a book entitled "Muslim Youths at the Crossroads, Advancing into the 21st Century", we did not see this as a major problem. This does not mean that it has not developed into a problem now, or that we do not need to address this as an issue now.

I believe that any discussion needs to take into consideration the following:

- We as Muslims need to state unequivocally and unambiguously that homosexuality is a deviant behavior and that there is not even an iota of doubt that Islam condemns the behavior.
- The most important thing for us as Muslims is that Islam is not our ethnicity, it is our religion which regulates our lives and from which we derive our values.
- Even though our religion allows us latitude, more than most, to ponder and reconsider some issues, homosexuality is clearly and explicitly condemned by the Quran (7:80-83, 11:77-79), the Prophet, and his progeny.
- When we have a conflict with the Quran, which is the word of God verbatim, we do not ask where the Quran went wrong but rather why are we, limited beings, in conflict with the wisdom of the absolute, God Almighty.
- As Muslims we do not make up our religion, but we receive it and we obey it.
- Thus stated, we need to clarify, that it does not mean that we hate the homosexual person but rather that we find the behavior abhorable. We want to help with sensitivity and care whoever has these tendencies, or practices such behavior. We can further point out the following:

God has created everything in pairs

each endowed with physical and psychological characteristics to complement and complete one another. The Quran (4:1) indicates that human beings have been created from one living entity (nafs), which represents the origin of both the male and the female. The human species though has included male and female since its existence. The "mating" or "spousing" of male and female sexes is original in human nature and out of this instinctive relationship the human race develops, continues and spreads.

Between the two sexes a gravitating combination of love, tenderness, and care is engendered, so that each finds in the other completeness, tranquillity, and support (Quran 30:21). Having children and loving them represents another fulfillment of the human nature (Quran 42:49-50).

It is through this spousal complementation and completion, according to the Quran (7:189), that each spouse achieves comfort, and enjoys peace of mind, satisfaction, and fulfillment. These relationships extend beyond the physical sexual contact and to psychological, spiritual relations.

The blessings of this completeness are not ended by their accomplishment, but they continue and develop through bringing forth children, raising them, and providing the whole family with material, emotional, and moral needs.

The pleasures of completion and procreation may well be extended and multiplied, when one is granted grand children, who not only represent genealogical continuation, but are also a dynamic revitalization of the human race.

Such physical-psychological-spiritual development through spousing and mating, followed by procreation, that may continue for more than one generation, ought to lead every sensible human being to be grateful to God for His successive and multiplying favors with his own family throughout his lifetime. Such persons and their happy veritable families would be models for the whole society (Quran 25:72).

- One of the criteria or litmus test of a behaviour that is beneficial to humanity at large is, "what if the action that

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(.....from page 68)

you are promoting is exercised by a majority of the people of the world? Will it advance humanity or will it retard it?" In this case human beings will cease to exist.

- If there is any truth to the claim that the male homosexual behavior could be genetic, how about the bisexuals and the lesbians. They for sure are making a choice and by our standards a wrong one too.

- The debate and the argument advanced by the homosexuals is "Be what you are," and "do not be ashamed of it". Many unsuspecting youths then start to experiment, to "discover" what they really are. They are in fact being unwittingly, and in their most suggestible period of growth, led astray with the power of suggestion and a convoluted logic. Whoever we are, whatever one might be, it is ennobling to always try to do what is right.

- Even if there is a genetic propensity towards homosexuality, it is the nobility of the human spirit that can overcome it. There are suggestions that alcoholics are genetically pre-disposed to their behavior. Furthermore, some people are inherently prone to take risks, which is an essential element for human progress and development. This pre-disposition to risk taking behavior can easily lead to the destructive behavior of gambling. We do not encourage the people with a propensity to alcoholism or gambling to keep on indulging in these vices, but rather encourage them to resist and overcome them. We should do the same with homosexual feelings and tendencies. Whether one has the orientation or harbours "homosexual genes," one's feelings and desires can not dictate behaviour. One may have a strong urge to have a homosexual contact, a heterosexual contact with one other than one's own spouse, or to steal or kill. The nobility of the human spirit is to resist, and this is what elevates the human being to the status above that of the angels.

- There is a period during our growth process where we are most comfortable with and try to bond with persons of the same gender. Some carry this behavior to an extreme and experiment with homosexuality. Some Psychiatrists still believe that those who

ior are really arrested in their development process. They avoid or are afraid to continue with the normal psychological growth. This condition is treatable by psychotherapy.

The reality of the society requires that we argue our positions, and deal with issues, as they prevail using some of the existing societal rationale. Though the thinking may fall short of our ideal, it can be an effective start in changing and moving the debate closer to our viewpoint and values. The following two points are made with this thought in mind.

- As Muslims, we identify and instinctively come to the defense of any individuals or groups who are discriminated against. This reaction is due to our foundational value and commitment to justice, and also from our own contemporary experiences, as individuals and as members of a group, who have suffered from discrimination and vilification.

While we abhor acts of discrimination against individuals or groups, we also place a high value on discretion. The individual's right of choice is a fundamental value and necessary condition for each individual to be accountable to God for his/her own actions. God's guidance secures the balance between the individual's and societal rights. No one has a right to spy into the private lives and affairs of individuals. Even when these private affairs should incidentally be known, the admonition is to keep them private and protect those involved.

However, when one openly declares one's sexual orientation, a private matter, and then demands special consideration because of it, we find this an affront to the society's well being. There are already safeguards and protections under the law against discrimination which includes heterosexuals and homosexuals. To demand further special rights and consideration based on how or who we have sex with, and claim it to be a civil rights issue, is ludicrous. To compare with and demand special protection as those who have been persecuted for their national origin, race, colour, or creed and religious beliefs is baseless and has no historical or social justification or parallels. We will then have to accede similar special demands for protection and single out groups vary

ing from those who want to have heterosexual relations to those who are left handed, when they are all currently protected under existing laws.

We are committed to uphold the family unit and its values, and protection of it as a durable, proven, most important and socially viable nucleus of any society. There is a continual struggle and effort to maintain the balance between an individual's right and society's well being. We place a higher value on the society's well being than an individual's right to actively promote counter values that will ultimately damage the society at large. We therefore have a right to resist and ensure the protection of our values against such an onslaught. This resistance should never be an aggression against any individual or groups, but a firm and principled stand against the counter values being promoted, while promoting our values in a kinder and gentler fashion with conviction. We have, indeed, a duty to promote divine wisdom and values that will advance humanity and that have withstood the test of time.

- Homosexuality is an issue that concerns most main stream Christians and Jews and we all share a common value. It can provide an opportunity to work together for the common good of the society at large.

We, as Muslims, have benefit and blessings of divine guidance and wisdom. The Quran reminds us that Allah (SWT) will change the condition of the people only if they themselves put forth the effort (13:11). If the homosexuals can promote their wrong values with vigour and succeed, we have a duty and a responsibility to not only make an effort to arrest this trend, but also to invest our time, energy, and resources to promote the divine values with as much zeal.

Our challenge is to explore and find ways to resist and counter this movement amongst our own families, immediate community, the Muslim Ummah, and the whole of humanity. This is our destiny and the challenge of the times we live in. Action more than rhetoric will make us worthy of Allah's (SWT) help and mercy and will endear us to Him. The question is what are you, and in turn all of us collectively, going to do to promote our values, and counter this threat?



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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

Q. Who are Jinn, Satan, Iblees and Ifreet?

A. "Jinn": In many passages of the Qur'an "Jinn" and man are spoken of together. In an ayat 'man' is stated to have been created from clay while "Jinn" from fire. There is much argument about the real nature of "Jinn" but it is safe to say that they are a creation of God, who are hidden from our eyes and have been given "intelligence" like human beings and are required to follow the Sheriat sent by Allah.

"Iblis" and "Satan" refer to the same person. He is from "Jinn", was elevated to worship Allah with the angels; and that is why he was included in the order of doing "Sajdah" towards Adam (a.s.).

"Ifreet" is a "huge, powerful Jinn".

Q: Can ladies and gents sit together in religious and social gatherings?

The Ithna-asheri in our town have established a union to perform religious ceremonies. They hire halls to hold Majlises and in these majlises and other social functions, our ladies and gents sit in the same room or hall where there is no purdah at all.

The argument put by them is "when our ladies go out for work or for shopping, they are not in Purdah; then why purdah in majlis? Also, they say that discrimination is prohibited in the country.

I, by this letter, seek guidance from you, according to the rules of the Sheriat?

A. I was shocked to read that majlises and other functions are being held where the ladies and gents sit in the same room or hall where there is no purdah at all".

It is amusing to note that they are

doing it in the name of avoiding 'discrimination'. Your country is essentially a Christian one. Neither the Catholics nor the Protestants admit women into priesthood. Catholic nuns are obliged to cover their whole body even in their dormitories; and a woman going before the Pope must cover her whole body, even is she, in her public life, is a 'striptease artist'.

So, the 'anti-discrimination' laws have not compelled the Christians to relax their rules that are obviously 'based on sex-discrimination.

Now coming to the Shia Ithna-asheri Shariat:-

It is the unanimous ruling of all the Mujtahids, right from the beginning up to now, that:-

1. A woman must cover her entire body and hair in such a way that it is not seen by any man who is not within prohibited degree. (Within prohibited degree: with whom marriage is prohibited, like father, brother, son etc.);

2. It is 'Haram' (unlawful) for a man to look at the body (or part thereof) of a woman who is not within prohibited degree, whether it be with lusty intention or without such institution. Also it is 'haram' for a woman to look at the body of a man who is not within prohibited degree;

3. The above rules are for her whole body except the 'face' and hands (from the wrists to the finger-tips) Note: Neck, ears and hair are not included in 'Face' and must remain covered.

4. So far as the face and hands (as explained above) are concerned, it is the unanimous ruling of all the mujtahids that it is haram (unlawful) to look at the face and hands of a woman, if that look is with lusty intention;

5. The only difference of opinion is about looking at the face and hands of a woman (who is not within prohibited degree) without any lusty intention. Some Mujtahids say that is allowed; others say that is not allowed.

Mujtahids like Agha-e-Khoui, Agha-e-Milani, Agha-e-Shahrudi and Agha-e-Shariatmadari have said that it is not haraam to look at the face and hands of a woman who is not within prohibited degree, without any lusty intention. But even then, they say that is 'Ihtiyat-e-Wajib' to refrain from such looking.

Looking at non-Muslim women, who usually do not cover their bodies, is allowed if it is without any lusty intention. Now if someone is prepared to reach the furthest limit, he can do so only if the womenfolk are prepared to cover their whole body from head to foot in a proper way (not in revealing clothes). To put it in a more clear way, a woman must cover herself as is done in Ihram, covering her neck, hair and ears also, leaving only that part of the face open which is washed in Wudhu.

I think it is high time for Jamaats to make it compulsory for women to attend majlises and other function in proper Islamic dress, even if they sit behind a partition. The Jews compel their congregation to wear skull caps and prayer-Shawls when praying in a synagogue, and it is not considered as an undue hardship. Why our own Jamats and institutions cannot enforce such rules?

I know that some women do not observe purdah in their daily lives. Someone may say that to make such women observe purdah within the Imambara or majlises amounts to hypocrisy! But it is not so. By making them observe the rules of Sheriat every time they come to the majlis or into Imambara, we do remind them what they should be and are not; we make them remember how a good Shia Ithna-asheri woman should dress. This 'reminding' is the most important factor in preserving our heritage of faith. Remove these restrictions and your children will not know the difference between the Muslim and non-Muslim ways of life.

Dear Children,

Asalam un alaikum.

Welcome to the third Children Page of the *Federation Samachar* and thank you young boys and girls for your response to the prize questions and puzzles. The response was again fair with the winner this time being Gulamabbas M. Peera of Jaffery Academy, Mombasa. He is 14 years of age and his comment on Majlises are published on this page. Congratulations Mohamed.

We remind children to send in their short stories, jokes, puzzles etc. which will be considered for use in future issues. In this issue we have one puzzle (Word Search) and one question for you to answer. Solve the puzzle and send us your answers to the question and we have a prize of TShs. 10,000/- for the best answer. Send in your entries on the form below and address it to:

Figure Out
Federation Samachar
P.O. Box 6710
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Name.....
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PRIZE QUESTION



As a child or youth do you feel it is appropriate to go to Madrasah daily (excluding weekends) or say, two or three days a week (with more intensified teaching), thereby allowing enough time for recreation and school homework?

THE WORD SEARCH

by Sarfaraz Daya, age 10

In this Word Search, solvers are expected to find at least 15 words (there are 19) associated to Prophet Muhammad (SWT).

M	Y	S	A	W	B	H	S	Y	A	R	U	Q
X	E	Z	Q	B	Y	B	U	O	L	S	U	U
R	F	C	S	U	Q	I	W	E	I	R	R	B
V	M	L	C	R	Z	L	A	S	A	G	J	A
Z	A	I	D	A	I	A	M	N	K	Y	A	I
Q	W	E	R	Q	T	T	E	Y	H	Y	R	U
A	B	D	U	L	M	U	T	T	A	L	I	B
M	U	I	O	P	A	B	A	A	D	S	M	D
E	F	G	H	A	D	A	F	J	I	K	L	L
N	Z	X	Z	C	I	V	B	N	J	M	A	A
A	D	M	R	Y	N	O	P	S	A	S	S	A
H	A	G	H	D	A	I	L	R	U	A	H	T
H	I	J	R	A	H	L	I	A	R	B	I	J

Previous solution: Muslim Ibn Aqeel, Muslim Ibn Awsaja, John bin Huwain, Zuhayr bin Qayn. Zaid bin Harith.



Mujtaba: Why is a computer never hungry?

Sarfaraz: Because it has enough 'bytes'

Teacher: Why are you late to class?

Salim: Because of a road sign I had to pass on the way .

Teacher: And what did the sign have to do with you?

Salim: The sign said, " school ahead, go slow."

Hassan: My father is always scared to cross the road.

Munir: Why do you say that?

Hassan: He always holds my hand before crossing the road.

Teacher: what would happen if electricity had not been invented?

Student: We would have to watch TV with candle light.

Our Majalis

by Gulamabbas M. Peera, age 14

In our Majalis I would like the preacher to talk mainly on these subjects and explain them better:-

* What is Islam and why is it the best religion of all. Also how should we practice what is taught to us by Islam in our daily lives. This would help me get better knowledge of my religion and it would make my faith stronger.

* The present vices we have within ourselves e.g. backbiting, lying etc. and how to remove these vices. They also should preach to us how to develop good character e.g. patience, how to help our fellow brothers etc. This would help all of us to become better practicing Muslims because we would try to acquire a good character and refrain from vices.

* In our majlises there also should be narrations of the Prophets and the Imams and the preachers should keep on reminding us of the high character they possessed. This would guide us to improve our characters and we will also know our Imams better. These all would make majlises more enlightening to the people and make us better practicing Muslims.



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Pakistan press pays tribute to Mother Teresa

A section of the press in Pakistan paid tribute to Mother Teresa by highlighting her secular qualities in serving humanity. The 'Muslim' wrote, "it was a measure of her greatness that she did not discriminate among Christians, Hindus and Muslims. Although she was (an) Albanian by birth and a Christian by faith, she perhaps was the greatest exponent of secular attitude." The 'Pakistan Times' said: "Mother Teresa was one of the personalities who stood for a Universal message of love, tolerance, peace and selfless service to humankind without considerations of caste, religion, nationality or else."

The 'Muslim' wrote that her deeds not only immortalised her but also the city of Calcutta. "No doubt, whenever people think of her they will simultaneously think of that great megapolis." The 'Pakistan Times' wrote that Mother Teresa was a link between God and the people and such people are seldom born.

During her life-time Mother Teresa did not attract much attention from the Pakistani press although it named social worker Abdus Sattar Eidhi "the Mother Teresa of Pakistan." But her sudden death, coming on the heels of the accident that took Princess Diana's life, seems to have touched the Pakistani press. A newspaper, on its international page, carried Calcutta-dated story about Mother Teresa with a heading "Saint of Gutters, Queen of hearts reunite".

Chess in Tehran?

The Asian zonal men and women chess championship was held in Tehran some months ago with the Iranians being represented. In consideration of the fact that chess is a forbidden game, can someone tell us on what reasoning the Iranians not only hosted the championship but even strongly participated in it?

Salman Rushdie goes bonkers?

Controversial writer, Salman Rushdie has suggested in his recent article in *The New Yorker* that Princess Diana died in a "sublimated sexual assault". The article has won him few friends and there has understandably been a loud outcry against his rantings. Even the very people who supported him when Iran's late Ayatullah Khomeini passed a death Fatwa against him are now saying that he is totally out of his mind for writing in the way he did about Diana's unfortunate death.

We have a copy of what Rushdie wrote but would never forgive ourselves if we were to waste our precious space for such trash. Editor

Results for previous USA Lottery Visa

[courtesy of Gulamabbas Dhala, Los Angeles]

The New Visa Lottery Application for the USA will open on 24 October, 1997 (do not mail prior to this date) and closes in November, 1997.

In the previous Visa lottery, some 4.7 million qualified entries were received during the February 3 to March 5, 1997 entry period. Some 1.3 million applications were disqualified for failure to comply with entry directions. The results (countrywise) were:

AFRICA

ALGERIA 865
ANGOLA 23
BENIN 56
BOTSWANA 2
BURKINA FASO 20
BURUNDI 5
CAMEROON 1,007
CAPE VERDE 143
CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC 1
CHAD 22
COMOROS 0
CONGO 41
CONGO (DEM. REP.) 395

COTE D'IVOIRE 433

DJIBOUTI 20
EGYPT 3,650
EQUATORIAL
GUINEA 1
ERITREA 450
ETHIOPIA 2,674
GABON 7
GAMBIA, THE 204
GHANA 6,035
GUINEA 453
GUINEA-BISSAU 2
KENYA 1,329
LESOTHO 0
LIBERIA 1,708

LIBYA 69
MADAGASCAR 8
MALAWI 37
MALI 163
MAURITANIA 33
MAURITIUS 29
MOROCCO 1,923
MOZAMBIQUE 0
NAMIBIA 4
NIGER 0
NIGERIA 6,007
RWANDA 59
SENEGAL 934
SEYCHELLES 0
SIERRA LEONE 5,364

SOMALIA 764
SOUTH AFRICA 671
SUDAN 1,709
SWAZILAND 7
TANZANIA 268
TOGO 643
TUNISIA 162
UGANDA 272
ZAMBIA 129
ZIMBABWE 76

ASIA

AFGHANISTAN 131
BAHRAIN 0
BANGLADESH 6,075
BHUTAN 0
BRUNEI 0
BURMA 298
CAMBODIA 26
HONG KONG SPECIAL
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGION 373
INDONESIA 216
IRAN 587
IRAQ 65
ISRAEL 92
JAPAN 440
JORDAN 126
KUWAIT 13
LAOS 10
LEBANON 67
MALAYSIA 109
MALDIVES 0
MONGOLIA 22
NEPAL 296
NORTH KOREA 1
OMAN 0
PAKISTAN 3,391
QATAR 0
SAUDI ARABIA 20
SINGAPORE 22
SRI LANKA 487
SYRIA 72
THAILAND 103
UAE 6
YEMEN 78

EUROPE

ALBANIA 4,233
ANDORRA 0
ARMENIA 1,037
AUSTRIA 152
AZERBAIJAN 355
BELARUS 655
BELGIUM 91
BOSNIA 143
BULGARIA 5,411
CROATIA 182
CYPRUS 32
CZECH REP. 147
DENMARK 82
ESTONIA 68
FINLAND 184
FRANCE 545
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GERMANY 2,510
GREECE 74
HUNGARY 298
ICELAND 66
IRELAND 763
KAZAKHSTAN 425
ITALY 565
KYRGYZSTAN 80

LATVIA 203
LITHUANIA 1,418
LUXEMBOURG 3
FORMER
YUGOSLAV
REPUBLIC 415
MALTA 16
MOLDOVA 282
MONACO 0
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MARTINIQUE 1
ARUBA 2
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ANTILLES 10
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RUSSIA 3,768
SAN MARINO 0
SERBIA 696
SLOVAKIA 418
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ISLANDS 0
TONGA 68
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