

*Federation
Samachar*
2018

**Allamah Sayyid Saeed
Akhtar Rizvi passes away**

**Allamah Rizvi
1927 - 2002**

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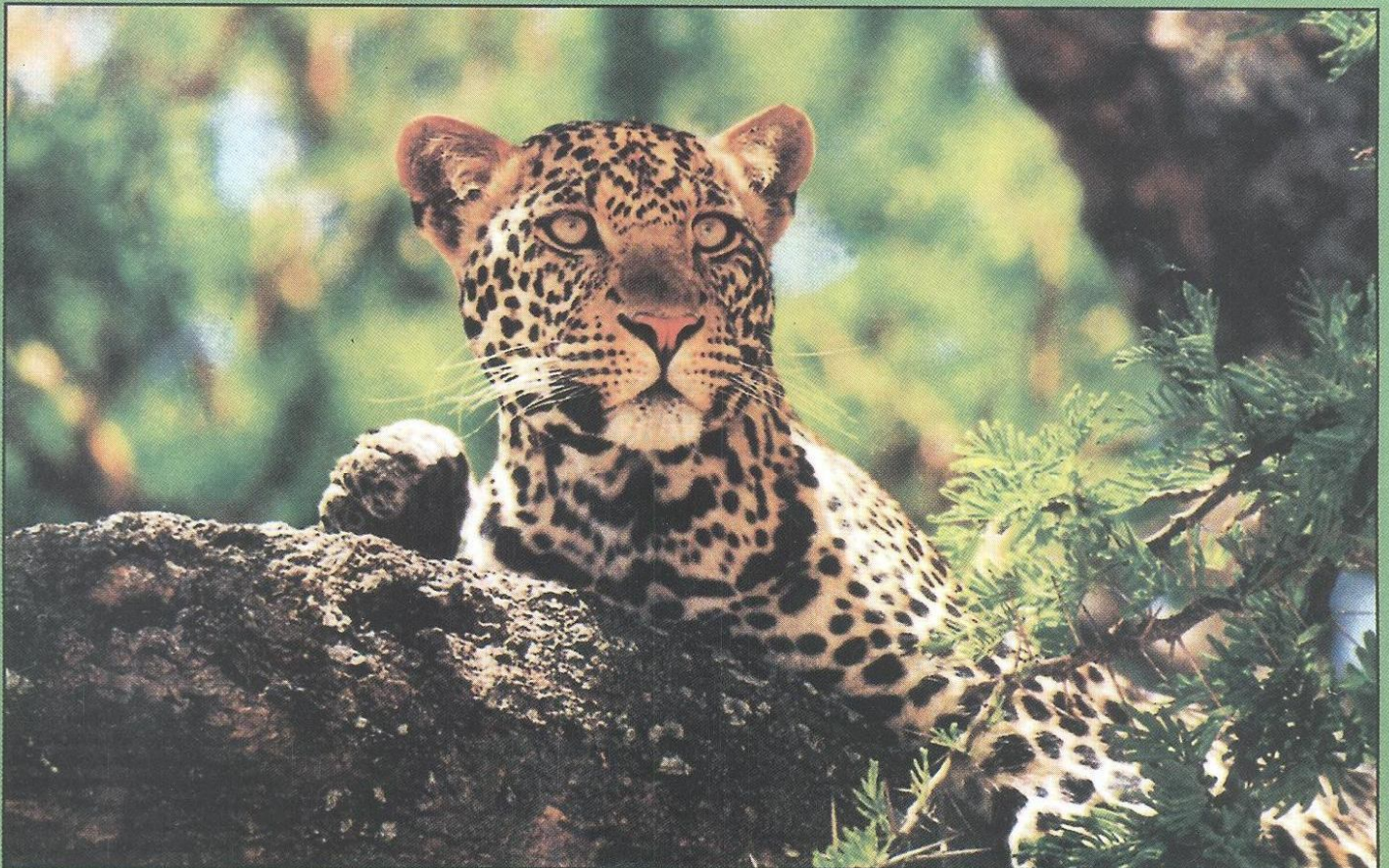
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Contents

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Editor:

Munir Daya

Deputy Editor:

Mukhtar Damji

Production Editor

(Web page and Samachar)

Amirali Shams Virjee

Sub Editor (Women pages)

Sakina Zainul Dato

Advertising:

Abdul Dato

Circulation:

Mrs. Fatim Haji

Fatima Patel

Salim Kassam

(Distribution in D Salaam)

Photographs and archives:

Murtaza Jivraj

Internet Edition:

Amirali Shams Virjee

North American Edition:

Baqir Alloo, Gulam Sajan,
Nazmul Damji, Sibtain Jaffer
and Bashir Valji

European Edition:

Akhtar Jaffer

Correspondence to:

The Editor,

Federation Samachar

P.O. Box 6710,

Dar es Salaam.

E-mail:

Samachar@raha.com

Internet edition:

<http://www.africafederation.org>

COVER PICTURE

**Marhum Allamah Sayyid Saeed
Akhtar Rizvi, the pioneer of the
Bilal Muslim Mission.**

CONTENTS

Page 5

Editorial -

*Our media needs to be
strengthened*

Pages 7 -10

Mailbag -

Your letters to the Editor

Pages 11 - 42

Muslim World News

Pages 43 - 49

Obituaries including full
coverage on Marhum
Allama Rizvi's death

Pages 51 - 52

Election News

Pages 53 - 81

Around Africa

Page 83

Health News

Page 85

Women

Page 87

Society

Pages 89 - 90

Heritage

Pages 92 - 94

Your Questions Answered

Pages 95 - 96

Family issues

Page 96

Anon

Pages 97 - 98

Off the cuff

Page 99

Why Education

Pages 100 - 103

Letter from North America

Pages 104 - 106

Letter from India

Pages 105 - 106

Thinking Aloud

Pages 107 - 108

From Down Under

Page 109

Wayside Wisdom

Page 113

Name the Personalities

Page 114

The Back Page

COLUMNISTS

Baqir Alloo - Dateline Toronto - Page 19

Sakina Zainul Dato - Women issues - Page 89

Mohamed Khalfan - Family issues - Page 99

Hasnain Walji - Off the cuff - Page 101

Akbar Jaffer - Why Education - Page 103

Ghulam Sajan - Letter from North America - Page 104

Syed Ali Mahdi - Letter from India - Page 108

Hassan Ali M. Jaffer - Thinking Aloud - Page 109

Dr. Asghar Moledina - From Down Under - Page 111

Munir H. Daya - Wayside Wisdom - Page 113

The views expressed in the *Federation Samachar* are not necessarily
those of the Africa Federation or the Editorial Board.

From the Editor's Desk

Our media needs to be strengthened

The print media in our community is at an elementary stage with magazines often creeping up only to stop publication after a few issues. Almost all our magazines fail to create a strong first impression because of poor content, typesetting or general lay-out. Exceptionally some magazines do have good contents but poor photo quality, editing, presentation and printing undermine this.

In our magazines, we sometimes see articles that are simply picked from other sources while in some publications we see sports coverage of international teams rather than the progress of our own youths. Some articles even contradict basic Islamic values but this is not very obvious because the subject matter is shrouded to give purported advice in psychology or health matters. In one Madressah magazine, a prize crossword for our children had a clue related to alcohol not because the composer was irreligious but because the crossword puzzle was picked up from another magazine.

For some reason many of our Jamaats have not considered it a priority to propagate our activities within the community through a strong media or to establish media links with the outside world to propagate our viewpoint of events. This despite the fact that an effective media also ensures archival preservation.

Many of our publications are ordinary not because we do not have capable manpower but because we have left our media to unqualified individuals only

because they have the time to do such work voluntarily. This has always been the trend, a trend that needs to be discontinued by ensuring that we encourage our students to pursue journalism even if on a free-lance basis.

To uplift the standard of magazines in the community the Africa Federation (AF) can call for all Jamaat publications in Africa to be centrally registered with published copies having to be sent to the Secretariat. After perusing contents, verifying regularity and obtaining the editorial objectives of the magazines, the AF can announce an official list of registered magazines as a form of readership guide. The object would be to monitor and offer advice to editors of our publications on ways to improve quality and coverage. When community magazines are monitored for quality and regularity it would encourage Editorial Boards to adhere to required standards or else risk deregistration.

Coming to the Federation Samachar, the decision to make it global has led to changes in its general format with more international news and various columnists from around the world now penning columns. The North American Edition printed in Toronto continues to cater for our Jamaats there and hopefully beginning from this issue a European Edition will be launched to promote readership in European Jamaats.

Going global is a gradual task with the ultimate objective being for all Jamaats worldwide to have a direct link with the *Samachar* Editorial Board to

ensure a smooth flow of important news, notices and announcements.


Such links are also necessary for the AF Web Page and for that matter the web pages of all our regional organisations.

The lack of a coordinated media policy has made the situation somewhat haphazard. To regulate this anomaly it is important for Jamaats to create a media and public relations portfolio in their committees. The person responsible should monitor and report on progress of all the Jamaat's newsletters or magazines and its web page if existent. This media man in the Jamaat should idyllically be the representative of the Jamaat for the *Samachar* and the AF Web page. Smaller Jamaats can introduce newsletters if the cost for a magazine is not justified.

For example, the Dar es Salaam Jamaat launched the *Dar Samachar* last year to update its members on activities. This began as a 16 page publication and was increased to 24 pages for the second issue. The Jamaat has now also launched its own web page while a number of its strategic individual institutions like the Tabligh Section and the Al Muntazir Schools also have web pages to be linked to the main Jamaat Webpage.

At the Federation level, an External Media link needs to be created to stop our present grin and bear it attitude towards what is wrongly written against us by the world press. This link would allow us to be better understood by others through prompt corrections of wrong reporting and by inviting the outside media to our main functions.

Munir Daya



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Mailbag

Dear brother,

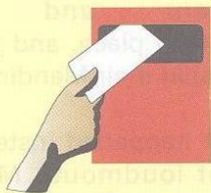
Editorial was apt

I refer to the Editorial 'Islam needs to be portrayed intellectually' and consider it as crucial for Muslim organisations to be respected and accepted in the modern world.

So far it has been easy for many of us to strongly argue over who or what is right and after such debates a nice meal is had following which, it's back to normal business.

While Muslims in the world have many situations to grieve about and to fight back against, it is a disservice to Islam when we fight back in a feeble way to only allow further opportunities for others to humiliate us.

**S. Suleman
Karachi.**



Your letters

Views, opinions or articles should be addressed to:

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

All letters sent to the Federation Samachar by mail or to our email samachar@raha.com will be considered for publication unless the author specifically refuses its publication.

Letters will be subject to editing for brevity and content. Destructive letters and those lacking objectivity or reason will not be considered for publication.

Readers are requested to keep their letters short and to the point.

Dear brother,

Sense should prevail instead of senseless killings

When in February, 2002 I heard about the incident in Afghanistan when the Minister of Air Transport and Tourism in Afghanistan's interim government, Abdul Rahman, was beaten to death by Afghan pilgrims at Kabul airport, I considered this in line with your Editorial of the *Samachar* January issue.

Dr. Abdul Rahman was beaten to death by Afghan pilgrims at Kabul airport as he prepared to leave for India, and like violent street demonstrations this made good news for the western media on how 'religious' pilgrims could kill a man prior to going for Haj.

One view said that angry pilgrims assaulted the Minister following rumours that he cancelled one of the flights taking them to Saudi Arabia to perform the hajj in order to use the plane to travel to India with his family. Another version said that this was a political move by those against the Minister. However when one pilgrim sitting with other individuals in their white robes was asked by CNN what he thought of the murder, he replied, "we only sent him to heaven. So why the big fuss." This reply served to tell others how violent Muslims are when we actually belong to a very peaceful Faith.

Take the example of journalist Robert Fisk. His gruesome murder in Pakistan shot on video showed others how violent Muslims can be. Ironically this allowed others to kill many innocent Muslims with an excuse of seeking the original perpetrators. By infringing Islamic laws to portray Islam, the wrongdoers are undermining the very faith they claim to be promoting.

**A. Hemani
Karachi.**

Dear brother,

Let us have matrimonials

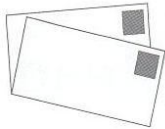
Your work for the *Federation Samachar* is very commendable and we can see it growing now in the number of pages year in, year out. Well done and keep it up. My suggestion is that why don't we add an extra page or column for matrimonial matches so that it can be easy for us to look for matching partners.

We can group such matrimonials according to age, education acquired, skills and so on. Just giving the first name is not bad if individuals don't want to be identified. e.g. "Mariam, Age 26yrs, completed Form VI, staying at Undali St. For more details contact our Marriage Committee in-charge who treats all communication with strict confidentiality."

I think this added column will increase the sales of the *Samachar* and also the ladies will be eager to buy rather than waiting for their husbands, or fathers, or brothers to get them a copy. Thanking you in advance if my suggestion is considered.

**Zaitun
Dar es Salaam.**

We have a facility for matrimonials that is being advertised for the past few issues but there has been no response. Editor.



Dear brother,

Sometimes our Mullas and leaders hijack Islam

Why is the Babri Masjid so important to the Muslims there? Of what value is this to the Muslims? The case is not similar to the Palestine issue or the Kashmir issue where the rights of the people were usurped. Is Babri Masjid worth fighting for?

The answer is simple while tragic and distressing. The problem lies not in the Muslims, the Ummah or even of course Islam, itself. The problem lies only with those who have 'hijacked Islam'. And they are the so-called leaders and mullahs who call themselves Muslims and servants of Allah (s.w.t.), yet are so egoistic, full of false pride and hollow beliefs. These leaders and mullahs are the ones who have always corrupted Islam while pushing its devoted and sincere faithful to the path of fire.

Let me try to explain what I am saying with another example in India, and the illogical views of these leaders and mullahs. Lucknow, a town which prides itself as a seat of Shiism and a powerhouse for Muharram, observed the martyrdom of the third Imam in such a passionate and beautiful way, that not only did people come from far away to attend, but also non-Muslims in particular Hindus came for Muharram as well. In addition, both Hindus and the Sikhs always took part by reciting elegies and other poems in praise of our Maula.

In Lucknow, literally thousands of processions were organised in

Muharram by the Shias in all parts of the town. People would just be speechless at the sight and the love for our Imam who had passed away centuries ago. Plus, the Hindus also organised their own processions in praise of our third Imam.

Well, one day, our Ahle Sunnat brothers and sisters wanted to join in this observation of our Maula, and share their respect and love for the Imam. They wanted to hold their own procession on the outskirts of the town, so that it would not bother others. Well, what happened? The Shia leaders and mullahs cried foul, and raised passion of the Shias into banning the intended Sunni procession, which was scheduled to be held on the outskirts of the town. This despite the fact that many Shia processions (Jaloos) were being organised.

The Shia leaders and mullahs rallied the Shias against these Sunnis, who were only trying to observe the wishes of Janabe Saiyadah. This resulted into major riots, chaos, confusion and deaths. Once again, to no surprise at all, the leaders and mullahs hijacked Islam. As a result of this illogical and irrational stand of the Shia leaders and mullahs, the State put a ban on all these processions. So for 30 years or so, all processions were stopped, just because of false pride among a few. So what did the stand of these few so-called staunch Muslims prove? Who is

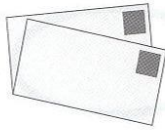
to blame for tarnishing Islam like that? What were their actual motives, aside from getting their names in the press and establishing themselves as leaders?

Now with the Babri issue. Some intellectuals and rational people have said that okay, the Hindus are saying that there are 10 apparent birth places of Ram, which the Mughals may have built their monuments and other structures on. Fine. They need to be politely told that please pick one of those sites, as Ram can only be born at one place, and we will take it from there. If it is the Babri Masjid that you choose, then the Muslims will simply relocate the Masjid to another convenient and less controversial place, and let the Hindus build their Mandir there.

But what happened instead? A bunch of loudmouth Muslim leaders and mullahs raised their voices and rallied the public once again. This too for a place where no prayers were being held. This was a Mosque they had no concern about just a few months ago for many years. Well, what did this result into? The Masjid was destroyed. Both Muslims and Hindus were killed, shops and businesses were looted and burnt. What did that prove? What image did that provide to Islam? Who really won, and who really lost? Who really suffered and who really emerged as the victorious one? Islam was once more hijacked. A shame. Very unfortunate.

It is the few leaders and mullahs who in their own twisted view and interpretation of Islam are destroying Islam from within. Very-very tragic...

**Hasan Rizvi
India.**



Dear brother,

Observations on the *Samachar* January issue

May I make some observations on some of the issues raised in the *Federation Samachar* (Volume 33, No. 2 of January 2002 issue). This issue was colourful and attractive for which I congratulate the printers for having done an excellent job.

Sayed Ali Mehdi's letter was thought provoking. His call for a shift from oratory to the written word as being indispensable ought not be limited to our leaders, thinkers and orators but also equally be applicable to our resident Alims and madressa teachers. It seems it is only in secular education that we insist that teachers employed are qualified, trained and have written or published articles and books. Such requirements are not sought when recruiting Alims or teachers for religious purpose. Perhaps it is the fault of those who are given the task of employing them in not knowing the proper criteria to be used when interviewing them.

Since Sayed Mehdi has touched on the World Federation, the people I have talked to have expressed their reservation about the World Federation in that some members do not benefit at all and some benefit more than their due share and therefore there is no equity. World Federation has limited resources but the demand of it is much greater both in the West and in the East. There is a tendency to channel resources more to the East based on cheapness even when funds are raised in the West. In my humble opinion the money should first be utilised where it is raised and any

extra funds should then be allocated based on need. Indeed projects like housing and school in the West can be undertaken by use of commercial loans and can be run commercially (side by side with charity), the loans and interest being paid from rents and fees received.

There is a feeling based on generalisation that poverty is found in the East (including Africa) only and not in the West. All the Jammats need to undertake a scientific research study to identify the root causes of poverty wherever our communities are so that appropriate remedial measures can be taken to alleviate these. Also, instead of people helping individually the funds should be channelled through Jamaats.

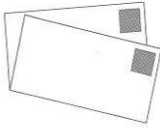
Your editorial was interesting but I have reservations as far as Americans are concerned. The late Imam Khomaini and others have branded them as *Shaitan*. They have in place puppet rulers in the Islamic States. In the pretext of teaching Bin Ladan a lesson, they entered Afghanistan and massacred innocent civilian men, women and children. Did America get Usama? The answer is no. Did they expect to get him? I doubt very much. Was the massacre necessary? Definitely not. Now the British government is thinking of attacking Saddam and innocent Iraqi Shia men, women and children would be killed. But thank Allah (SWT) that he did not get the support of his labour MPs. The world had turned a blind eye when Saddam was massacring Shias in Iraq.

They preferred a weaker Saddam to ensure there was no threat. Otherwise if they really wanted Saddam it is very easy to get him without any bloodshed by supporting the opposition. But no, the West did not and does not prefer such an easy option.

It was interesting that you raised your observation about a Canadian doctor reading the Holy Qur'an. A few days before coming to the UK for permanent settlement, I decided to stay at a tourist hotel with my family in Dar es Salaam. I became bored and I wanted something to read. I noticed in every room, except for a Bible, there were no other reading materials and I had no option but to read it. It dawned upon me that we, the Muslims, were complacent in this issue and we need to get our priority right. Can't we have a Holy Qur'an in each hotel room throughout the world? Yes, we can and we need urgently to look into this. For Africa a Kiswahili translated Qur'an would be more appropriate.

Ghulam Abbas Sajan raised an interesting issue about leaders being *muttaki* which is an important criterion. We were lucky in having Marhum Mulla Saheb as a President of World Federation as he was knowledgeable in Islam. But there is generally a big shortage of leaders with appropriate Islamic credentials. From practical experience when I was elected as a committee member of the Jamaat, to my surprise I found

(continued on page 10)



Dear brother,

(...from page 9)

the religious knowledge possessed by other committee members was pathetic and the big irony is that they were in charge of a religious institution. What is needed is that an Alim should be consulted before any decision is taken on religious issues.

If I am to lay down the criteria of a good leader, a leader should have charisma, be humble and honest. He or she should listen to views and opinions and should take actions which are for the betterment of the whole Jamaat.

In 1986, I was in Toronto for a different purpose and there I had the opportunity to attend a NASIMCO conference as an observer. I don't know the present position but I had noticed the members were deliberating the issues calmly and everyone had a chance to speak and contribute. The members were very well educated and experienced and some of them were professionally qualified. An organisation can do wonders if their members are united.

Mohammed Baqir Hemraj
Birmingham.

Wrong qualifications were attributed to me

In your last issue brother Brother Mohamed Baker Hemraj wrote a letter with some reference to me with regard to my qualifications.

While I have written to him separately, I wish to point out that the academic qualifications attributed to me in your December 2000 issue were inaccurate.

I have not obtained my three degrees [MSc, Mphil and PhD] in two years. In fact, it is impossible. MSc, i.e., Masters Degree itself is a 2-year course. Attributing the wrong qualifications to me would indirectly cause undue prejudice against the Aligarh Muslim University, which is a well-known institution internationally recognised for its high academic standard and specialization in all disciplines of science, arts, commerce and applied sciences.

My actual academic qualifications are BSc (Hons) 1967 to 1970, MSc in Chemistry 1970 to 1972, MPhil is a part of doctorate work with theory papers and dissertations. PhD in Analytical Chemistry 1972 to 1975. The title of my PhD thesis was, 'Synthesis and analytical applications of inorganic ion-exchangers.'

I produced six research papers from my PhD work, which were published in six different international journals of chemistry. After my PhD, I was awarded scholarship by CSIR for post-doctoral research studies. I have taught in Aligarh Muslim University [one year], University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt [9 years] and University of Swaziland [8 years].

Now I am the Principal of Al-Muntazir Islamic Seminary.

Sayyed QMM Kamoopuri
Dar es Salaam.

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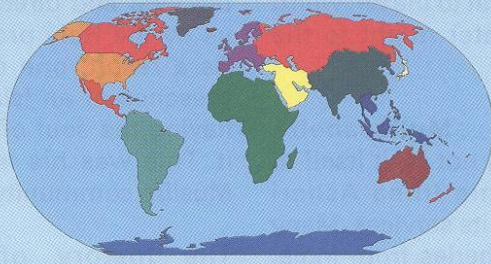
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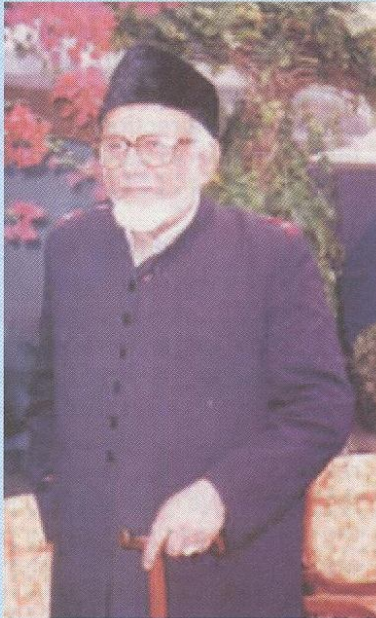
Knowledge and Ignorance

In reply to some one who posed Imam Ali (as) a difficult question, Imam Ali (as) said : 'Ask in order to understand, and do not ask in order to find fault, for surely the ignorant man who wants to learn resembles a man of knowledge, and surely a man of knowledge who wants to be difficult resembles an ignorant man who wants to find fault.'

Muslim World News



Mulla Asgherali M. M. Jaffer His Legacy and Our Future



(1936 - 2000)

Two years have passed since the death of Marhum Mulla Asgherali M M Jaffer. The community moves on, as it must do. All the questions we may ask and answers we may seek about his contributions towards the cause of Islam, are multiplied tenfold by the fact of death. This only goes to show the depth of our appreciation for him; both as a man and a leader. A man of versatile ability, with the capacity to journey to the depth of his soul in search for understanding and reflection, easily differentiated him as a distinguished leader of our time.

There are many facets of his involvement towards the betterment of human society that one can choose to write engagingly about but I believe, that his pivotal role in the advancement of the Shia community, particularly in the West and our community in the UK, can be regarded as one of his most significant contributions.

During the period from the 1980's and beyond, when Islam within the UK and elsewhere in Europe was often depicted as adversarial and threatening, he was able to present Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, in a manner that brought understanding and accommodation between people of different faiths. History will judge this profound role, of spreading the message of the Ahlulbait (a.s), as a force of good at a time of major uncertainty due to the distressing displacements of our own community from Uganda. This displaced and deprived community settled in Europe and North America; an event that may prove to be of benefit in the Islamic religious awakening in the West.

The displaced Khoja Shia Ithna Asheries from Uganda arrived in the UK in 1972 carrying very little with them. They had to leave behind

much of what they had owned. They were soon facing new challenges in their new environment. It was here that Marhum Mullasaheb's presence in Europe provided the necessary guidance and direction to progress. Imambadas, masjids and madressas needed to be established at a rapid pace in order to prevent unIslamic influences to creep within and divert our vulnerable community members. Work to this end began and soon centres at Peterborough, Birmingham, Leicester and London (Hammersmith) were acquired, which functioned as Imambaras. That was just the beginning.

A great deal of effort went into establishing new multi-purpose centres as well as expanding our existing centres to cater for the variety of socio-religious needs of our community. The effect of these projects was to cause a re-migration amongst our people, but this time out of choice, from remote places to areas where the centres had appeared. The displaced and scattered community regrouped. Community life as we knew it was rekindled.

In the rest of Europe, a similar process was taking place. In Paris, the number of our community members had increased gradually and in time two beautiful centres have been built. In Switzerland too, our members gradually settled in different areas and centres appeared there as well. Those who came to Sweden in the exodus from Uganda also set up two centres, in Trollhattan and in Marsta. When the centre in Trollhattan was burnt down in an arson attack in 1994, a new one in its place was constructed within the year – a clear recognition of Islam being the priority for the community in the

(continued on page 12)

Muslim World News

(...from page 11)

West. Throughout Europe, Islamic centres were being constructed and soon properties around many centres were purchased and extensions were being built. From nothing in 1972, our community now boasts 15 major centres and numerous others throughout Europe. A clear result of his far sighted guidance.

Today, a great deal has developed around our centres. Madressas soon appeared for teaching religious studies and evolved into workshops, combining theoretical learning with practical instructions. The emergence of libraries consolidated this academic development. Nursery schools have started to crop up within our centres. Educational seminars catering for the interests of young men and women are on the increase. Senior citizens' programmes for elders have become a regular weekly event in many centres. The centres are vibrant with activity. But that is not all.

Alims from many Shia communities throughout Europe are united in the Council of Ulemas that has a collective responsibility on religious matters that affect our community. And lately, dhakirs from our own community have taken a leading role in defining challenges facing Muslims in the West and developing appropriate responses, always working closely with community leaders. The work of welfare with individuals was not neglected when their rising needs became a worrying concern to them. For example, many families within the community were affected by the changes in the social security laws. Their last port of call lied with the community offices of the World Federation. Assistance was duly given. As the value of centralisation of funds begin to be appreciated, many jamaats in

Europe forward the money collected in the form of Khums, Sadka and Zakat to the WF, which provides greater might to the community.

Marhum Mullasaheb's leadership did not limit itself to the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri community in its services. Many Shia Ithna Asheries from India, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq settled in the UK, found themselves faced with similar problems as our own community. Through the WF, he helped many such communities to set up centres that have become the nucleus of their own communities. Many centres now exist in London, the Midlands, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

He did not stop just at Shias. He was instrumental in advocating co-operation with all Muslims. Under his leadership, the WF has become a national member of the Muslim Council of Britain and is playing its role in dealing with problems and injustices faced by all Muslims. And, he did not draw the line at Muslims either. He became involved with Interfaith, a group that has representatives from all major faith groups in the UK. Today, because of his timely guidance, the WF is recognised as a key Muslim organisation in the UK.

Under his leadership, the WF assisted in setting up numerous Islamic centres. It is not bold to say that his leadership has gone some way in keeping our own community united and has helped us pave the way for establishing links with other Shia communities. For, the WF has become involved and has co-operated with other Muslim organisations and it has affiliated with groups that represent all types of religions to explain the message of the Ahlulbait (a.s). He became a beacon amongst many in the West for rekindling the Islamic faith from within the Muslims, consolidating and then

entrenching a spiritual foundation based on the teaching and direction given to us by the Holy prophet (s.a.w). As a result, one observes the presence of an Islamic identity having the soul of Islam within it. This was his legacy to the Muslim community in the West.

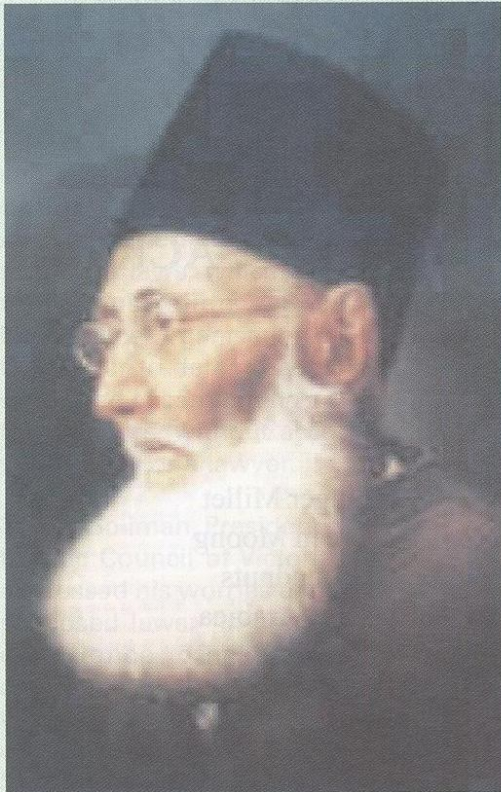
The history of our own community in Europe is very new. We were new to the land, its people and their culture, facing unprecedented challenges that needed to be met head on to ensure firstly, the survival and then the continuity of our people as an Islamic community. During this time, Marhum Mullasaheb's leadership provided steadiness and stability and we acquired durable strength, meaningful purpose and direction. And upon this, we began to build an Islamic way of life.

For us, this remains a continuous process as we constantly try to grapple with new and menacing threats that engulf us today. In an attempt to control these disintegrating forces that are at work in our community, we must resume the search for unity; and to this end, we must explore fully the deeper knowledge of our past and the present, in order to refashion ourselves to the enduring values of Islam and thus progress further to reach a higher peak in our development - as an individual and as a community. As the processes of unity take their form within the mind, we may expect to see a similar process of integration taking place in our institutions. But this change is not an automatic one. All of us must be eager to share our highest goods with the whole community - indeed, with all humanity - only then will we be able to transform our community and ourselves. There in lies our hope.

Dr Sibtain Panjwani
Secretary General
World Federation

Haji Naji lives on in our progres

(1864CE/1297AH – 1942CE/1362AH)



Earlier this year, the 8th Zilhaj (Thu, Feb 21, 2002) marked the 60th death anniversary of Allama Haji Naji. His was amongst the first and perhaps the foremost contribution for the preservation and promotion of the Shia Ithnaasheri faith in the Khoja Society in its early days when the community needed it most.

Who was Haji Naji?

“From a third class compartment of the train alighted a five feet tall person with a black cap, long beard on a radiant handsome face. He was wearing country style shoes and had a walking stick in one hand, a bag and a basket in another.”

Moonis Vartejwala

describes his arrival at one of his extensive visits to remote towns and villages of Kathiawar, as this unassuming great muballigh of the Khoja Community traveled delivering sermons and guiding the community toward the path of Ahlul Bait (AS).

It is said that during the visits he was fond of exhorting his listeners to repeat the Salawat loudly and then he would pray: “O Allah ! may I live to see a mosque and an Imambargah in this town, and see my fellow men offer prayers. O Allah ! May I see a madressa here – Amin.” Not only were his prayers answered during his lifetime; I believe that it is these prayers that has blessed the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Community with the tawfeeq to establish mosques, imamabargahs and madressa around the globe.

To crown his sincerity and erudition, this savant emerging from the nascent Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri Community, popularly known as Haji Naji, had unique qualities of leadership, with a clear vision and a goal. It was not easy to practice the faith in those days, let alone preach. His mentor and teacher, Mulla Qader Husain Karbalai had been threatened with his life and three people had to give their lives for accepting the Jaffari faith. Yet this lonely traveler, against all odds, carried his mission with persistence and tenacity.

Gifted with persuasive oratory power and a lucid pen, his sermons were simple but touched the hearts of men. Through the columns of

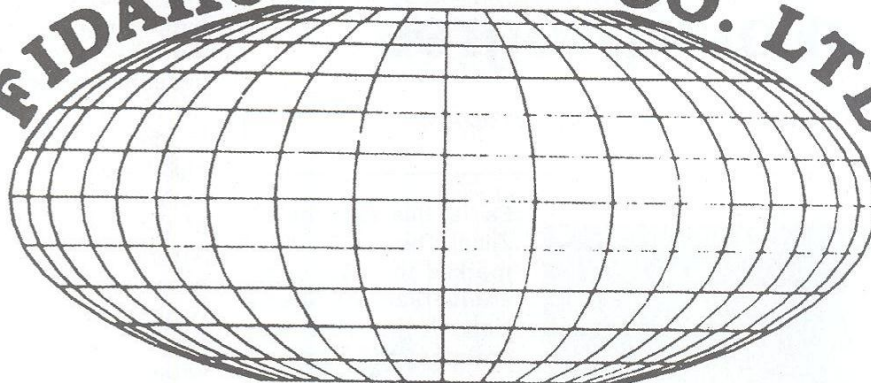
Rahenajat, which remains an instrument of tabligh even today, ably maintained by his grandson and great grandson, and the hundreds of books in Gujarati, his words have transcended generations as much as oceans.

In addition to towns and villages of Kutch and Kathiawad, his ‘Dua no Majmuo’ and Gujarati tafseer of the Quran are still read in Africa, Europe and North America. Paying tribute, Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer, another towering figure of the community wrote, “ It is a known fact that a number of Khojas converted from Ismailis to the Shia Ithnaasheri faith after their arrival in East Africa. Thus one can safely conclude that most of these Khojas were novices in complete sense of the word: new to the place, new to the faith. The only source of guidance and constant contact with religious knowledge was Rahe Najaat, which came regularly every month.”

Just as his ‘Majmuo’ runs parallel in importance to Mafathul Jinan, in many a Khoja home, his translation of Meraju Sa’adah is thought to have had major impact in the lives of many of our brethren in East Africa at the time. Having avidly read the translation in my youth, I can very much relate to that.

It would not be an overstatement to record that his was amongst the first and perhaps the foremost contribution for the preservation and promotion of the Shia Ithnaasheri faith in the Khoja Society in its early days when the community needed it most. Over a century after his birth, Allama Haji Naji lives on, through the continual advancement and progress of the worldwide Khoja Community as a diligent and a practicing Shia Ithnaasheri community. That is the greatest living tribute we can pay him. We request all mumineen to remember this great savant of our community with a Sura-e-Fateha.

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Islamic Council calls for re-consideration of "anti-terror" laws in Australia

The Australian government has indicated that it will pass "security legislation" based on the UK Terrorism Act 2000 and Anti-Crime and Security Act 2001.

The Muslim community has expressed concern of the Law Council of Australia and of Amnesty International over the proposed laws, which will give the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) the power to detain people not suspected of committing a crime for 48 hours, without access to their family or a lawyer.

Yasser Soliman, President of the Islamic Council of Victoria, has expressed his worries about the proposed laws. "In light of the experience of the Muslim community in the United States, where some 6000 individuals were caught up in the post-September 11 "security net", many Australian Muslims fear that they will bear the brunt of this legislation. Racial profiling in the USA has resulted in an American-Arab member of the US Secret Service, a guard of President Bush, being removed from an aircraft because he was considered "dangerous looking", based on his ethnicity alone.

"To give the ASIO such powers as are envisaged in forthcoming legislation, which includes the power to detain people not suspected of committing a crime for 48 hours, without access to their family or a lawyer, constitutes a real threat to the liberties of the Australian people," Mr Soliman said.

The apparent ruthless and inept handling of various issues relating to refugees has seriously damaged public trust

in some sections of the Federal Government. Against that background many Australian people will now be very nervous about giving the Government any enhanced powers, which may be used to further restrict individual rights and freedom.

The Islamic Council intends to co-operate with other Australians of goodwill who are also concerned to protect the democratic liberties, which brought so many outsiders there. The Council is calling for an open public discussion of the provisions of these proposed laws. It has demanded that when the draft legislation is introduced in Parliament, it be open to full scrutiny and debate. If, after rigorous examination and discussion, it is found that the proposed bills would represent a threat to the liberty of Australian citizens, the Council has called on Senate representatives to reject the legislation when it comes to the Upper House.

The UK experience has already shown that serious human rights violations occur under such legislation. People arrested post-September 11 have been eventually released after months in detention, without charge. Others have been offered a choice between internment and deportation.

This type of legislation simply fuels the marginalisation and criminalisation of already marginalised communities, and the perception amongst these communities that Western governments have double standards when it comes to human rights and non-Western communities.

Nasimco now under Caretaker Committee--

new committee to be appointed by August

At an Extraordinary Conference of Nasimco held in Toronto in February this year, the Executive Council (Elected and Nominated members) was replaced by a Caretaker Committee comprising:

Sultan Davdani, Toronto, Chairman

Sajida Mehdi, Toronto, Member

Ghulam Abbas Sajan, Toronto, Member

Ali Abbas Hasni, Montreal, Member

Shabbir Karim, Mineapolis, Member

Delegates from eleven Jamaats were present and the total votes cast by delegates, councilors and office-bearers were 40. It was resolved that the existing Nasimco Executive be dissolved and a new one elected to replace it within a time frame of six months.

The Caretaker Executive Committee has the task of running the affairs of Nasimco, revising the constitution and calling an Extra-ordinary Conference of member Jamaats to adopt the constitution and elect new office bearers by August this year.

The previous Executive Committee including the office bearers had to be asked to resign due to an impasse in agreeing on the day to day running of Nasimco. The resolution received 75% of the votes as required by the constitution.

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British Muslims urge Government to enact sanctions against Israel

In the wake of the clear defiance of last week's UN resolution calling on the Israeli army to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) urged the Government to show it was serious by enacting measures to force an immediate Israeli withdrawal.

"The Israeli war machine is defying world opinion, killing Palestinians seemingly at will and is forbidding medical staff from reaching and tending to the wounded, old and young. This is clearly a breach of International law and legality as well as simply act of barbarism," said Yousuf Bhailok, Secretary-General of the MCB.

British Muslims wonder why our Government, even now, is not showing more steel in bringing an end to a regime of terror and destruction. Why does our Government not go beyond verbal gestures when it comes to dealing with the brutal 35-year long military occupation of Palestine, and Israel's flagrant refusal to abide by numerous UN resolutions? At this very minute, the most sacred churches in Bethlehem are under siege and attack. We also fear for the renewed sabotage of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The time has come for forceful action, including sanctions, against a rogue Israeli government.

The MCB believes the current crisis has the making of a tragedy that could impact the lives of Muslims, Jews and Christians the world over and is currently trying to arrange a meeting with the Foreign Secretary, Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, to convey the concerns of the community.

World Federation revisits Gujarati Promotion resolution

The World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Communities, at its conference held in 1988, unanimously adopted a resolution from the Africa Federation to promote Gujarati as a common language within the community.

To this end, a number of steps were taken to promote Gujarati as a common language among members of our community and some Jamaats have tried to promote Gujarati language within their membership. Much can still be done and more efforts need to be applied at all levels.

At the 4th Executive Council Meeting in Mombasa, a paper was presented, which was the result of the discussion initiated by the e-magazine: 'The Community On Friday', that deliberated on the need to preserve Gujarati as our common language within the community. Many councillors expressed that it was vital to maintain our cultural identity and that the Gujarati language is the vehicle to do this. Others, however, felt that the exercise is a fruitless one. Some also commented that parents have a more important role in cultivating the Gujarati language and that the community can only supplement efforts made by parents. On balance, the consensus at the meeting was to promote the language at all levels in the community.

The 1988 resolution clearly directs all Regional Federations and their constituent Jamaats as well as Jamaat members to provide full, fair and effective support and compliance. The way forward, therefore, is to make all our members realise the significance of their contributions in implementing this resolution for the betterment of our community.

The World Federation Secretariat is in the process of identifying the extent of effort so far made within the community; look at the various resources, as well as the means available to the community for promoting it. To this end, co-operation from the membership is vital to the success of this preservation and promotion programme. Assuming full support, the World Federation secretariat will come up with a report on the current status as well as any additional implementation strategy, within the next few months.

Canadian parliamentarians condemn Israel upon return from fact-finding mission

Nine Canadian members of parliament from three political parties, who witnessed the daily suffering of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, are staunchly criticizing Israel for its abuse of human rights and collective punishment of the Palestinians. "Everybody is shocked at how a strong, intelligent, wealthy, educated and liberal society like the Israelis — with such a sad history of their own — have themselves turned into human rights abusers," says Liberal MP Carolyn Parrish, one of the parliamentarians who went to Israel and the Palestinian Territories on a fact-finding mission in May this year.

Parrish said that 10,000 arrests of Palestinians have been made in the last 18 months while there are still 3,000 people detained without charges or legal counsel. "And how about a new rule there that you can be arrested for 18 days and held without charges. That's a democracy!" she exclaimed sarcastically.

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DATELINE TORONTO

World Federation leaders were in Toronto from May 23 to 26 for a busy program that impressed and inspired Toronto Jamaat members. On May 23rd a well-attended Thursday night majlis audience were given glimpses of the activities of the World Federation (WF) and the results achieved so far.

WF Chairman Hasnain Walji in a focused and forceful speech dealt with various issues that confront our worldwide communities and the efforts of the WF in alleviating them. He reiterated the need to avoid duplication of grants though centralization. He cited the case of Gujarat earthquake relief when working together produced good results.

On May 26 the World Federation hosted the first Seniors Conference in the history of our community. Dr. Akber Mithani explained the objectives of the conference and quoted verses from the Qur'an as well as Ahadis that exhorted the believers to look after the old and the infirm. He also highlighted some of the problems facing the seniors in the west and requested participants to suggest ways and means of solving them. The President of Toronto Jamaat Alhaj Aliraza Rajani, Interim President of Nasimco Alhaj Sultan Davdani, Mulla Mohsin Jaffer and others also addressed the conference.

The meeting was then divided into four workshops to discuss various issues pertaining to

senior. At the end of the day many useful recommendations were made by participants and pertinent action plans were suggested.

The same evening, Crescent Village hosted a dessert and tea reception for all participants. Alhaj Baqir Alloo on behalf of the Board, Tenant's Liaison Committee and the management welcomed the seniors and briefed them on details of the project. He pointed out that the Crescent Village complex provided a unique and readily accessible settlement for a scientifically conducted social study of our community.

The Vice Chairman of the Board, Alhaj Gulamabbas Sajan thanked the office bearers of the WF for accepting the invitation and thanked all those who volunteered in the arrangements. He requested the Chairman of the WF Alhaj Hasnain Walji to address the audience, which he did through a short and candid delivery. Alhaj Roshanali Jaffer Hameer represented the Africa Federation at the Seniors Conference.

The Executive Meeting of the World Federation opened on Sunday May 25 with a welcome address by the President of Toronto Aliraza Rajani. He said that it was an honor for Toronto Jamaat to host the Executive as well as the Seniors Conference and hoped that the next time the venue would be the new premises at 9000 Bathurst.

Various reports and papers were presented and lively discussions ensued. The same evening Toronto Jamaat hosted a grand reception for the delegates and members of the community, which was attended by many including some government officials and leaders of other Muslim Communities.

The Islamic Education and Community Center project has commenced with the signing of a contract to build it in phases. Excavation work is in progress and it is planned to first build a mosque and a fully carpeted Imambargh. Full details of the project can be viewed by visiting www.jaffari.org. Fund-raising for this \$14 million has crossed the half way mark. The project is a unique one in our worldwide community history for its all inclusive facilities for religious, social and recreational activities. Funds for this sawabe jari project are welcome. Ijaza for Khums money has been obtained and tax-deductible receipts will be provided.

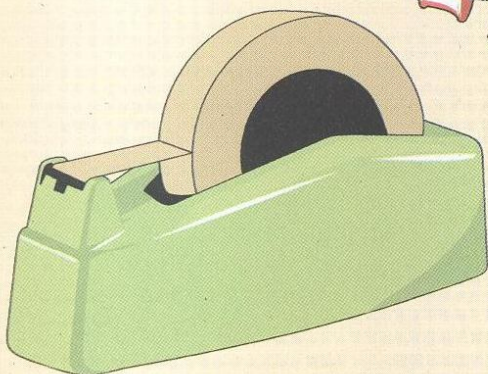
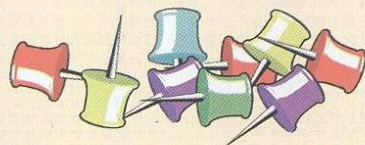
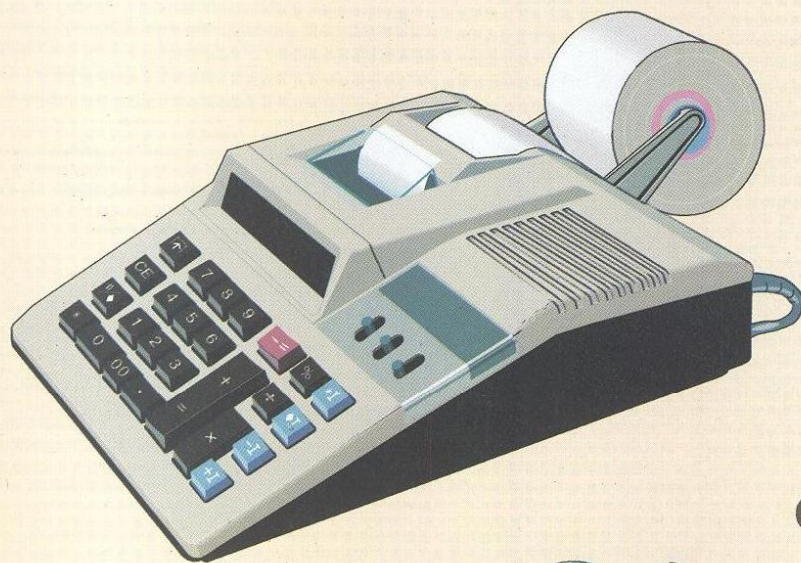
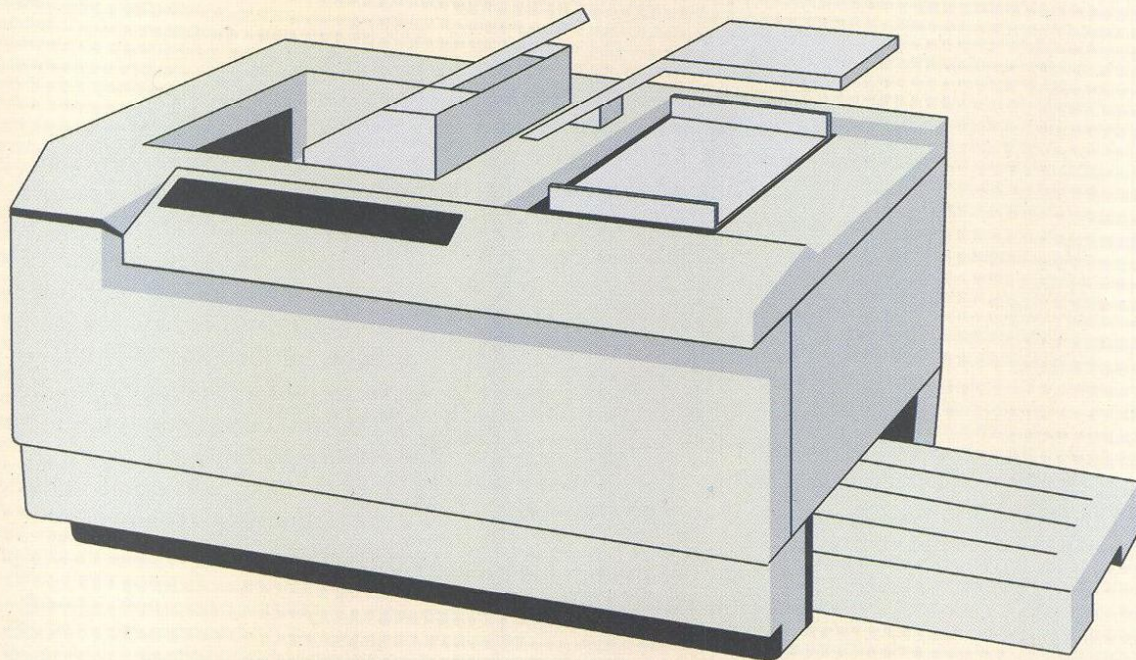
The Toronto Book Drive 2002 Project has commenced with full participation of our youths. This time the team hopes to collect more than 25,000 books and 500 computers and ship them to Dar es Salaam and Mombasa. Toronto Jamaat has sponsored this project and will pay the shipping cost. Br. Muntazir Dhala of Ohio-USA, heads the project with Nisar Sheraly, Fatima Kanji, Mehjabeen Yusufali, Sameer Karim and Alyraza Sheraly as coordinators for collections, sorting and packing in Toronto. Last year 6,190 books were collected from Toronto and shipped to Tanzania.

The Ja'fari Islamic Housing Corporation held its Annual General Meeting on 5th March this year. Corporation members including members of the executive committee of our Toronto Jamaat attended the meeting. Br. Sajjad Ebrahim was unanimously elected to serve as President and Brs. Ghulamabbas Sajan, Kasim Moledina, Dr. Hyder Fazal, Baqir Alloo, Hussein M Rashid and Sr. Kanizbai Remtullah were elected to serve as Board Members.



by Baqir Alloo, Toronto .

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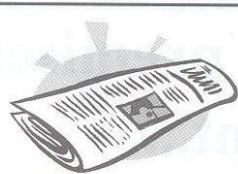


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MEDIA WATCH

Islam's progressive spirit is abused by repressive regimes

by Soha Ali Khan

The recent terrorist attacks and the identification of global terrorism with Islam is a development most Muslims find disturbing. There is nothing Islamic about terrorism.

The Quran forbids the killing of non-combatants, especially women, children and the aged. It forbids suicide. It requires the issue of notice before an attack. Terrorists break every rule in the Quran regarding the legitimate use of force. I would like to point out that of the 6,666 verses in the Quran, only 40 deal with war.

It is a resource that can be used both in circumscribed cases to wage war and make peace. To equate a religion as the characterising factor in terrorism is to allow the inhumane acts of a few people to define that faith.

It is sad that acts of violence when committed by Muslims are labelled Islamic terrorism, whereas similar acts by people of other faiths are not characterised by their faith. Yet, this will not change the fact that many terrorists seek to legitimise their actions in the name of Allah.

The reason behind the success of radical Islamic groups lie not in their claims to religious authority but in their success in exploiting popular grievances, be they poverty, inequality or the denial of basic rights, to gain sympathy from much of the general public in Islamic societies.

Why is it that of the 56 or so Muslim countries in the world, most have a poor record of civic engagement, democracy and respect for human rights? Is Islam really intrinsically antagonistic to individual liberties?

When the Quran was written it was an equitable and radically progressive document considering the social and cultural context of that time. Its message of justice and equality between men and women was revolutionary as illustrated by the granting of legal rights to women.

However, this progressive spirit is being lost as it is shamelessly abused by repressive, conservative regimes. Muslim practices such as the misuse of the *pardah*, *mahr* and unilateral divorce in such regimes have more to do with local cultural ethos than with Islam.

The crux of the matter is not that Islam is inherently more violent than other religions, as is often perceived, but that it is the local expression of conflict over access to resources and political space plaguing nations the world over.

We need to focus on the promotion of conditions conducive to the use of Islam for peace and not war i.e. to address the roots of Muslim discontent.

What is clear is that there is no unified or monolithic Islam. Like

other religions, it too has many faces. In fact, Indian Muslims and their language, Urdu, amply illustrate diversity and integration within the Islamic tradition.

Perhaps the paradigm for this is Akbar's political and religious tolerance in allowing freedom of worship, conversion and religious practice during his reign (1556-1605), thereby nurturing its composite culture.

Historically, India's rich cultural fabric and its people's tolerance of diversity have been its enduring strength. However, the recent upsurge of identity-politics and communal violence present a significant challenge to this rich cultural heritage.

There is the danger that Muslims will be drawn to define their identity defensively to say that they are not a religion that promotes or sanctions terrorism.

In addition, they also need to be willing to proactively address the political and socio-economic problems that have led to the stagnation of many Islamic societies. A positive affirmation of their Islamic identity is vital in preserving the true message of Islam and preventing the actions of a minority from defining the religion.

The SundayTimes of India

The MediaWatch pages carry articles that we consider would be of interest to our readers. We do not necessarily agree with all the contents of such articles.

Articles on these pages are meant to encourage dialogue. Those having opinions are welcome to send in their comments.

Articles are sometimes edited for brevity or for factual and grammatical corrections.



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Mombasa hosts fourth meeting of the World Federation Executive Council

Mombasa, one of the first places our great grandfathers from Kutch and Kathiawad migrated to, was the venue of the 4th Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation. It was also the place where Marhum Mulla Asgharali MM Jaffer was initially nurtured to eventually become that very champion, leader and personality that we admired and still do admire. These aspects of Mombasa created a historical and memorable atmosphere as the 4th Executive Council Meeting convened in the impressive Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall, its opening taking place on Friday 4th January.

The road show of the World Federation, however, began on a spiritual Thursday night on 3rd January. The Secretary General of the World Federation, Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, enumerated the many facets of the organisation's services, controlled and performed at the secretariat. He made it explicit that the World Federation could not be compared to any other existing federation within our community because of its array of activities, exposure and services to the world. He described the 'Secretariat as a hub around which the whole wheel of the World Federation rotates.'

The Chief Co-ordinating Officer, Sheikh Mustafa Jaffer, explained the important routine activities carried out at the secretariat and illustrated its reliance upon 'teamwork' for the efficient running of the World Federation.

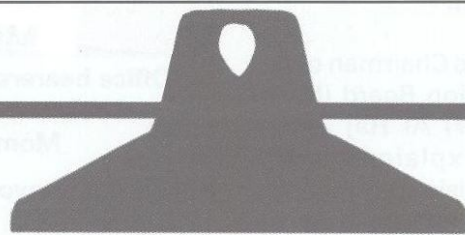
The Chairman of CETAB, Al Haj Murtaza Dattoo, informed the audience on the progress made on the goals and objectives of the Career, Education and Training Advisory Board (CETAB). He reiterated the commitment of the

entire team at the secretariat to continue to work closely with the Education Board of Africa Federation in order to provide sufficient loans to deserving students within our community. Three MGN Loans have been offered by WF-CETAB to students of East Africa wishing to study abroad. The funds have been provided by Marhoom Mohamedhusein Gulamali Nasser (Congowala). CETAB invited students from East Africa to apply for the loans via the Education Board of the Africa Federation. The three loans have

been allocated for deserving students wishing to take a career in Journalism, female student for any degree course and a student who has excelled academically and is financially handicapped. Each loan is for the value of Stg. Pounds 10,000 per annum for a period of three years. He also touched upon the aspirations of seeking excellence in our primary and secondary schools.

The Chairman of ZCSS, Al Haj Mohamed Visram, moved the

(continued on page 24)



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Muslim World News

(...from page 23)

audience when he described the desperate plight of the poor and needy children in our own community and the Shia communities' worldwide. The shackles of poverty within the community can only be removed by educating its children and he reiterated the mission of the Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme that: 'No child in the community should ever be deprived of attaining basic education.' ZCSS is presently sponsoring thousands of children in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Iran and Kenya. He also announced the success of the recently launched Yatim and Asir scheme to provide educational assistance for deprived children of Shia Iraqi refugees in Iran.

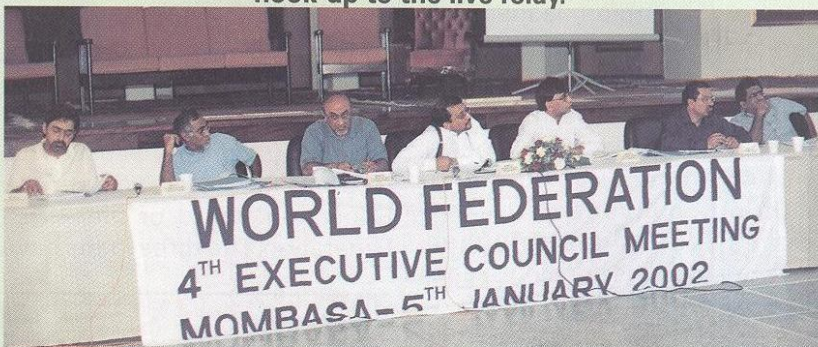
On behalf of the Chairman of the Islamic Education Board (Mulla Muhsin Jaffer) Al Haj Jaffer Dharamsi explained that understanding Islam and sharing the gift of Islam can only be effectively done if everyone of us participate in the activities of the IEB ranging from projects on the Holy Qur'an, Zakireen and Madressa to Media, Books and the use of the Internet.

On behalf of the Chairman of Medical Advisory Board (Dr. Mohamedtaqi Walji), Dr Ahmed Hassam, a member of the MAB, reiterated the perils of ignoring WF resolutions relating to AIDS and Thalassaemia. He emphatically stated that only by 'empowering the Health Boards of regional federations and Jamaats will we, as a community, be able to effectively promote health awareness and combat diseases.'

The Hon. Treasurer, Al Haj Ahmed Daya explained details of various sources of revenue for the World Federation and how these funds are disbursed. He provided a summary of movement of funds over the past 25 years that illustrated growth of the World Federation and the wide-range of



The high tech world. Mustafa Jaffer of the WF Secretariat engrossed with his lap top for a hook-up to the live relay.



Office bearers of the WF on the main table along with the Chairman of the Africa Federation and Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat on the extreme right.

activities it is involved in.

The Vice President, Dr. Ahmed Hassam gave an update on the Marhum Mulla Asghar Memorial project. He also gave a detailed update on the progress on resettlement of our communities in Kutch and Gujarat that were affected by the earthquake of January 26th 2001. He said that the final phase of the resettlement programme to provide assistance to build permanent homes and repair and build the damaged Mosques and imamwadis is underway.

Finally, the President of the World Federation, Al Haj Hasnain Walji, summed up the evening's proceedings by reiterating that the 'Vision to Reality' document, which sets out defined goals and objectives for our community worldwide as well as acting as a mechanism for performance management, will move the community efficiently towards the defined vision, inshallah. He encouraged the leadership to empower the boards and subcommittees to implement the

decisions of the conferences and executive councils. These are the 'frontline workers' of the community who require all the management and resource backup in order to produce the most effective results. He emphasised to the attentive audience that the time has now come to 'make this cultural shift and devolve responsibility and accountability' to them so as to enable the community to make even greater strides to achieve our objectives. He acknowledged that the preceding presentations were but a glimpse of the solid team that had been nurtured by Marhum Mulla Saheb, which he was now blessed to lead.

The venue for the Fourth Meeting of the Executive Council was also the Mulla Asgherali Memorial Hall on Saturday 5th January where participants from several different cities representing almost all the regions of the World Federation met to deliberate upon important issues affecting the community.

(continued on page 25)

Muslim World News

(...from page 24)

In his quarterly review, the President of the World Federation outlined the overall activities carried out by the World Federation and emphasised the need to adopt change in the way we function in order to achieve progress for the community. He could not overemphasise the role the youth have to perform in community activities. Youth, he said, is a phase of life that may need special attention but should be respected and strongly encouraged to be involved in community life so as to engender progress.

In the Councillors Forum, two papers of considerable interest were presented. The first paper, which was the result of the discussion initiated by the e-magazine, 'The Community On Friday', deliberated on the need to preserve Gujarati as our common language within the community. The Secretary General, Dr Sibtain Panjwani, in the preamble to the paper, explained that the Gujarati language strengthens our socio-religious culture, hence the need to preserve it in our society. He reminded the Council of a resolution passed in 1991 for active preservation of the language within the whole community.

Councillors took part in a lively debate outlining their views, both for and against the preservation of the language. Many expressed that it was vital to maintain our cultural identity and that the Gujarati language was the vehicle to do this. Others, however, felt that the exercise was a fruitless one. Rather, we should be more practical and face reality that our children are growing up where other languages are more paramount and beneficial. Some also commented that parents have a more important role in cultivating the Gujarati language and that the community can only supplement efforts made by

parents. Councillor Mohamedraza Moledina of USA, with characteristic clarity, presented the second paper in which he explained the turn of events on the 11th of September in New York detailing the incident and the consequences for the Muslims in America. He emphasised that within the political space that is available to Muslims, our community, as part of an overall Muslim society, need to engage vigorously in performing our duty in protecting the values of Muslims and educating the masses worldwide on what true Islam is. The President of NASIMCO, Sister Noorzehra Ebrahim, as well as representatives from various European and North American Jamaats, elaborated upon the impact and experiences within their own community and region and stressed the need to build closer relationships with

other communities. Being the term of education, the President of the World Federation, Dr. Hasnain Walji, announced the 'Mulla Asghar Memorial Academic Scheme' for children in our community in Africa. Furthermore, he informed the Council of the intention to call an Extra Ordinary Constitutional Conference in September 2002 to specifically review the procedures of presidential elections and the proposals received from Karachi (Pirhai) Jamaat regarding proportional representation.

The Treasurer of the World Federation Alhaj Ahmed Daya, succinctly presented the financial report and the financial status of the World Federation.



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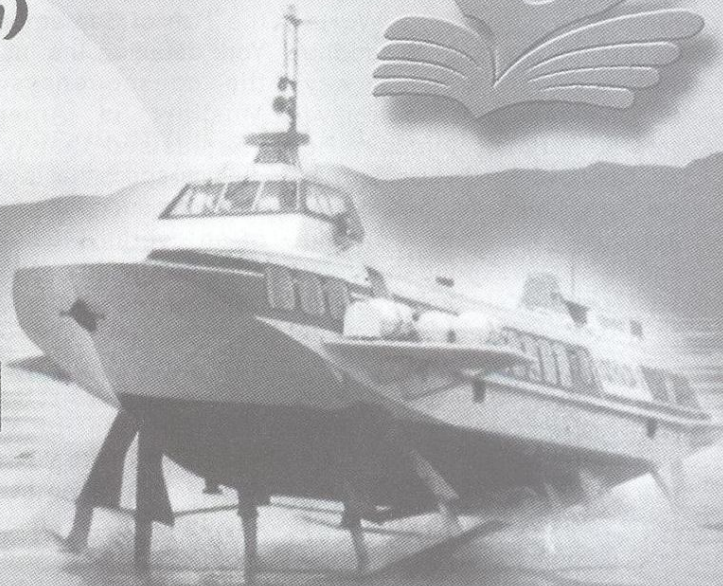
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Hindus take out Moharram procession in Madhya Pradesh

Hindu families have been taking out the Tazia procession on Muharram for more than 120 years in some districts of Madhya Pradesh, India. This began in 1882 when the Raikwar family of the Vidisha town began preparing and taking out Tazias on the ninth day of Moharram. Since then, the Raikwar's Tazia leads the procession of mourners on Muharram, and moves ahead of the long line of replicas of Hussain's tomb and flags along the streets.

Like several Muslim families across the globe, the Raikwar family members, too, set aside their daily chores to grieve for the grandson of Prophet Mohammad, Imam Hussain (a.s.), and his 70 companions who were brutally killed on the banks of the river Euphrates in Karbala (Iraq) in AD 680.

"Hussain is everybody's hero, the embodiment of virtues of piety, courage and self-sacrifice. He did not seek power. He represented the authentic voice of Islam and, for that reason, boldly challenged the un-Islamic practices of the Umayyad ruler, Yezid," a member of the Raikwar family said.

They also march, as they do year after year, through the lanes and by-lanes in fervent lamentation chanting, "Ya-Hussain, Ya-Husain", rhythmically beating their chests and self-flagellating. "Hussain laid down his life but did not compromise with a bloody-minded tyrant," said the head of the Mishra family of Sehore, another Madhya Pradesh town where a Hindu family takes out the Tazia procession.

Said Dinesh Chandra Mishra, present head of the family, "Every age brings forth a new Yezid, but resistance to tyranny, as is illustrated by Husain's legendary example, is incumbent upon every man of faith."

Young professionals invited to be more involved

The type of interactive sessions as last held by the Young Professionals Network (YPN) at the request of the World Federation (WF) at the Stanmore Annex provide a fine leeway for young professionals to be more involved in community affairs. In that session over thirty active invitees participated with the Secretary General of the World Federation, Sibtain Panjwani, delivering a fine presentation on behalf of the World Federation.

The key objectives highlighted during this session were two folds:

- To create greater awareness among the young professionals body of what the WF stands for, the broad spectrum of activities it undertakes and to give a flavour of the day to day organisational structure of the body;
- To initiate a process of interaction between the professionals and the WF with the purpose of creating opportunities for the young professionals to enable them to beneficially contribute and get involved at an early stage

Br. Sibtain began with a brief history of this organisation over the last 26 years. In particular, he reminded that the success of the World Federation is a function of the vision formulated by its previous leaders. Part of this vision included training and developing the then youngsters who have become the leaders of today. The same

philosophy is being adopted today to get youths more involved.

Br. Sibtain explained at length the working modalities of the World Federation, which he said is actively involved in improving the quality of life of its members, physically and spiritually. The focus to date for the communities in the East (Sub Continent and Africa) has been to eradicate poverty by improving education, health and housing facilities while in the West, where the quality of life, physically is much better, the focus has been to preserve and enhance spirituality. This focus will change and evolve in line with new situations.

Finally Br. Sibtain highlighted a tangible opportunity and perhaps a challenge for the young professionals, to help initiate a media desk in the WF that would work closely with the external liaison desk and other World Federation bodies. In light of the current environment, it is becoming increasingly important that the views of the community are better represented in the broader mainstream media. Furthermore, there is a need to respond to the increasing negative sentiment towards Islam being expressed in the media. He said the World Federation requires resources to address these issues on a regular basis and be creative in the use of the various mediums including print, television and the Internet.

There were several attendees who already actively participate in World Federation activities and their experiences suggest a high degree of reward and satisfaction being derived. Essentially a few hours a week can make a huge measurable difference. This indeed was encouraging for their fellow young professionals.

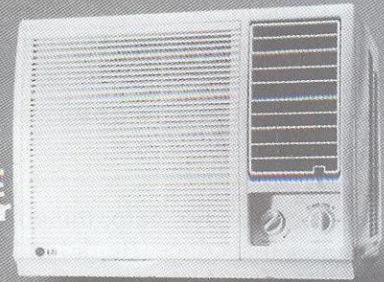
Positive feedback in respect of this session has been received and a group of youngsters have been engaged to determine the optimal way to utilise the skills of our young professionals to benefit our communities.



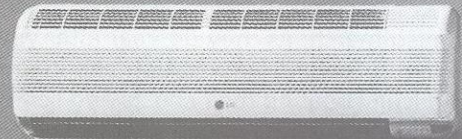
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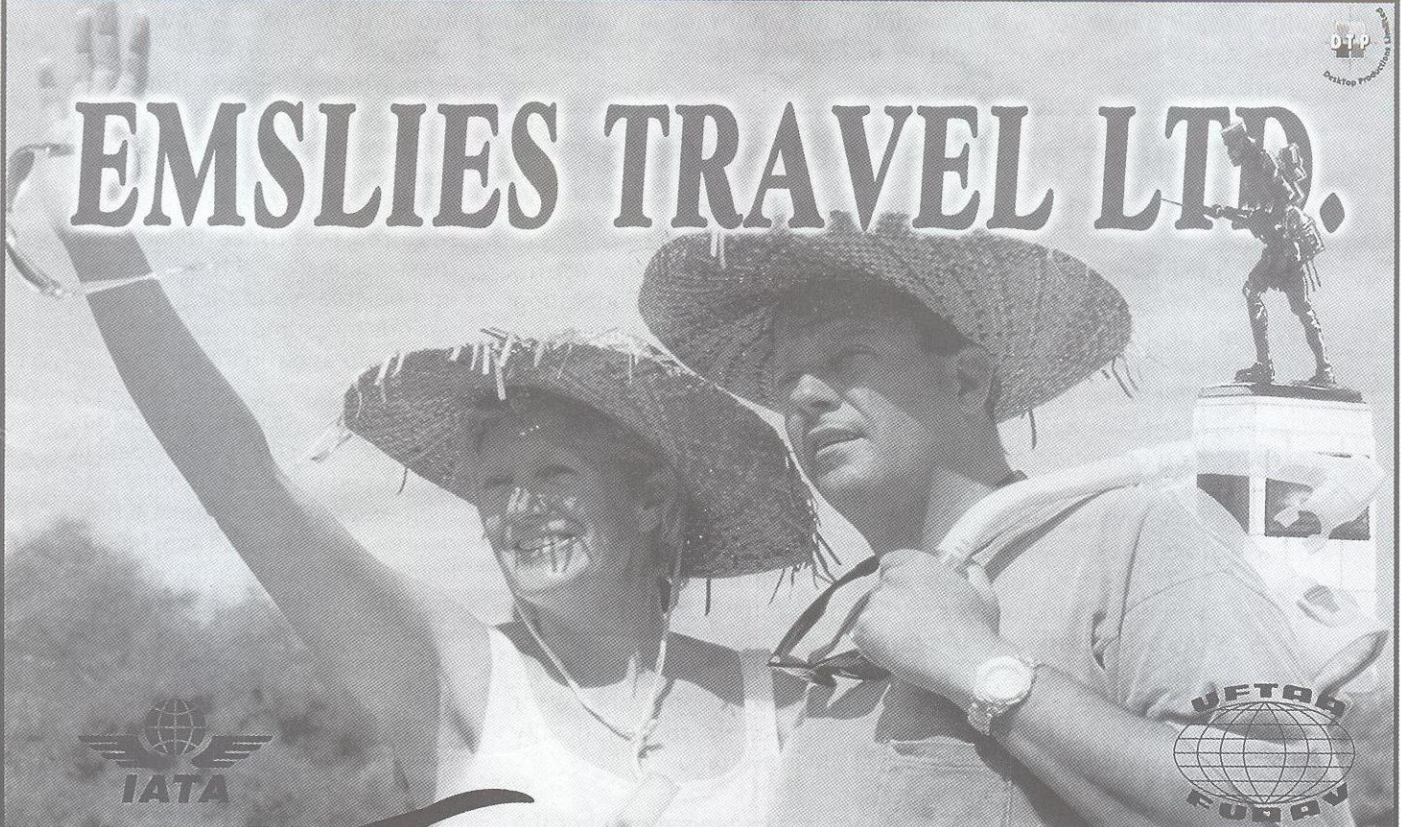
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Muslim World News

Five loans awarded for overseas studies

The World Federation Careers Education and Training Advisory Board in conjunction with the Africa Federation Education Board have offered five loans to students from East Africa to study abroad. The criteria for selection was based on the excellence of academic results.

The loans are to be equally funded by the World Federation and Africa Federation. Each loan is for the value of Stg. Pounds 10,000 per annum for a period of three years.

While the selection criteria was mainly focused on academic results, financial need, community and humanitarian service were other issues considered during selection. The deadline for applying was on 20th June, 2002.

Crescent Village elects new liaison committee

The Toronto Crescent Village has elected a new Liaison Committee to organise various programs at the Ja'fari Housing Complex. Sister Nargis Somji, sister Nazma Hussein and Br. Rahil Jiwan were elected unopposed by the tenants. Sister Kaniz Rehmtulla and Br. Baqir Alloo will sit in the committee representing the Board.

Arabs staying away from Britain

The number of Arab tourists visiting Britain has fallen sharply due to hostilities created after the events of September 11. According to the British Tourist Authority, visitors from Saudi Arabia alone dropped by 15 per cent last year compared with 2000. There were also six per cent fewer travellers from the United Arab Emirates. The reason for the fall was due to reports of Arabs being delayed at airport immigration plus the cumbersome visa formalities involved.

London to host International Women's Convention in September

Following the Senior's Convention held in Toronto on 24th May 2002, the World Federation in conjunction with the Council of European Jamaats is organising an International Women's Convention in the UK, inshallah on the 14th September 2002. This is among the events being organised to mark the 25th Anniversary of the World Federation.

The primary objective of the convention is to acknowledge the significant role that can be played by women in our community as well as address specific challenges faced by women in our society. All women leaders, social workers and those with a special interest in community issues are urged to participate in this convention.

The convention will take place at the Zainabiya Centre, Milton Keynes. Details of the programme are being finalised by a Steering Group and will be available soon. Please contact the World Federation Secretariat at womensconvention@world-federation.org for further information.

World Federation Extra-ordinary Conference due for September

The Fourth Constitutional Conference of the World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Muslim Communities is scheduled to be held in London on Saturday 14 September 2002.

Members are reminded that 14 July 2002 is the last date for notification to all members of any proposed amendments to the constitution. Any proposed amendments to the constitution should reach the secretariat by 7 July 2002.

Voting rights of members are related to the number of individual heads per member. The list on page 30 of this issue outlines the number of heads in each organisation. If amendments are sought these should be submitted by 7 July 2002.

There will be a full programme of activities from Thursday 12 September to Sunday 15 September, including the fifth meeting of the Executive Council, a ceremony for presentation of Mulla Asghar Memorial Awards and a Ladies Conference.

A task force has been nominated to help facilitate the smooth convening of the conference with the primary objective of creating consensus around proposed amendments thereby helping to make the conference's proceedings more efficient and less time consuming.

Its terms of reference are:

- Invite proposals of amendments from members in advance and also derive a consensus around the same.
- Identify the changes needed in the constitution with particular emphasis on the proposals received from Karachi (Pirhai) Jamat regarding proportional representations.
- Sort out the procedural changes on some proposed amendments with particular emphasis on the procedures of Presidential Elections.
- Find a happy medium in which a consensus can be derived.

(continued on page 30)

Constitutional Conference 2002 Voting Rights and Representations

A total of 149 representatives are entitled to attend, to deliberate and to vote at the conference as detailed below.

135 representatives are from members of the World Federation as follows:

	No. of heads	Nominated	Delegates	Additional	Total
Aden Jamaat	100	1	1	-	2
Africa Federation	22195	5	1	19	25
Birmingham Jamaat	591	1	1	-	2
Bombay Jamaat	5000	1	1	4	6
Council of Gujarat	15000	5	1	14	20
Dubai Jamaat	900	1	1	-	2
Essex Jamaat	120	1	1	-	2
Gloucester Jamaat	50	1	1	-	2
KSIC of Australia	60	1	1	-	2
Karachi Jamaat	40000	1	1	6	8
Kutch Federation	600	5	1	-	6
Kuwait Jamaat	85	1	1	-	2
Leeds Jamaat	50	1	1	-	2
Leicester Jamaat	150	1	1	-	2
London Jamaat	5000	1	1	4	6
Mehfile Murtaza, Karachi	1500	1	1	1	3
Mefile Zainab, Paris	200	1	1	-	2
Milton Keynes	100	1	1	-	2
Muhammadi Welfare, Australia	100	1	1	-	2
Nasimco	11000	5	1	10	16
Panjatan Society, Australia	200	1	1	-	2
Paris Jamaat	450	1	1	-	2
Peterborough Jamaat	450	1	1	-	2
Portugal Jamaat	90	1	1	-	2
South London Jamaat	1100	1	1	1	3
Stockholm Jamaat	125	1	1	-	2
Switzerland Jamaat	100	1	1	-	2
Trollhattan Jamaat	150	1	1	-	2
Watford Jamaat	460	1	1	-	2
Wessex Jamaat	254	1	1	-	2
		46	30	59	135

Besides the 46 nominated councillors detailed above, 14 other Members of the Executive Council are entitled to attend, to deliberate and to vote. (President, Vice President, Hon. Treasurer, Secretary General, 5 Ordinary Councillors, 5 Appointed Councillors).

(..... from page 29)	appointed the following on the task force.	Mahmood Hooda - Peterborough
-To present regular progress report to the Secretary General.	Asaf Gulamhusein - Mombasa	Correspondence on constitutional amendments can be mailed to const@world-federation.org.
The World Federation has	Murtaza Salehmohamed - Karachi	

Earthquake in Gujarat

Report by Dr Ahmed Hassam

Following the earthquake of 26 January 2001, Phase 3 of the resettlement plan has been completed. Under Phase 3, those whose businesses were affected were advanced loans to restart their businesses. The loans were given through Jamaats and all repayments will be collected by the Jamaats who will then reutilise the funds for ongoing economic upliftment of its members.

Phase 4 involves the rebuilding of permanent housing and religious centres. This work has started. All new buildings are being designed to be earthquake proof as per the government's latest regulations.

Nagalpur

The World Federation advanced loans to 12 families to restart their businesses under Phase 3 of the resettlement plan. At present all families are living in temporary accommodation built by the Sajjadiyya Trust of Canada.

In preparation for the rebuilding of the damaged Imambara and Mosque, the World Federation financed the building of temporary halls for ladies and gents. These were used for amaals during Shabe Qadr nights and were ready in time for Namaz-e-Eid. The halls were officially opened on Eid ul Fitr night.

When the new Mosque and Imambara are completed and are in use, the temporary halls will be converted to an education centre with class rooms for madressa, tuition classes, sewing classes, tuition classes and others.

At present the Madressa is running in the *Sahan* of the Mosque next to the damaged Imambara building.

The World Federation has advanced loans to 16 families to rebuild their homes on their existing lands. The homes are being designed to the requirement of each family and will be earthquake proof.

The World Federation will finance the building of houses on Jamaat's lands to accommodate the remaining 12 families who used to live in rented accommodation.

Bhuj

The World Federation advanced loans to 62 families to restart their businesses under Phase 3 of the resettlement plan.

As almost all members of Bhuj Jamaat lost their homes, rebuilding in Bhuj City Centre will take long (permission to build new structures are still not being given). Land has however been bought just outside the city for temporary settlement of all the families. The new master plan of Bhuj proposes to upgrade the road next to our new settlement as a wide road straight into town and on to our old Mosque and Imambara complex.

The new settlement, named Al Mahdi Society is complete with ladies and gents Imambaras, Jamaat's office and office of the Kutch Federation. Quite a few families have bought land next to the Al Mahdi Society for putting up homes, financed by loans from the World Federation.

All approval for new work in Bhuj was suspended by the World Federation because of a misunderstanding and a constitutional crisis in the Jamaat. With the active participation of Kutch Federation, committees and elders of other Kutch Jamaats and elders of Bhuj

Jamaat, this has now been resolved and a new committee has taken charge of the Jamaat.

Applications for permanent homes by those with land on which permission to build is obtainable are being processed. Once these families move out of the temporary houses at Al Mahdi Society, the remaining houses will be upgraded for permanent occupation by those who do not own land and need rented accommodation.

Most of Bhuj city has been cleared of debris and is now full of large open grounds where once settlements had flourished. Our Mosque lies alone surrounded by tracts of open spaces. Bhuj Jamaat has built Mehfil-e-Abbas on the site where the Imambara once stood. This houses the Zari, which is normally visited on a daily basis by many inhabitants, Shias, Muslims and non Muslims. The Mehfil was opened with a majlis and nyaz in January 2002.

Work on repairs to the Mosque was scheduled to start. A boundary wall will be built around the whole site to protect it from unscrupulous land encroachment and to stop stray dogs and pigs from coming into the compound. It is hoped to review the Mosque and Imambara redevelopment in a few years time, once all families have settled and it is known where they are and what their requirements are.

Mandvi

The families in Mandvi have not suffered much personal loss. The Imambara had some damage. The Jamaat has repaired it. The Mosque too did suffer some

(continued on page 32)

Muslim World News

(from page 31)

damage. It is possible to repair the Mosque for the present and may be review a redevelopment project in a few years time in case the population increases.

The Jamaat owns land next to the Mosque on which it is possible to build houses for families wanting to move from other parts of Kutch.

Kera

Seven families are living in temporary houses built by the Sajjadiyya Trust next to the Mosque compound. Decisions are awaited from Kera Jamaat regarding their requirements for permanent homes and the redevelopment of the buildings within the Mosque compound. A beautiful Imambara is nearing completion funded by Al Haj Mohamed Jaffer Hasham of Toronto through the World Federation. Work had started a few years ago when Mulla Asghar was still alive.

Mundra

Seven families are living in temporary homes built by the Sajjadiyya Trust on Jamaat's land in Mundra. Decisions are awaited from Mundra Jamaat regarding their requirements for permanent homes. The Jamaat has received donations privately for the redevelopment of the Mosque, Madressa and Imambara buildings.

Mariya

Alhamdulillah the families in Mariya are now reasonably settled in their businesses. They have also received compensation from the government for loss of properties. With these funds they have managed to repair their homes. The Imambara and Madressa buildings have been repaired. Shortfall of funds have been bridged by the World Federation. Plans to repair the Mosque are also well under way.

The Madressa building has been made into a one floor building and the Imambara roof has already been repaired.

The Council of Gujarat with the Jamaat of Mariya have negotiated to purchase land in Morbi to resettle the whole community of Mariya. Morbi is a large city, 30 miles from Mariya and has been chosen by the Jamaat of Mariya as an ideal place for them to settle because of educational facilities and business opportunities.

AF President visits WF Office

The World Federation Secretariat was graced with a visit by the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Al Haj Zulfikar Khimji, who was invited to take part in the weekly Office Bearers meeting on Thursday 7th of March 2002.

The President of the World Federation, Al Haj Hasnain Walji welcomed Zulfikar Khimji to the Office Bearers' meeting and invited him to provide an update on the state of affairs and Mumineen in Africa.

Zulfikar Khimji explained the overall situation of Africa and the state of affairs in Madagascar in particular. He reported that all Mumineen were safe in Madagascar, but were in dire need of prayers of all their brethren worldwide.

The Office Bearers went on to discuss ways on how the two Federations envisage future co-operation to enhance the state of the community.

The President of the World Federation reassured Zulfikar Khimji of full support in all activities of the Africa Federation for the benefit of our community all over the world.

Looking back in perspective, the earthquake that struck parts of Kutch and Gujarat on the morning of 26th January 2001 did actually cause major devastation to our communities in Bhuj, Nagalpur, Kera, Mundra and Mariya. We lost two members of our community and there was destruction to homes, businesses and religious centres.

The response of the World Federation was prompt to the tragedy. On receiving the news, the World Federation Secretariat was in contact with our regional federations and Jamaats and assured full support. Emergency relief reached the affected areas within 24 hours.

A Kutch Disaster desk was set up at the World Federation Secretariat in Stanmore to answer queries from relatives and members of our community worldwide. Within weeks, temporary accommodation and income support was available to all families.

In five months, a detailed resettlement master plan was drawn up in collaboration with local Jamaats and regional federations, the final stages of which are now being implemented.

According to a recent report by the UK's Disasters Emergency Committee on the Gujarat earthquake, more than twelve months on, thousands of people in the affected areas are still destitute. This contrasts with our community, which is almost back on its feet. This explains well how co-operation between the World Federation, regional federations and local Jamaats along with generous contributions from members worldwide help to handle crisis situations successfully.

Unity is a key to countering any crisis especially when backed by a fine infra-structure that involves many individuals who volunteer time with the sincere intention to serve.

Toronto hosts fifth WF Executive Council Meeting

The Jaffery Islamic Center at Bayview, Toronto was a hub of activity from Thursday, May 24 to May 26 starting with the World Federation Road show and an open house for the community on Thursday night, followed by the International Seniors Convention on Friday, the WF Executive Council Meeting on Saturday and the Youth Networking meeting on Sunday. The formal events were interspersed by a grandparents breakfast at Al Sadiq School at Bathurst, a visit to the Crescent Village Senior Complex and a gala dinner at Bayview, a power breakfast at the Masoomin Center at Brampton and an empowering Youth Meeting at Bayview on Sunday.

The World Federation Road Show: The President of the WF shared a multimedia presentation on the activities of the WF providing a snapshot of its wide-ranging services to the community to an attentive audience. He emphasized that the role of the WF was primarily that of an enabler and a facilitator, which sought to serve the community with sincerity and simplicity, which were values firmly entrenched in the team at the secretariat by his predecessor Marhum Mulla Asgherali M M Jaffer.

Amongst the many new projects highlighted were the Aynullah Eye Clinic established by the World Federation MAB in Karnataka, the Zaynabiyya Asir and Yatim Scheme; as well as the Mulla Asgher Memorial Child Sponsorship Scheme for children in East Africa. This being the term of Education, he focused on the activities of the Career Education and Training Board, and appealed to the audience to give

generously when CETAB approached them for donations for higher education as currently there are as many as 45 applicants awaiting loan approvals for higher education. He also highlighted the many wide and diverse fields in which the Islamic Education Board of the World Federation continues to serve and cited the www.quran.co.uk site, which has had international academic acclaim.

Suggesting that the WF was very much on the information technology bandwagon, he asked the audience to visit the WF website at least once a week to keep abreast with the wealth of information available. At the same time cautioning on the negative use of IT, he cited the example of malevolent mass emails, which only served to exacerbate problems rather than offer solutions and appealed for maturity in dealing with such submissions.

He called upon the community to understand and apply the principle of centralisation, not just of funds and *hukook*, but also of human resources and experiences and not to be dissipated by short-term individualistic efforts, however, well meaning. Citing the handling of the Earthquake project, he expressed his satisfaction at the manner in which the World Federation had worked with regional federations, private trusts and well-meaning individuals on a common strategy and a master plan, which had resulted in the optimal utilisation of resources for the betterment of the community.

The International Seniors Convention: The International

Seniors Convention brought together almost 300 participants from all over North America, Europe and Africa. Under the dynamic chairmanship of Dr. Akber Mithani, in the presence of the Presidents of the World Federation, Nasimco, Council of European Jamaats and North American Jamaat, the seniors of the community had a unique opportunity to articulate their aspirations and expectations from the community. The different workshops were extremely lively and helped create a strategy for the seniors, which was the prime reason for the convention. The full report of the convention, prepared overnight by Dr. Mithani was subsequently tabled at the Executive Council meeting for further deliberation.

Executive Council Meeting: Executives, members of the secretariat team, Jamaat presidents and councilors of the World Federation from Europe and North America attended the fifth meeting of the World Federation Executive Council on Saturday, May 25, 2002. About 100 men and women from Toronto and other North American cities attended as invitees. Also in the audience were Councilors Susan Kadis and Mario Racco of the City of Vaughan, and Mobeen Khaja, President of the Progressive Muslims of Ontario.

Welcoming all in attendance, World Federation President Dr. Hasnain Walji thanked Toronto Jamaat for hosting the World Federation meeting and commended the Jamaat on playing a leadership role in North America. In his review of the last

(continued on page 34)

Muslim World News

(...from page 33)

quarter, Dr. Walji outlined educational opportunities that are now in place for primary, secondary and higher education in Africa through the "Mulla Asghar Memorial Academic Scheme".

Expressing concern at the situation in Gujarat, both because of the riots as well as the seeds of disunity sowed owing to disagreements in the leadership of our community there, he stated that efforts were underway to restore unity to enable the WF to carry out immediate relief work as well as long term projects, which had been affected by the situation. A delegation comprising of Councillors Manzoor Kanani, Aunali Saleh Mohammed and Mohamed Raza Moledina had traveled to the area and submitted a full report of their efforts in bringing all the parties together. However all efforts had not been entirely successful. He categorically stated that if unity could not be restored, the WF would have no choice but to work directly through the instrumentality of Jamaats and other frontline workers, in order to serve those in dire need of assistance for relief projects. Long term projects would remain on hold until unity is restored.

He spoke of the exemplary philanthropist infrastructure in Pakistan. He noted that the World Federation has lobbied to protest against the killings of Shias in Pakistan, but to no avail.

Dr. Walji meanwhile encouraged members to use the office of the World Federation when they want to contact our marja'a and suggested that using intermediaries caused confusion and even disappointment, as some messages are not relayed accurately.

Gujarat Earthquake Report: Dr. Ahmed Hassam submitted a status report on the Gujarat earthquake. He gave specific

information about construction and permanent resettlement plans to be completed by July and August 2002 in Bhuj, Nagalpur, Kera, Mundra and Mariya. A sum of over US\$ one million has been collected for aiding the victims of the earthquake. "Working through Jamaats allows us to centralize our aid efforts and facilitate accountability," said Dr. Hassam.

In the last 25 years a spirit of 'charity giving' has emerged within the community and while the mumineen in Kutch may have benefited in the short term for their immediate needs, in the years to come there is a need to find ways to reduce dependency by enabling jamaats to be financially stronger and self sufficient. Hence, the strategy during the Earthquake Resettlement Project has been to provide assistance in form of interest free loans to muminen through the jamaats. The repayments of these loans will provide a Foundation Fund for the jamaats to use for on-going economic upliftment of the community. This approach is already bearing fruit.

Islamic Education in North America: Dr. Akber Mithani introduced a paper entitled "Islamic Education in North America". He said that after madressah is completed at the age of 14 or 15 years, students are expected to learn independently from the madressah structure. Dr. Mithani said that we need educational institutions in place to provide further Islamic education for our young generation by investing in Islamic education through qualified educators, short accredited courses at higher levels and discussion groups.

Television Broadcasting: Riyaz Dattoo, who produces the "Islam in Focus" television program in North America spoke about the tabligh-focused content of his Toronto based television program. Riyaz invited people to contact

him with news items that deserve publicity and to provide him with film footage of events across North America. The Chairman commended Riyaz for his initiatives with the program, and invited members to think how centralisation regarding television broadcast can help from the World Federation level.

External Liaison Desk: Mr. Habib M. Habib said that after the Sept. 11 event, the External Liaison Desk worked closely to brief senators and congressmen. The External Liaison Desk also spoke against the assassination of Shia professionals in Pakistan. Regarding the recent riots in Gujarat, the Desk has worked on effective lobbying by interacting with a U.S. congressman before his trip to India. Presenting his report on External Liaison, Dr. Akber Mohamedali briefed the council on the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that has 400 Muslim organisations affiliated to it including the World Federation. He noted that Islamophobic comments from high-level politicians, who are misinformed about Islam, need to be countered.

Palestine: Br. Mustafa Jaffer said that regarding Palestine we should not be seen as a passive society. In order to provide financial aid to Palestinians, appropriate relief agencies had to be identified, which has now been done. He said there are many Shia converts in Palestine who are now being helped by building houses, schools, clinics, and helping orphans. He urged all jamaats that are collecting funds to emphasize to members that we have been given an opportunity for tabligh. The Chairman added that the World Federation does not jump into projects and acts only when convinced that money would go to the right hands. He gave the example of tabligh efforts in Bosnia, where although action was taken after much review, the

(continued on page 35)

Muslim World News (...from page 34)

effort is now continued, permanent and sustained.

History and Genealogy Project: Br. Shabbir Mohamad of Toronto introduced a project called the Khoja Heritage Project. It involves hosting a website with a database and a powerful search engine. This site would include a comprehensive reference and resource database about our history and our culture, enabling us to trace the history and ancestors of individual Khoja Shias. The URL for this project is www.khojaheritage.com. Br. Shabbir said that the core team involves himself, Goulam Amarsy and Mamood Amarsy.

Human Resource Management: In a very persuasive and eloquent presentation, Dr. Akber Mohamed Ali expressed his concern on the use of human time as a resource. He said, "Structures are in place, but we are not capitalising on volunteer time. It is a myth that people do not want to volunteer. There are many people available and many come forward when help is requested." He said that without identifying specific volunteer tasks to do, this results in demoralisation, and reduced efficiency. People feel neglected and rejected while others experience burn-out. He added, "We should capitalise on every member who comes forward to volunteer. We should recruit and retain volunteers through an infrastructure and various incentive schemes. Our youth are taking up volunteer work outside the community to earn credits at university. He emphasised that for optimal human resource use four principles should be in place - delegated responsibility, decentralisation of power, accountability framework, and a consensus approach."

NASIMCO: Br. Sultan Davdani addressed the meeting on behalf of NASIMCO and said it was refreshing that the World

Federation is going to different cities to meet people that it represents. He said that NASIMCO's existence is being questioned and that there is a need to revive it with new plans and to forge new working relationships.

Council Of European Jamats: Br. Mahmood Huda, President of the Council of European Jamaats noted that although many seniors were in the hall, youth are rarely in attendance. He listed the various imambara and community centre projects totaling about US\$36.5M in North American cities such as Allentown, Vancouver, Bathurst, Brampton, Minnesota and in Europe (Leeds, Leicester and London) and asked members to reflect on their impact on our community, saying that while we continue creating enthusiastic superstructures, this must be balanced with spiritual emphasis. This particularly among young people who are not seen to be sufficiently participating in community affairs.

CETAB Report: Hassan Pirbhai said that CETAB is working along the "Vision to Reality" document objective. He said the first priority is for education and the second for the term beyond. In addition, CETAB activities involve giving online career guidance or featuring profiles in newsletters. CETAB is meanwhile developing a loan-tracking systems for student loans. The organisation is also working closely with the Africa Federation, and will work in tandem with Toronto's Skills and Career Development Board for scholarships and academic achievement awards. He encouraged people in attendance to fill out a form for the CETAB mentor database.

WF Youth Network Desk: Shafique Govani said that the mission of the Youth Network Desk is to create an inter-Jamaat and intra-Jamaat network where youths can share experiences and ideas. The idea is to create a

youth network, with unity and communication for the purpose of moral and spiritual upliftment and knowledge. He said that the World Federation Youth Network Desk has visited Europe in 2001, and in 2002 they visited Africa for the Youth Leadership Workshop. (A North American Youth conference was held in Toronto on May 26, 2002).

Newly appointed Toronto Youth Director Mehjabeen Allarakhia said that the Toronto "Jaffari Islamic Youth" organisation has been active for 15 years and thanked the World Federation for the networking opportunities that the current conference has facilitated.

Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme: On behalf of ZCSS, Shafique Govani reported that a donor has been secured for a school in Karimpur and work will be completed in September 2002. He said a Teacher's Quarter is being built in Khujwa and reported that 45 new graduates have joined the scheme thereby bringing the current total to 224 undergraduates, and 424 graduates in the portfolio as of May 2002. The Zainabiya Scheme currently has 11,000 students. It is the organisation's mission to enhance education opportunities for all children. The Zainabiya Yatim and Asir Sponsorship Scheme meanwhile supports 150 children.

Medical Advisory Board (MAB): The World Federation sends medicines and equipment to Iraq and Iran regularly. The Board continues to work closely with dispensaries in Dar es salaam, Arusha and Nairobi; and funding is required for more medical equipment. A second eye clinic has been established in Patna to provide cataract surgery, and cataract eyeglasses. Primary health care work continues in Bangalore and Patna.

MAB is addressing the issue of

(continued on page 36)

Muslim World News

(...from page 35)

awareness of drug abuse and HIV. It has called on doctors of the community to provide health education and make people aware of Thalassaemia and AIDS.

WF Goodwill Delegation: Br. Mohamedraza Moledina spoke about his Goodwill Mission to Gujarat and the attempts made to reconcile the differences amongst the leadership.

Toronto Project Update: Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi said that Toronto is a role model to other communities. He said that the "khojas" have a knack for organisational skills; therefore we should assist other groups and strengthen ourselves collectively.

Br. Ali Raza Rajani, President of Toronto Jamaat said that there are currently 4,000 members in the Toronto Jamaat, with a population growth rate of 8-10% annually. The property at 9000 Bathurst has almost tripled in monetary value. The Centre has already provided immeasurable benefits, both tangible and spiritual.

Br. Ali Raza said that construction on the Islamic Education and Community Centre (IECC) 9000 Bathurst and on the Masumeen Islamic Centre in Brampton will begin soon, and he commended the efforts of Toronto VP Br. Razak Damani and Br. Murtaza Panju, Chairman of Brampton Jamaat in spearheading these projects. Razak Damani provided an update on the IECC 9000 Bathurst project. Current pledges are at the C\$7.5 million level, about 50% of the goal. Br. Razak said that future plans are to have a student hostel and a low-income seniors home at this location.

Vancouver Project Update: Dr. Abbas Moledina reported that the Vancouver Jamaat's project is now nearing completion. Insha'Allah, the Az Zehra Islamic Centre will have an official opening event on August 25, 2002.

Leeds Project Update: Councilor Nasoor Dhanain emphasized that Leeds is not a tiny jamaat. Their membership is growing. He reported that work on the Leeds Project did not commence as planned on April 7, 2002 but will begin soon.

Seniors Convention Report: Dr. Akber Mithani said that 260 seniors of both genders participated in the Seniors Conference held in Toronto on 25 May 2002. The seniors expressed a need for a permanent multi-functional facility for their meetings, and said that they need a library and resource centre.

Support Systems required by the seniors include the need for English classes, transportation, a Help Line and information or education sessions on issues such as health, retirement, finance, real estate, information technology and counseling. Dr. Mithani recommended that the World Federation initiate a Seniors' Desk that will facilitate the development of a world strategic plan focused on the needs of our seniors in the community.

Br. Ramzan Dhanji, who chairs the UK based KOSHISHCO, a seniors organisation, said that they had approached government bodies and influenced them to donate money; therefore the seniors would not be a burden on Jamaat communal funds. At the same time, the leaders from UK opined that it is important that local Jamaats and the regional bodies worked in hand to ensure that the needs of all seniors are adequately addressed.

The Chairman concluded that the World Federation would Inshallah, set up a desk at the Secretariat, which would explore ways in which we could accommodate the various seniors' groups for the betterment of the community in the most efficient manner.

Treasurer's Report: After some deliberation on the Treasurer's Report, the meeting noted with satisfaction the financial statement presented by Ahmed Daya.

Calendar of Events: Members were asked to mark 13, 14 and 15 Sept. 2002 on the calendar, for events to include the Constitution Conference, Women's Convention, Executive Meeting, and the 25th Anniversary of the World Federation to be held in England. The Chairman encouraged members to check the Diary of Events on the World Federation website and to adhere to the deadlines regarding submission for constitutional amendments.

Closing: The Chairman thanked Toronto Jamaat and volunteers for their "tremendous welcome". He commended the spirit of volunteerism, and the meticulous and tremendous efforts of Razak Damani and his team to facilitate the hosting of the conference in Toronto. He recognised the dedicated "ownership" that Br. Razak Damani has demonstrated as well, in working for the IECC 9000 Bathurst project. Volunteer time resource is as valuable as monetary resources are, and he cited Br. Razak as an example. On behalf of the World Federation the Chairman pledged a donation of C\$250,000 to the 9000 Bathurst project as a token of support. In closing, Dr. Walji once again encouraged the NASIMCO Caretaker Committee to revive the organisation.

Toronto Vice President Br. Razak Damani invited Toronto volunteers to the podium, and then a presentation of souvenir plaques was made to World Federation workers. Br. Razak said that it was an honour for Toronto to host the World Federation Conference under the fine leadership of Br. Hasnain Walji.

Report compiled by Sr. Mahjabeen Yusufali, Editor of Toronto Jaffery News.

WF donates Physiotherapy Unit to hospital in Arusha



The Arusha hospital

The World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities has, over the last 25 years, aided the process of provision of health care to the needy and the deprived in different parts of the globe. Amongst areas in Africa, the World Federation's involvement in Arusha has been substantial particularly through our Shia Ithna-Asheri Charitable Dispensary and Hospital there.

The population living in villages and slums scattered around Arusha have little access to good health care. The Ithna-Asheri Charitable Hospital is a non-profit making, health service established in 1986 as an outpatient dispensary, to serve the general population of Tanzania. The inpatient wing was established in 1991.

The Charitable Hospital provides efficient and quality medical care (curative and preventive) to the general population irrespective of class, creed, race or religion. The Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community of Arusha established the hospital and the Jamaat manages it.

Due to the increasing growth of our community, the general population of Arusha and the increasing incidences of cardiac illness, systemic hypertension, diabetes mellitus etc., the hospital is attending to increasingly more critically sick patients.

Statistics of the hospital for the year 2001:

	No. of Patients
Outpatients	68936
Admissions	1935
Deaths	38
Deliveries	360
Major Operations	330
Ultra Sound	2274
X-Rays	2492
Antenatal Clinic attendance	3314
Young Children Clinic (Y.C.C.)	5106
Eye Clinics	4344

A total of 128 full time employees serve the hospital, visiting consultants from KCMC (Moshi) including a Consultant Surgeon, ENT specialist, Eye specialist, Orthopaedic specialist, Urologist and a Dermatologist come once a week for clinics. Services rendered include:

- a) General outpatient service for adults and children.
- b) MCH service including Antenatal clinics, young children clinics

and family planning clinics.

c) Laboratory services including routine blood, urine and stool examination, serum bio chemical analysis, blood grouping and matching services, lipid profiles, serological tests etc.

d) Minor and major surgical procedures.

e) Dental services.

f) Eye services.

g) Physiotherapy.

h) X-ray and Ultra sound scanning.

i) General wards including two-bed Acute Care Unit.

j) Maternity service with beds.

k) Major operation theatre.

l) Ambulance service.

Patients suffering from injuries and post-operative pain require specialised physiotherapy like Short Wave Diathermy, etc. No such facility was available in Arusha and the World Federation has therefore donated a brand new Curapuls 670 Short Wave Physiotherapy Unit to the Arusha Ithna-Asheri Charitable Hospital. This was sent to Arusha from Holland.

The hospital has started using the machine. The first patient was treated in April 2002. Thereafter many patients have benefited from this machine including patients suffering from arthritis of the knee and patients with long standing back pain.

Pakistan to ban preaching militancy and sectarianism 'again'

Pakistan's religious affairs minister said on 20th June, 2002 that the Government would soon pass laws banning the teaching of militancy and sectarian hatred at the nation's 8,000 Islamic religious schools.

Speaking at a news conference, Dr Mehmud Ahmed Ghazi said the Madrassah Registration Ordinance 2002 approved by the cabinet would be remodified and presented to the President before enforcement.

SIMPLICITY and SINCERITY - VALUES WE HOLD

by Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, Secretary General,
The World Federation of KSI Muslim Communities

We have reached the half-term mark of the current term of the World Federation. Being a global institution means that the secretariat of the World Federation has to deal with issues relating to members globally. Requests for assistance come in many languages and from many corners of the globe. Each application is responded appropriately. A brief glance of the response during crises in Gujarat, Pakistan and Afghanistan will confirm this. Today, our successful multifarious activities have established our own unique presence within the Shia World, making us the envy of many institutions that include Maraje who have continuously expressed their faith in our abilities. An achievement, judged by any standard, is worthy of respect.

This term being the term of Education, there are priorities relating to the primary, secondary and higher levels of education for the community. There is a need to improve the standard of education so as to provide a good opportunity for our children to develop their capabilities. We work closely with regional federations and Jamaats to facilitate their programmes for improvement of standard in their schools. The excellent results achieved by our schools in Arusha, Dar es Slaam, Mombasa, Nairobi and Karachi reflects the skills and dedication of board members of these schools as well as the Jamaats to provide quality education to the children of our community. The importance of loans to deserving students merits our close consideration. Working closely with the Education Board of the Africa Federation, the World Federation announced three MGN (Marhoom Mohamedhusein Gulamali Nasser (Congowala) loans to students of East Africa wishing to study abroad. The three loans have been allocated for deserving students. One will be awarded to a student wishing to pursue Journalism, one to a female student for any degree course and another for a student who has excelled academically and is financially handicapped. Each loan is for the value of Stg. Pounds 10,000 per annum for a period of three years. Finally, there is a need to forge alliances within our community so as to provide opportunities for work experience to recently qualified graduates.

Again on the education front, the mission of the Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme, which is now sponsoring over 11,000 children worldwide, is to make sure that: 'No child in the community should ever be deprived of attaining basic education.' Since 1982, we have run this sponsorship scheme for poor Shia children around the world. Initially, we started sponsorships of our community children in Gujarat but over the period of time this scheme has expanded into many regions around the world and now we operate in various countries including the whole of India as well as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bangkok, Bosnia and Kenya. We now have children who have worked their way through the primary and secondary level and are now looking for help to progress to University level. To facilitate this, a new scheme was launched in 1997, called the 'Zainabia Graduate Sponsorship Scheme.' This year we have 560 students graduated on our books and they are studying courses ranging from Medicine, Engineering to Computer Technology and Fashion Designing.

Recently we have introduced a new scheme, called the 'Zainabia Yatim and Asir sponsorship scheme' and are in the process of working through the second one. This new scheme came about as a result of the continuing tragedy of the Iraqi refugees in Iran and the growing refugee crises in the Shia world. This is to help with the education of orphans and children of captives of Shia families around the world. So far we are sponsoring around 160 children under this scheme and due to the overwhelming support of the community, we are in the process of approving another 100 children, alhamdulillah. Furthermore, this year a new scheme is being prepared under the name of 'Mulla Asghar Memorial Academic Scheme' for the children in our community in Africa. The World Federation and Africa Federation, inshallah, will jointly carry out this scheme.

On the tabligh front, the Islamic Education Board has prioritised and is working through numerous objectives that range from projects on the Holy Quran, Zakireen, Madressa, Media, Books, Internet to many others. The idea is to provide opportunities to all for understanding Islam and sharing the 'Gift of Islam' with each other. This is the primary area of our work that is carried out from our two well-equipped resource centres. One resource centre is based in Northwood, London, United Kingdom. The other is based in New York, America. Many up to date programmes are now established and we pray that they come to fruition soon. Such programmes can only be effectively done if everyone of us participates in the activities of the IEB.

On the issues of health and poverty, there are challenges facing the community but there are also opportunities. Opportunities to upgrade the

(continued on page 39)

standard of health services that we can offer to our members through our screening programmes, health education materials, Hajj Medical Missions, dispensaries and hospitals. In all these areas, much has been accomplished. Today, health-screening programmes have benefited the community in the United Kingdom. Its Thalassaemia screening is recognised as a pioneering work within the ethnic community. It has brought awareness and cautioned the community on the perils of ignoring issues relating to Thalassaemia as well as Aids. We continue to supply medical equipment and journals to our Jamaats in Africa and their hospitals and dispensaries, particularly in Dar-es-Salaam and Arusha.

Furthermore, the World Federation provides healthcare services to slum dwellers, the poor and refugees. A good programme of preventive healthcare centre is established in Govandi, Neelasandra and Khujwa where patients are advised and treated with an emphasis on prevention and immunisation. The Ainullah Clinic in Bangalore is the latest addition. Annual eye camps are also held in Bihar where at least 200 patients have their sight restored by operation. The role of the Medical Advisory Board as an experienced enabler is vital in this area of work. As a strategic leader in matters of healthcare, it has plans to facilitate forums that can come up with directions and strategies for communities worldwide to provide access to respectable healthcare that is affordable and of good quality.

The above is just a snapshot from the breadth of work carried out at the Secretariat of the World Federation. These areas of our work are set out in the 'Vision to Reality' document that has defined goals and objectives for our community worldwide as

well as a mechanism for performance management, which will move the community efficiently towards the defined vision. In order to carry out these tasks, we need to empower the boards and subcommittees throughout the membership of the World Federation. These are the 'Frontline workers' of the community who require all the management and resource backup in order to produce the most effective results. The time has now come to make this cultural shift and devolve responsibility and accountability to them so as to enable the community to make even greater strides to achieve our objectives.

Yet, we cannot ignore new management concepts that are here with us and used by similar charity organisations to achieve competency and effective performance in the delivery of services. Whereas the usual motivation for introducing structural changes are transparency, accountability, effective performance, competency and many others, 'simplicity' and 'sincerity' as concepts are also uppermost in our mind as motivating factors. We say this because at the Secretariat of the World Federation, our approach has been to make each new process simply effective with a sincerity of purpose. While quality obviously remains a key direction, the values of 'simplicity' and 'sincerity' are integrated within this direction as key drivers for improvement in the delivery of the service to the community.

This approach has been effective. In the last 18 months, with tenacity and discipline, bringing all the experience to bear upon the matter in hand, the secretariat has dealt with implementing many decisions of the conference and the executive council and continues to provide, with candid appraisal, all that is expected of it. This is the measure of its determination to serve the community. Alhamdulillah.

Mulla Asghar Memorial Awards to recognise outstanding workers

To recognize persons who have rendered outstanding services to the community, all Jamaats worldwide are invited to nominate names of individuals for the following awards:

- < Mulla Asghar Memorial Award of Excellence in: Zakiri
- < Mulla Asghar Memorial Award of Excellence in: Tableegh
- < Mulla Asghar Memorial Award of Excellence in: Education
- < Mulla Asghar Memorial Award of Excellence in: Work Amongst Youths
- < Mulla Asghar Memorial Award of Excellence in: Work Amongst Women

1. Any person, male or female in any part of the world may be nominated by a Jamaat provided that the person is a member of a member Jamaat of The World Federation or of the Regional Federation.
2. The closing date for nomination is 15 August 2002.
3. All entries must be endorsed by the Jamaat and sent to the Secretariat in a sealed envelope marked: Mulla Asghar Memorial Awards – September 2002.
4. A panel comprising of all Past Presidents and Past Vice Presidents will judge the nominations and make the final selection. The decision of the Panel will be final. Amongst the merits, the panel will judge the candidates on the following criteria. All nominations must be accompanied with the following details:
 - < Length of service
 - < The breadth of the scope of service
 - < Consistency of service
 - < Leadership qualities
 - < Innovative approach
 - < Impact on the community

World Federation Secretary General Visits Dar es Salaam

At the invitation of the President of the Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Al-Hajj Asgharbai Bharwani, the Secretary General of the World Federation, Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, paid an official visit to the community in Dar es Salaam soon after attending the 60th Supreme Council session held in Arusha on 29th and 30th March 2002.

The President Asgharbai Bharwani, Vice-President Zulfikar Dewji and Hon. Secretary Yasin Nurmohamed received him at the Dar-es-salaam airport. A three-day busy schedule was arranged to see various development programmes currently under construction.

The community in Dar es Salaam, numbering more than 8000 heads, is the largest Jamaat in Africa. With a strong presence in Dar es Salaam, our community has made a considerable institutional progress to see that the needs of members are sufficiently accommodated, alhamdulillah. The Jamaat manages the affairs of the community through its 22 committees.

During his stay, the Secretary General visited the Maderessa that caters for almost 1600 community children and spent time with the Tabligh sub-committee as well as touring the construction site where the tabligh resource complex will be situated. A sizeable Mosque expansion is also under construction and there are plans to construct, in the near future, inshallah, a multipurpose five storey building that houses underground car parking

facilities, kitchen facilities, ghusl khana, Musafarkhana, a madressa complex and two ladies Imambaras. The visit also took him to the Haji Ebrahim Dispensary and the hospital run by the Jamaat

Almost 70% of the resources of Dar es Salaam Jamaat go towards supporting the education programme that provide education facilities for more than 2000 children of the community. The Secretary General had the opportunity to go around all the educational institutions, ranging from the Nursery school, Girls and Boys Primary schools to the Girls and Boys Secondary schools. In the dedication of the education team, management committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat and the community at large, lies the future of education in our community. There is no doubt that with the right infrastructure already in place the future looks promising. Dar es Salaam community should take pride in this fact that they have achieved so much within the limited resources available to them.

At a dinner meeting, the Secretary General addressed about 30 members of the community, which included members of the Managing Committee of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, elected Counsellors of the Supreme Council of Africa, Trustees and officials of various institutions of the Jamaat. Past Office Bearers of Africa Federation including the immediate past Presidents, Al-Hajj Mohamedbhai Dhirani and Al-Hajj Habibbhai Mulji, were also present. In his address, he

focused on the progress and achievements made so far on the 'Vision to Reality' paper presented by the World Federation last year and stressed on the importance of centralisation of our resources and activities globally.

In the Question and Answer session that followed his address, he acknowledged that the deteriorating economic condition of the less fortunate members of the community is a matter of deep concern and there is an immediate need to initiate an economic upliftment programme to address the situation.

In his address to Jamaat members at the Imambara, he emphasised the need of centralisation and informed members of the active role played by the World Federation in consolidating its activities and future developments worldwide. He expressed pleasure to have had the opportunity to visit some of our institutions in Dar es Salaam and to see their progress. He submitted to the attentive audience that the Dar es Salaam community has proved itself, by its conduct, that when leaders and workers work together, people pay and people show faith. They show faith in the institution and the leaders of the community must not let them down.

The visit of the Secretary General provided an excellent opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest with the management committee and frontline workers of Dar es Salaam Jamaat as well as to appreciate the opportunities and challenges facing our community in Dar-es-Salaam. His in-depth report will enable the office bearers to better understand how the World Federation can be of greater service to our community there. It will also pave the way for members of our secretariat team to effectively co-ordinate projects with Dar es Salaam Jamaat.

Crisis in Gujarat - the WF acts

...India's Human Rights Commission calls for justice

Since communal troubles started in Gujarat, the World Federation Office bearers and Secretariat have kept in touch with Jamaats and community leaders in India. They have contacted the Council of Gujarat, Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Mahuva and the Kutch Federation including Bhuj, Kera, Mundra and Nagalpur.

In several towns in Kathiawad, members of our community lost their homes, businesses and factories through arson attacks. Many of our community in Bhavnagar had to abandon their homes to take shelter in safer localities.

On 6th of March, the Secretariat was informed by the Executive Councillor of the World Federation, Al Haj Aunalibhai Salehmohamed and the President of Bhavnagar Jamaat, Al Haj Ramzanbhai Asaria that the situation of our community in Bhavnagar had turned for the worst as more businesses and homes were broken into and looted and, in some cases, burnt down.

The majority affected were small family businesses and workers who are now unemployed and without shelter. At one time hundreds of families from outlying areas of Bhavnagar among them women, infirm and children were sheltered in the mosque and Imambada of Bhavnagar. Many displaced families were looked after by families living in Ambachowk, Bhavnagar. These families are now homeless, destitute and frightened for their lives and have therefore become refugees in their own towns.

Bhavnagar Jamaat did everything possible with its limited resources including providing food parcels and monetary assistance to those

caught in the turmoil.

In Ahmedabad, when the curfew was lifted for a few hours, the youth of Ahmedabad were quickly mobilised to send relief rations to families all over. These families are daily wage earners who have lost means to earn their livelihood. Another 210 families were identified and helped with food rations through the Sarkhej Jamaat.

The Council of Gujarat promptly initiated a scheme to financially assist those wishing to relocate to safer areas, the cost being INR 6,000 per family.

Meanwhile, the World Federation has sent letters of concern to the Indian Embassies in the UK and the USA, and is liaising with other organisations like the American Federation of Muslims of Indian Origin in their efforts at lobbying on behalf of the Muslims in India.

When the incident occurred, a World Federation goodwill delegation visiting Gujarat, comprising of Councilors Manzoor Kanani and Mohamed Raza Moledina accompanied by Al Hajj Masum Meghji was not able to travel to Kutch and had to return to Mumbai.

To monitor the course of events the World Federation has maintained regular contact with community leaders in Gujarat. Its Executive Councillor Alhaj Aunalibhai Salehmohamed, Gulubhai Bhurani, the President of the Council of Gujarat and Ramzanbhai Asaria, the President of Bhavnagar Jamaat have continually kept the World Federation abreast with the situation.

As a first phase relief measure, the World Federation has already authorized a sum of US\$10,000

as immediate relief to the community there, while the secretariat assesses the amount of damage and the resources required. Early estimates suggest that sums up to US\$100,000 may be required.

The community around the world is requested to make special efforts to seek donations to assist the Gujarat Jamaats in their efforts to resettle the affected Mumineen in their homes and businesses. Please also remember the afflicted families in your prayers.

Meanwhile, India's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has blamed the Gujarat state government for its alleged complicity in recent bouts of religious violence there.

In its final report, the NHRC charged the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party state government with "comprehensive failure" in both preventing the violence from erupting and in failing to stem its rapid spread. "The facts indicate that the response was often abysmal, or even non-existent, pointing to gross negligence (and) in certain instances a complicity that was tacit if not explicit", the report says.

More than 900 people - mostly Muslims - have died in a spate of religious clashes since late February, when a Muslim mob attacked a train carrying Hindu activists returning from the northern city of Ayodhya. Voluntary agencies and some international watchdogs say the number could easily be close to 2,000.

The NHRC report stresses that it is imperative to recognise that peace can return only when all those responsible for having violated the law are punished.

The ultimate Quran site - www.quran.org.uk.

Imam Zayn-ul-Abideen (AS) said: "Were people aware of what lies in the obtainment of knowledge, they would pursue it even though they had to make voyages and endanger their lives to obtain it." Usul-al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 35.

Due to the vast technological advances made in recent times, the obstacles to obtaining knowledge in the aforementioned hadith are fast becoming confined to the realms of myth and folklore. The infinitely increased accessibility of knowledge in this media-age does not however absolve us of the responsibility to seek knowledge; rather, the task becomes more incumbent upon us.

The World Wide Web is the prime medium for making knowledge available *en masse*. Knowledge of the Holy Qur'an is an obligation on every Muslim. It was with these two key facts in mind that WF-IEB launched its website dedicated to the Holy Qur'an, entitled 'Holy Qur'an Resources on the Internet.'

There is no shortage of sites dealing with Qur'anic issues on the internet but www.quran.org.uk fills a niche by functioning as a portal to the wealth of information on the web. By categorising and linking to high quality Qur'anic material in a simple, user-friendly manner, the site has rapidly acquired a formidable reputation of its own. In fact the site was recently displayed on CSPAN, a public TV news channel in the US, recommending it as a good site to visit for information on Islam.

Over 500 diverse academic institutions including the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies and

Georgetown University, Washington, DC, directly link to the website. With the establishment of a specialist Qur'an library at Dar-ul-Tableegh, the reputation of the site within academia will be further enhanced, as unique material relating to the Qur'an is made available on the web for the first time. The site, which at one stage had 25,000 hits in 100 days, has 11 English and 23 foreign Qur'an translations and has been endorsed by over 500 academic institutions.

The site has undergone several facelifts and in Ramadhan was receiving over 2,500 hits per week with visitors hailing from as far afield as Kyrgyzstan and Trinidad and Tobago.

The website provides links to eleven different English translations of the Qur'an, including widely used versions by Marmaduke Pickthall, M.H. Shakir, and Yusuf Ali. There are also links to translations in 23 other languages. Content includes numerous articles and full-length books by the likes of Shaheed Mutahhari and Shaheed Al-Sadr and other eminent Muslim scholars and covers topics ranging from Qur'anic orthography to the Qur'anic liberation of women. The multimedia section links to several mp3 and Real-Audio based recitations of the Holy Qur'an and is accompanied by resources aimed at improving recitation skills.

The website is truly dynamic and updated on a frequent basis with many new features every month. Visit the site today at www.quran.org.uk. Encourage everyone in your family, madrasah, and Jamaat to do so regularly and together understand the uniqueness of the Holy Qur'an.

ALLAMA SYED SAEED AKHTAR RIZVI MEMORIAL FUND LAUNCHED

During the Ziyarat (Fatiha Khwani) held for Marhum Allama Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi in Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 23rd June 2002, the Chairman of the Africa Federation Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji launched the ALLAMA SYED SAEED AKHTAR RIZVI MEMORIAL FUND. All proceedings towards this Fund will be used for Tabligh.

The Africa Federation appeals to the entire Community to contribute towards this Fund, which will assist in keeping up with the works that Marhum initiated and carried out.

Contributions towards the Memorial Fund can be made at the Africa Federation Secretariat offices in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. Bank Account details have been outlined on page 69 of this issue.

Mombasa Jafferys elect new office bearers

At a Special General Meeting held on Wednesday, 12th June 2002 at Mombasa Jaffery Sports Club, the following members were elected as office bearers and committee members forming the managing committee:-

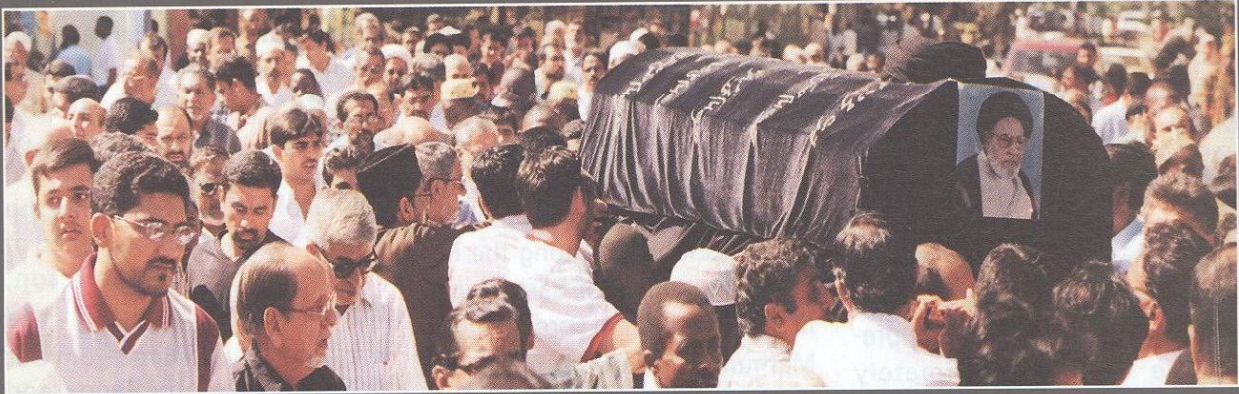
Chairman - Mohamed Raza Karim
Vice-Chairman - Zuheir MT Kanji
Hon. Secretary - Mohamed H G Khaku
Hon. Treasurer - Mohsin A Khaki
Sports Secretary - Azim M Karim

Committee Members:

Shabbir MT Kanji
Murtaza K Gulamhusein
Saleem Bhaloo
Mahmood Karim
Riyaz Virjee
Dr. M A Karim
Ex-Officio Mohamed A P

A global tragedy – Allamah Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi passes away

(Obituary and report by Munir Daya, Editor, *Federation Samachar*)



INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAJIUN.

The sudden and sad demise of Allamah Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi in Dar es Salaam on Thursday 20th June 2002 (8th Rabi-ulAakhar 1423) came as a shock to the community and Muslims at large, around the world. Marhum Maulana Rizvi was more like an institution rather than an individual considering his intense involvement in propagating the Shia faith around the world.

He was a scholar, a preacher and a writer. He acquired deep knowledge of religion as well as of secular subjects and his books have been used by children learning Islam, adults wanting to know further about our religion and by new converts and outsiders for who Marhum spent many hours enlightening them on the true concepts of the Shia faith.

As a prolific writer he has over 140 titles to his credit some of these have been translated into twenty two languages. His books and correspondence have been instrumental in spreading the true Islam from Philippines to Guyana and around the world. His books on the Elements of Islamic Studies, harmful effects of music, the ill effects of pork and many others are a household name because they provide simple and crucial explanations on many issues pertaining to Islam. He also wrote numerous articles

The funeral was attended by hundreds of community members and outsiders.

while excerpts from his 'Your Questions answered' editions have been regularly carried in the *Federation Samachar*. His writing erudition also extends to the English translation of the profound *Tafsir Al Mizan* of Ayatullah Tabatabai.

A faqih and a muhaddith in his own right, he was also an expert in tafseer and scholastic theology, a rijali and historian, a poet and a linguist that all made him one of the greatest Muballighs the Shia World has ever known. A multitalented communicator, he spoke and wrote in Urdu, English, Arabic, Persian and Kiswahili while also knowing Hindi and Gujarati.

As a historian, his last mammoth work, on the History of The Shia Communities, is in the process of being published. In his tribute, the World Federation President, Hasnainbhai Walji points out that Allama Rizvi authored the very first monograph he ever read on the history of the Khoja Shia Ithnaasharis. This was authored in conjunction with Professor Noel King of Makerere University about a quarter of a century ago.

The World Federation Secretary General, Sibtain Panjwani in his condolence message says, "I am reflecting on those momentous and far sighted decisions made by the Supreme Council of the Africa Federation in 1964 to

create the Bilal Muslim Mission with the support of Allama Syed Akhter Rizvi and others who remained committed to this substantial task during their lifetime ..." He adds, "...History will record the work of the Bilal Muslim Mission as a legacy from our community to the indigenous people of Africa."

Born in Ushri, Bihar, India on 5th January 1927 (1st Rajab, 1345) Maulana was first appointed as a resident Alim in Lindi after coming to Tanzania in 1959. Realising that he could only propagate the true faith by understanding and speaking the local language he was quick to learn Kiswahili and improved his English as a result of which he could write the many books that he authored.

As a man with vision he was thus involved in the establishment of the Bilal Muslim Mission in Africa. In 1962 he prepared a scheme for tabligh and sent it to Haji Ebrahim H. Sheriff in Arusha. He then amended and improved the first plan and when Allama was transferred to Arusha in 1963 a pilot scheme was put into effect.

Before the triennial Conference of the Africa Federation in Tanga in 1964, Allamah Rizvi's recommendations were circulated as a Secretariat paper and this got a

(continued on page 44)

Obituaries

(.....from page 43)

boost following a resolution of Hussein Nasser Walji (approved in the general meeting of Dar es Salaam Jamaat) that called upon the Federation to become involved in tabligh activities among African people. In his booklet, 'Outline of Shi'a Ithna-ashari History in East Africa', Marhum Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer states, "...the 1964 memorandum was received with mixed feelings but it got a boost from a resolution sent by Dar es Salaam Jamaat to do something in this (tabligh) connection." An appreciative majority ultimately adopted this scheme as a policy and this is how a new field of activity appropriately called the Bilal Muslim Mission came into being.

In his same book, Marhum Mulla Asghar mentions, "...the incessant and untiring efforts and contributions by Maulana Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi in this direction have been decisive and of great importance. His knowledge of Kiswahili and English enabled him to offer his service without any undue hesitation. He was appointed Chief Missionary of the Bilal Muslim Mission – an appellation signifying the new role of an Aalim among the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheris. For the first time in its history, the community lent its credence to this new appointment and realised that the function of an Aalim could be much more beneficial, varied and discursive."

From Arusha, Marhum Allamah Rizvi was transferred to Dar es Salaam Jamaat. The expansion of the Mission's activities in Dar es Salaam necessitated the formation of an autonomous body and in July 1967 Allamah Rizvi went to Mombasa and had a meeting with the office-bearers of the Supreme Council in which it was decided to establish two institutions, the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania and the Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya. The former was registered on 16th April 1968 and the latter in 1971 with Marhum Maulana Rizvi be-

ing one of the founder members and the Chief Missionary. He was also the Tableegh Advisor of the Late Chairman of the Africa Federation, Late Mohamedali Meghji and to Marhum Mulla Asghar M.M. Jaffer, Alhaj Mohamed Dhirani and Alhaj Habibbhai Mulji.

Thereafter with his enthusiastic missionary activities into the interior regions of East Africa his name became synonymous with the word Tabligh among the indigenous people of East Africa. In his endeavour to spread Islam, Marhum introduced correspondence courses in Islamic studies in English and Kiswahili besides several other courses for Shia students through the Bilal Muslim Mission. These courses are not only pursued in Africa but throughout the world. He also traveled widely in Africa, Europe, Canada and the USA where he recited thought provoking majlises and lectured University students and various other audiences. While his audiences at some gatherings were intellectuals he always reached out to new converts and those wishing to know more about religion.

Funeral

The funeral took place on Saturday 22nd June 2002 (10th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423) with a very large attendance at the Dar es Salaam Jamaat Imambara and also at the graveyard. Many indigenous Shia brothers attended and walked on foot covering the route of the funeral Cortège from the Imambara to the cemetery in more than half an hour. Normally coffins are taken by a special van to the graveyard. Two scouts holding two large black flags led the cortège to the burial site while traffic police stopped the busy Saturday morning traffic in Dar es Salaam to make way for the cortège.

The Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat Imambara was thronged with Mumineen, who included the Africa Federation Chairman Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji, Hon Secretary

Alhaj Barkat Rajani, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Tanzania, Representatives from Muslim Communities in Dar-e-Salaam, Sayyid Murtadha Murtadha from Madrastul Akram Nairobi, Alhaj Abbas Nasser Chairman and Alhaj Fazleabbas Dato, Hon Secretary of Bilal Muslim Mission Mombasa, the Dar es Salaam Jamaat Chairman, Asgharbai Bharwani and the two immediate Past Chairmen of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani and Habibbhai Mulji. Alims from Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Tanga and Zanzibar were also present together with officials from various regions of Tanzania.

Namaz-e-Mayyat was led by Hujjatul Islam Syed Mohamed Rizvi the son of the Marhum. Sheikh Musi Ridha Resident Alim of Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat gave a brief history of the Allama followed by a short majlis.

Ziyarat (FatihaKhwani)

During the Ziyarat (Fatiha Khwani) ceremony held on Sunday 23rd June 2002 (11th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423) five speakers paid tribute to Marhum for his great contribution towards Islamic enlightenment around the world. The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Zulfikarbai Khimji highlighted some of his achievements ever since the formation of the Bilal Muslim Mission and launched a Memorial Fund in the name of the Late Allama Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi and requested all Jamaats to keep a desk for collection of funds that would be spent towards tabligh.

The Chairman of Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya, Abbasbhai Nasser said that Marhum Maulana Rizvi had played a crucial role in initiating tabligh activities and said that his first impact on the local community was when he obtained a distinction pass in Kiswahili that he learnt after arriving in Tanzania. He said

(continued on page 45)

Obituaries

(.....from page 44)

publications like the Light (since March, 1963) and Sauti ya Bilal (since 1965) are now read throughout the world while some books of Maulana Rizvi have had to be reprinted because of great public demand. He said Maulana was also involved in reforming imprisoned convicts and said that few knew the fact that he was also a good poet.

On behalf of the African population in Tanzania, Sheikh Ramadhani Kwezi of Bilal Muslim Mission paid tribute to Maulana who he defined as a great religious advisor to the local population. He said that prior to Maulana's arrival in the country there was not a single African Shia but today there are over 100,000 Shia Africans whose lives have not only been uplifted religiously but also economically. He said Marhum Rizvi has travelled to over 45 countries for tabligh and that the local African Shias have been orphaned by his death. He also referred to the Bilal Charitable Trust opened in India by Marhum.

The Chairman of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania, Pyralibhai Shivji outlined the historical involvement of Marhum in tabligh activities since he came to Tanzania. He said his involvement in rehabilitation of prisoners had led to an improvement in the moral values of inmates who were reached out to. He also said that all the community's Marjas beginning from Ayatullah al-Uzama Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakeem, Ayatullah al-Uzama Sayyid Abul Qassim Al-Khoui, Ayatullah al-Uzama Gulapaygani and Ayatullah al-Uzama Seestani entrusted Marhum Maulana Rizvi as being capable of answering questions on *fiqh*.

The Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani said that in 1959, when

he was the Dar es Salaam Jamaat Honorary Secretary, the Jamaat, then consisting of about 1800 members, was in need of a resident Maulana. He said that Maulana Rizvi arrived in a steamer from India at the age of thirty to fill this position but because Lindi Jamaat also urgently needed a Maulana, Marhum was instead sent there as a resident Alim. He said Marhum Maulana Rizvi quickly blended with the local population and learnt Kiswahili fast following which he addressed gatherings in Kiswahili.

Mohamedbhai said that the then Chairman of the Africa Federation, Ebrahimbhai Sheriff asked him to handle tabligh secretariat affairs as a result of which he was transferred to Arusha. In Arusha he also undertook Islamic propagation at Jamaat level. In 1964, he said, a resolution was passed to begin tabligh activities when the Chairmanship was under Marhum Mohamedali Meghji who superseded Ebrahimbhai Sheriff who passed away.

Mohamedbhai said that Marhum Maulana Rizvi faced difficulty in tabligh activities sometimes from members of our own community who blamed him of initiating a situation conducive to inter-racial marriages. He said that some even complained that it would be difficult to control our occasions when niaz is served in the presence of non-Khojas. He said that such complaints proved unrealistic and today the Bilal Muslim Mission has many Shia Centres, some in very remote areas, where converts congregate and mark the Shia faith. He said the fact that today the Bilal Muslim Mission's activities have spread far and wide to places as far as Madagascar, Mozambique and South Africa and other places worldwide including the United States is a testimony of how the will to spread Islam can prosper if done with a sincere motive.

He said Marhum has 146 book titles to his credit with 85 of these being in English and the others in different languages including Kiswahili. He said that Marhum previously also penned a weekly column in the local Tanganyika Standard newspaper called 'Thought of the Week' which dealt with inter-faith issues and that he wrote many articles for local newspapers. He also referred to the 'Question and Answer' series carried in the *Federation Samachar*.

Mohamedbhai said that Marhum Maulana Rizvi was a bridge between conservative and modern Islamic thinking and called on the community to have a constructive vision following his death. He said it is high time that we focused on individuals to take further Islamic training so that we have enough manpower to run the affairs of our institutions, Jamaats and the Bilal Muslim Mission.

A branch with fruits

On a personal note I greatly cherish the fact that Marhum allowed us to carry excerpts from his book 'Your Questions Answered' in the *Federation Samachar*. I also recollect the time when he penned a special article for the *Federation Samachar* special edition marking the 52nd anniversary of the Africa Federation. He wrote an article on the codification of Shi'a personal law in Tanzania and Kenya and when he had a few amendments to the article, he personally visited me in my office despite his very busy schedules. I was indeed touched by his humility and modesty because he could have simply called me to his office to collect the amendments. His modest behaviour reminded me of a parable that my late father taught us about humility saying that when a branch is full of fruits it bows down but when it has no fruits it remains erect. Marhum Maulana Rizvi was a perfect ex

"The death of an aalim, is the death of an aalam"

By Sakina Zainul Datto

For many Dar es Salaam city centre residents, the day dawned on Saturday, June 22, 2002 to the sound of Yaseen being recited from the Azan mike. It was an immediate feeling of doom, like you feel when you wake up on Ashura morning only to realise what a heavy day it is and no sign of joy should appear on your face.

And it indeed was a grave day. The death of an aalim, a scholar, is the death of an aalam, the world. That is the saying of our Maasomeen. And the loss to the world it certainly was. It was a day we laid to rest the most prominent and knowledgeable personality of our community, Syed Akhtar Rizvi.

Everyone seemed to try and remember and connect the sadness they felt in their hearts automatically through a meeting, a discussion or a moment they had shared with the Syed. I couldn't help recall how I had asked him for an interview some years back when he was in Birmingham for treatment. Saying he was not allowed to stress himself, he nevertheless agreed for an interview to be published in *Samachar*. That incident reminded me of the crux of what this great man was all about -- the service and guidance for the community at whatever cost to himself.

As some ladies could not help sobbing after having done the ziarat of marhum, paying their last respects, one lady was overcome and all she could think about, she said, was that he was the one who had recited her nikah.

The presence of a huge Bilal crowd at the funeral as one entered the mosque was evidence of the aalim's great

achievements. From zero, he had turned thousands of indigenous people in Africa into the followers of Alhulbait. And their sobbing was so heart wrenching as '*La illaha illa Allah*' was recited signaling the journey towards kabrastan that no one in the gathering could control tears pouring down their eyes.

Despite the sober crowd of black clad women, most people interviewed by *the Samachar* revealed that it was difficult to digest that such a household name shrouded in piety had truly departed from our community leaving us without the benefit of the huge ilm he possessed.

Many sisters recalled his *Masael* classes for ladies some years back and how they had complete faith in few except Akhtar Rizvi. His word was taken with full confidence.

The Dar es Salaam resident aalim summed up everyone's thought that day as he declared himself devoid of strength and words with which to offer condolences to the Syed's children and the community at large at this time of "Musibate Azeem."

He reminded the gathering of how it was unimaginable for ordinary people to realise what a loss the world had suffered with the passing of this great ulama. Only the world of knowledge could gauge the loss that has been created and that could never be filled, he said.

He informed of how people in different parts of the world, Iran, India and Pakistan to mention a few were together in this mourning. It was a loss for so many, one could not imagine, he revealed.

"Tabligh is a rough road, a way of *ambiya*. Few can manage to

walk along this path for they need the action of the *ambiya*," he said elaborating on how the Syed's life was all about tabligh.

"His name (Allama Rizvi) has become synonymous with the word Tabligh amongst the indigenous people of East Africa," the World Federation newswire declared. "The passing away of an Aalim of such caliber is a great loss to the entire Muslim world and in particular the Shia Community," it added.

No heart was untouched when the maulana addressed the Syed telling him the huge and diverse crowd, consisting of people of all races, communities, age and status that had gathered at the Khoja Shia Ithna asheri mosque that morning were there to bid farewell to him.

As the funeral procession left the mosque on its way to kabrastan, the huge sober crowd immediately attracted attention of the passerby and people along the streets stopped working to observe the funeral, instinctively knowing in their hearts that this was no ordinary funeral, nor ordinary mayyit. Alhamdulillah, many of our community members paid tribute to this great personality by keeping shut their shops and businesses and joining in the funeral.

As the procession moved towards the graveyard, women stayed behind to pay tribute of their own. Zakeerah Fatim Dewji had the crowd in tears within minutes preaching on what an aalim means and what this loss meant.

"Aalim is like a shelter for the community," she quoted the Maasumeen's saying. The shelter had been uprooted and the fort against enemy destroyed, leaving us exposed, she said.

She informed the ladies about how the Syed's books were read even in prisons in America, because of which many non-

(continued on page 48)



Death Jottings

**Inna lillaahi wa inna
ilaihi raajiun**

The following deaths have been reported since the last issue of the *Federation Samachar*.

Marhum Sherali Mohammedali Habib of Dar-es-Salaam on Monday 24th June 2002, 12th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423.

Marhum Muhsin Mustafa Nasser of Mombasa on Saturday 22nd June 2002, 10th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423.

Marhuma Fatmabbai Raza Manek of Toronto, Canada on Friday 21st June 2002, 9th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423.

Allama Syed Saeed Akhter Rizvi of Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday 20th June 2002, 8th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423.

Marhum Hussein Mohamed Abdulla Hemraj, Peterborough, United Kingdom, Monday 17 June 2002, 5 Rabi' al Thani 1423.

Marhuma Rubabbai Gulam hussein Abdulrasul Haji Juma of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 16th June 2002, 4th Rabi-ul-Aakhar 1423.

Marhum Syed Ashique Abbas Murtaza Hussein Rizvi, of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 11th June 2002, 29th Rabi-ul-Awwal 1423.

Marhum Asgarali Juma Kurji, London, United Kingdom, 9 June 2002, 27 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhuma Fatma AbdulRasul Bandali of London on Thursday 6th June 2002, 24th Rabi-ul-Awwal 1423.

Marhum Mudassir Shiraz Moh'dali Gulamhusein, Mombasa, Kenya, 2nd June 2002, 20 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhuma Amreen Ahmed Hussein of Dar-es-Salaam on 1st June 2002, 19th Rabiul Awwal 1423.

Marhuma Fatmabai Hassanali Dhalla Kanji, London, United Kingdom, 28th May 2002, 15 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhum Jamil Molu of Mombasa on Sunday 26th May 2002, 13th Rabi'ul Awwal 1423.

Marhuma Rukiyabai Amirali Habib of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 26th May 2002, 13th Rabi-ul-Awwal 1423.

Marhum Mujtaba AbulQasim Kalyan, Mombasa, Kenya, 26 May 2002, 13 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhum Raza Panju, South London, United Kingdom, 24 May 2002, 11 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhum Mushtakali Ashrafali Hasham, South London, United Kingdom, 24 May 2002, 11 Rabi ul Awwal 1423.

Marhum Irshaad Husayn Ramzan Dhalla of Dar-es-Salaam on Monday 13th May 2002, 29th Safar 1423.

Marhum Mohamed Raza Hirji, Scotland, United Kingdom, 13 May 2002, 30 Safar 1423.

Marhum Suleman Dawud S Lalji (Babu Suleman) of Dar-es-Salaam on Sunday 12th May 2002, 89th Safar 1423.

Marhuma Khairoon bai Mohammedraza Khamis Damji of Dar-es-Salaam on Friday 3rd May 2002, 19th Safar 1423

Marhum Dr. Mushtaqhusein G.M. Dhirani of Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 1 May 2002, 18 Safar 1423

Marhuma Rukiyabai Hasanali Dhalla of Toronto on Wednesday 1st May 2002, 17th Safar 1423.

Marhuma Zainabbai Kassamali Dattoo of Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 30th April 2002, 16th Safar 1423.

Marhuma Zarinabai Ashiq Bhalloo of Zanzibar on Tuesday 30th April 2002, 16th Safar 1423.

Marhum Haji Roshanali Gulamhusein Shivji, Bukoba, Tanzania, 17th April 2002, 4 Safar 1423.

Marhuma Raziabai Pradhan,

Mumbai, India, 16th April 2002, 3 Safar 1423.

Marhum Mohammed Taqi Abdulrasul Versi of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 16th April 2002, 2nd Safar 1423.

Marhuma Kulumbai Abdulhusein Dharamshi of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday, 16th April 2002, 2nd Safar 1423.

Marhuma Rubabbai Alimohamed Karim of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday, 2nd April 2002, 18th Muharram 1423.

Marhum Mohamed Ali Hassanali Nasser Virji, Mwanza, Tanzania, 1 April 2002, 17 Muharram 1423.

Marhum Mohammed Jaffer Merali Alibhai of Dar-es-Salaam on Friday, 29th March 2002, 14th Muharram 1423

Marhum Gulamhusein Hassanali Pirbhai (BIRIWARA) of Dar-es-Salaam on Friday 29th March 2002, 14th Muharram 1423.

Marhum Haji Mohammed Jaffer Merali Alibhai, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 29 March 2002, 14 Muharram 1423.

Marhuma Kulumbai Jaffer Boga, Allentown, USA, 28 March 2002, 13 Muharram 1423.

Marhuma Fatmabai Mohamed (Biremi) of Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday, 28th March 2002, 13th Muharram 1423.

Marhuma Khatijabai Mohammed Fazal Dewji of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 26th March 2002, 11th Muharram 1423.

Marhum Razahusein Jaffer Ali Nurmohammed of Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 26th March 2002, 11th Muharram 1423.

Marhum Amirali Mohamedhusein Gulamhusein, Mombasa, Kenya, Friday 22 March 2002, 7 Muharram 1423.

Marhum Mohamed Raza Mohamedali Alibhai Ramji of London on Saturday 16th March 2002, 1st Muharram 1423.

(continued on page 48)



Death Jottings

(...from page 47)

Marhuma Shirinbanu Razahussein Pirbhai of Dar-es-Salaam on Saturday 16th March 2002, 1st Muharram 1423.

Marhum Mohamedraza Mohamedali Alibhai Ramji, London, United Kingdom, 16 March 2002, 1 Muharram 1423.

Marhuma Zainabbai Husayn Virji (Mamdhub) of Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 13th March 2002, 28th Zilhajj 1422

Marhuma. Kulsumbai Jafferli Karim Khatau of Dar-es-Salaam on Wednesday 13th March 2002, 28th Zilhajj 1422

Marhuma Rubabbai Muhammad Abdulrasul Dato of Dar-es-Salaam on Monday 1st March 2002, 26th Zilhajj 1422.

Marhuma Sugrabai Mohammed Taqi Dhanani of Dar-es-Salaam on Friday 8th March 2002, 23rd Zilhajj 1422.

Marhum Husein Ashrafali Sachoo, Johannesburg, South Africa, 3 March 2002, 18 Zilhajj 1422.

Marhuma Shirinbai Fazal Tarmal, of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 27 February 2002, 14 Zilhajj 1422.

Marhuma Lailabai Fidahusein Walimohammed Jivraaj of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 25 February 2002, 12 Zilhajj 1422.

Marhuma Zainabbai Mohamedali Nanji of Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday 21st February 2002, 8th Zilhajj 1422.

Marhuma Khadijabai Ahmed Fezi, Mumbai, India, 19 February 2002, 6 Zilhajj 1422

Marhum Nisar Husain Gulam Ali Momin, Ahmedabad, India, 18 February 2002, 5 Zilhajj 1422.

Marhum MuhammadMahdi Gulamabbas Versi and his son Marhum Master Gulamabbas M. Versi of Mtwaru on Thursday 14th February 2002, 1st Zilhajj 1422.

Marhum Samir Hasan Walji of

Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday 12th February 2002, 28th Zilkaad 1422.

Marhuma Lailabanu Haiderali Pirmohammed, Swansea, United Kingdom, 11 February 2002, 28 Zilkad 1422.

Marhuma Sakinabai Asgher M.M. Jaffer of London on Saturday 9th February 2002, 25th Zilkaad 1422.

Marhuma Banubai Yusuf Nanji Kara of Dar-es-Salaam on Thursday 7th February 2002, 23rd Zilkaad 1422.

Marhum Ramzanali Ladak, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 7 February 2002, 24 Zilkad 1422

Marhum Hussein Karim Dhirani, London, United Kingdom, 6 February 2002, 23 Zilkad 1422.

Marhum Roshanali Mawji, Leicester, United Kingdom, 5 February 2002, 22 Zilkad 1422.

Marhum Muhammadtaqi Gulamhusein Rashid of Mwanza on Monday 4th February 2002, 20th Zilkaad 1422.

Marhum Fidahussein Rajabali Esmail, Karachi 1 February 2002, 18 Zilkad 1422

Marhuma Zainabbai Gulamali Dungersi, Dubai, 1 February 2002, 18 Zilkad 1422

Marhum Janmohamed Murad Ali, Sharjah, 29 January 2002, 15 Zilkad 1422

Marhuma Parvinbanu Roshan Jameel, Mauritius, 27 January 2002, 13 Zilkad 1422.

Marhum Hussein Sharif Velji, Birmingham, 27 January 2002, 13 Zilkad 1422.

Marhuma Hasinabai Akbarali Dahya Manji, Kitchner, Toronto, 26 January 2002, 12 Zilkad 1422.

Marhuma Fatemabai Roshanali Mawji, Leicester, United Kingdom, 19 January 2002, 5 Zilkad 1422.

Marhum Mohammedraza Abdul Nurmohammed, London, United Kingdom, 8 January 2002, 24 Shawwal 1422.

(.....from page 46)

Muslims had turned Muslims. She said his books had been translated into several languages and were widespread in the world. He was a renowned author, having left a wealth of knowledge for generations to come. The least we could do, she said, to honour him was to observe 40 days of strict mourning and having condolence books opened at several centres for people to sign and show their devotion to the Allama.

The funeral proceeding ended amongst ladies by matam to a nawha that Allama liked, Nadeem Sarwar's "*Amma bar bar gala dukhta hai.*"

Well known Hamida bai Manji (Malimia) informed the *Samachar* about how people all across the globe from Iran, Iraq to India and USA asked about the Allama on her trips abroad. "The whole Shia world knew him and were concerned about him," she said.

"The sad demise of Maulana Akhtar Rizvi has caused an irreplaceable loss to the entire community. He was a source of knowledge and guidance. His lectures were heard and books were read with great interest and appreciated by all. The knowledge he imparted was immense. We take solace in that we got to know him and learn from him," read a statement issued by the Ladies Managing Committee of Dar es Salaam. It's Chairlady Marzia Jessa offered condolences to the bereaved family, the Shia Scholars and the Ulemas and to all the members of the Shia community on this "irreparable loss."

Said Jessa, Imam Ali (AS) states: "An Aalim is alive even if he is dead and an ignorant is dead even though he is alive," summing up the reality of Syed Akhtar Rizvi's life and death. May Allah (SWT) rest his soul amongst the proximity of Masumeen. Amen.

INNA LILLAHI WAINNA ILLAIHI RAJIOON.

Tower of our strength is gone

by Fidahussein A. Hameer

In the 35 years of its history, the Bilal Muslim Mission has gone through a lot of crises during which Allamah Seyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi (AM) stood like a pillar. "This Bilal is Imame Zamana's mission and Allah will take care of it," he used to tell us. He quoted the question Abraha asked Hazrat Abdul-Mutalib (a.s.), "You are asking for your animals, what about Khana-e-Kaaba?" to which Hazrat Abdul Mutalib replied, "Kaaba is Allah's property, He will take care of it." Marhum told us, "Similarly Allah will take care of Bilal, you don't have to worry."

Over the years the deaths of prominent people involved with the Mission have been received with profound shock but at all times Allamah Rizvi was a pillar of strength always reassuring that things would continue as planned. Among those who passed away were Haji Rafiq Somji the first Hon. Secretary of the Mission, then Haji Ahmed Sheriff, the founder member and first Chairman, then Haji Ali Mohamed Jaffer who was also a founder member followed by Bwana Ali Sheriff, Chairman of the Bilal Muslim Mission Arusha Branch. Immediately thereafter Alhaj Mulla Asgherali M.M. Jaffer, who had the Mission's welfare at heart and was an ardent supporter, also passed away.

Allamah was a pillar of strength and always reassuring. "Personalities will come and go. It is the institution that matters" he used to tell us.

And alas that pillar of strength is now gone. Allamah's departure from this world is a real loss for us. Allamah was a *faqih*, a *muhaddith*, a historian and a real

treasure of knowledge. There is no replacement in the whole world, the tower of strength and reassurance on which we leaned, is gone.

We pray to Almighty Allah (s.w.t.) to reward Allamah Saheb for his services to mazhabe Ahlul Bayt A.S. and place him in Jawarehe-Maasumeen A.S. and give us all

the strength and fortitude to carry on the heavy burden he left behind.

Fidahuseinbhai is a Founder member of the Bilal Muslim Mission. He has actively served the Mission ever since it was formed and worked for many years with Marhum Allama Rizvi to propagate the true Faith.

The "cool shadow" is no longer

by Habib J. Mulji

The sad demise of Allama Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi has created a vacuum in the religious leadership and guidance that had enriched the entire Shia World for decades. Only Allah (s.w.t.) can help us to fill this vacuum.

A tree can only be objectively measured when fallen. How many people sitting under the cool shadow of this tree have benefited from its fruits? By way of spiritual upliftment, higher religious education, economic or other problems, all looked upon this tree to achieve their goal.

The Bilal Muslim Mission would not have come into existence without Marhum's wisdom of leadership and guidance. It was his enthusiasm and devotion which prompted the Africa Federation to establish it much sooner than would perhaps have been the case.

In Marhum was a fountain of knowledge. He always had time for all, rich and poor. His life assumed additional purpose because he found meaning in the lives of others. He devoted his whole life to serve Islam and Ahlul-Bait (a.s.). It was due to his books, teaching and propagation that more than one hundred thousand indigenous people of Africa and other parts of the world embraced the faith of Ahlul-Bait (a.s.)

Allama's life was so rich and loving, so generous and kind, so amiable and understanding, so honest and truthful, that he has left behind an enviable legacy of memories. In his passing away, we have lost a man who was sought after by those beyond the perimeter of his immediate family. He will be missed by people throughout the world and will be remembered for his enthusiasm, sacrifice and devotion.

It is Allah (s.w.t.) who can reward Marhum in abundance and whose call Allama had heeded in the mission of tabligh. May He in His mercy and grace rest Marhum's soul in the proximity of Masumeen (a.s.). Amen.

Habibbhai Mulji served as Chairman of the Africa Federation for two terms. He was a close associate of Marhum Allama Rizvi.

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World Elections



Africa Federation Committees



The Sports Council Committee. Standing from left to right: Mustafa Panju, Raza Pyarali (Secretary), Tahseel Sheriff (Vice Chairman), Mubin Lalji and Salim Chandoo. Sitting from left to right: Mrs. Memoona Alwani, Amir Somji (Chairman), Mrs. Farah N. Abbas. Inset - Misriya Salim Kassam.



The Central Health Board Committee. Standing left to right: Mohamed Mulla, Dr. Dilawer Padhani and Dr. Jamil Merali. Sitting left to right: Shiraz Rashid, Aunali Khalfan, Safdarali Jaffer (Chairman), Inayat Alidina and Razahussein Manji



The Federation Samachar Editorial Board and AF Web Page team. Sitting from left to right: Mrs. Fatim Haji (Distribution), Munir Daya (Editor and Web Master), Sakina Zainul Dattoo (Sub Editor - women pages), Fatim Patel (Distribution and Web Page inputs). Standing from left: Salim Kassam (Dar es Salaam Distribution), Murtaza Jivraj (Photographs and archives), Amiral Virjee (Web Page designer), Abdul Dattoo (Advertising), Mukhtar Damji (Asst. Editor).

Birmingham Jamaat

The new Executive Committee members for Birmingham Jamaat for the term 2002-2004 are:

President

Br. Hussein Mawji

Vice President

Br. Mohamed Bharwani

Secretary

Br. Mustafa Ramji

Asst. Secretary

Br. Haji Premji

Hon. Treasurer

Br. Mohseen Meghjee

Asst. Treasurer

Br. Navshad Kanani

Committee Members

Br. Abbas Khoja (Mukhi)

Br. Ashak Rashid

Br. MohamedFazal

Br. Hussein Kanani

Br. Sajjad Pardhan

Br. Sajjad Najafi

Trustees

Br. Haider Haji

Br. Nassir Fazal

Br. Raza Ali Virji

Br. Asghar Hemraj

WF Councillor

Br. Ashak Rashid

COEJ Councillor

Br. Rafiq Hemraj

Edmonton Jamaat

The new office bearers of the Shia Ithna-Asheri Jamaat Association of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada for the 2002 term are:

President

Br. Mohammedraza Fazal

Past President

Br. Shaukat Moloo

Treasurer

Br. Saleem Dhalla

Secretary

Br. Mohammed Jamal

Program Organizer

Br. Akbar Bhimji

Elections

Panjan Society of Victoria

The Panjan Society of Victoria have elected a new Managing Committee for the next two years ending 2004. The Committee is as follows:

President

Br. Shabir Alidina

Vice President

Br. Iftexhar Shah

Secretary

Br. Haider Naqvi

Treasurer

Br. Abbas A. Gulamali

Committee Members

Br. (Dr.) Masood

Br Abbas Abedi

Br Ali Faiyaz

Br Mumtaz Zaidi

Br Sabir Hussain

Br Nadeem Rizvi

Br. Irfan Ali Naqvi

Br. Shakaib Hassan

Br Hasnain Dhirani

Arusha Jamaat

The new office bearers on the Managing Committee of Arusha Jamaat for the term 2002-2004 are:

President

Br. Mehdi Rashid

Vice President

Br. Firoz Bhimani

Hon. Secretary

Br. Mohamedraza Pyarali

Hon. Treasurer

Br. Shabbir Virjee

Committee Members

Br. Gulamhussein Mukhtar

Br. Riyazhussein Somji

Br. Mehboob Sajan

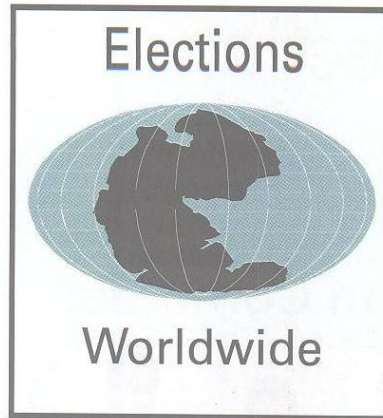
Br. Sadiq Chagani

Br. Husseinabbas Lalji

Trustees

Br. Gulamhussein Saleh

Br. Mohamedhussein Walli



Marsta Jamaat

At the General Meeting held on 1st March 2002 at Zainabiya Islamic Centre, Marsta, a new Managing Committee was elected. The members of the new committee are as follows:

Chairman

Br. Pyarali Bandali

Vice Chairman

Br. Zulfikar Alibhai

Hon. Secretary

Br. Hasnain Govani

Hon. Treasurer

Br. Nazarali Hassan Ali

Committee Members

Br. Shahid Raza Ladha

Br. Sibtain Govani

Br. Gulam Hussein Sumar

Leicester Jamaat

The Leicester Jamaat in the UK elected the following new office bearers during its elections held in March, 2002.

President

Dr Mohammed Asghar
Bhojani

Vice President

Mr Bashir Kassam

Treasurer

Mr Pyarali Master

Hon. Secretary

Mr Shabir Hirji

Committee Members

Mr Masoum Jeraj

Mr Jabir Bhojani

Allentown Jamaat

The Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaat of Pennsylvania held its Annual General Meeting on Saturday February 23, 2002. At this meeting the following office bearers were elected by an unprecedented unanimous vote of Jamaat members:

President

Br. Mohammed Khaku

Vice President

Br. Hasnain M. Jaffer

Secretary

Br. Mohamedraza A.

Rajmohamed

Joint Secretary

Br. Mohamedsalim Bhimji

Hon. Treasurer

Br. Hassanain A. Jaffer

Committee Members

Br. Yusuf Mohamedali

Br. Akberali Rizvi

Br. Riyaz R. Kermalli **

Br. Abdullah F. Soonasra**

** Nominated to the Management Committee by the elected officials.

Los Angeles Jamaat

The newly elected Executive Council of the Shia Ithna Asheri Islamic Jamaat of Los Angeles (SIJLA), for the term 2002-2004 are:

President

Mazaher Kermally

Vice President

Gulamabbas Khakoo

Secretary

Arif Peera

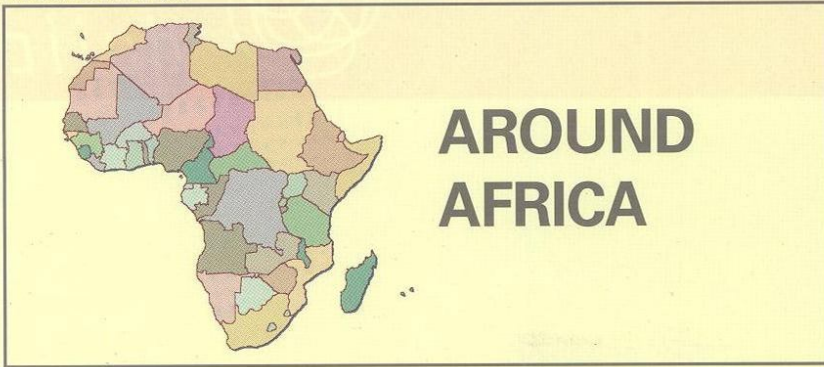
Treasurer

Iqbal Rahim

Councillors

Hasnain Haji

Jaffer Jaffer



Arusha hosts 60th Council Session

Report by Munir Daya,
Editor, *Federation Samachar*

The northern Tanzania tourist town of Arusha was the host for the 60th Annual Supreme Council Session from 29-30th March, 2002.

The opening session was held at the Jaffery School hall at night on 29th March, 2002. Earlier on the same day, the Africa Federation office bearers held meetings with individual Boards to facilitate briefer presentations of only important issues at the actual session. This was done with the intention to allow more discussions on crucial issues.

The Master of Ceremonies for the opening night was Dr. Mohamed Sheriff. He welcomed all to the session and to commence proceedings asked young Aliraza Mukhtar to recite verses from the holy Qur'an that were translated into English by Master Jahangir Sheriff.

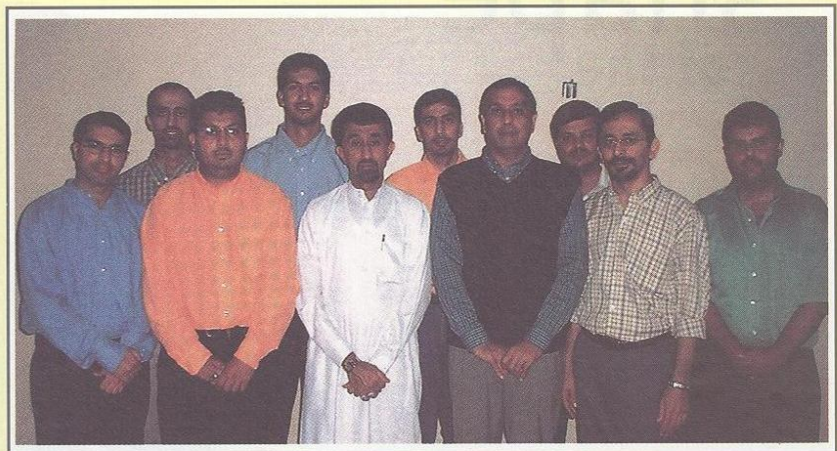
Due-e-wahdat was then recited following which the Chairman of the organising committee, Mustafa Panju introduced members of his team and welcomed all participants to a fine stay in Arusha. He then asked Arusha Jamaat President, Mehdi Rashid to present a goodwill plaque to the Africa Federation Chairman, Zulfikarbhai Khimji.

The Arusha Jamaat President, Mehdi Rashid then highlighted

AROUND AFRICA

Khimji to deliver his keynote address he, on behalf of Arusha Jamaat, post-humously honoured Marhum Bwana Ali Sheriff for his extensive invaluable services to the community and others. He then asked Zulfikarbhai Khimji to present this award to marhum's family.

In his keynote address, the Africa Federation Chairman, Zulfikarbhai Khimji accentuated on the slogan of communal unity, upliftment of education standards and facilities and eradication of poverty. He said by adequately educating our children the community would be gearing towards better prosperity in the future.



The Organising Committee of the Session. Pictured - 1st row from left to right: Mehdi Bhimji, Shabbir Virjee, Mehdi Rashid (Jamaat President), Tahseel Sheriff, Sadiq Chagani, Mubeen Lalji. 2nd row from left to right: Jamil Remtulla, Kumail Lalji, Musaddiq Versi and Rizwan Peera. Missing: Mustafa Panju, Chairman of the Organising Committee.

the activities of Arusha Jamaat attributing progress by this small Jamaat to foresight of past elders. He warned on the spreading moral decay of society and emphasised on the need for the community to think of the posterity by way of economic, religious and social responsibilities.

He cited an example of our Somalia brothers who, despite being welcomed and accommodated by our Jamaats, are still facing uncertainties. He said the Somalia episode is a lesson from which we should learn to have a meticulous vision.

Prior to inviting Zulfikarbhai

The Chairman reiterated the need for centralisation of funds and discouraged individuals from seeking separate Ijazas. He said that during his close door one hour meeting with our Marja'e Taqlid, Ayatullah Sayyid Alihuseini Seestani, the Marja expressed keenness to offer an Ijaza to only one institution in the region.

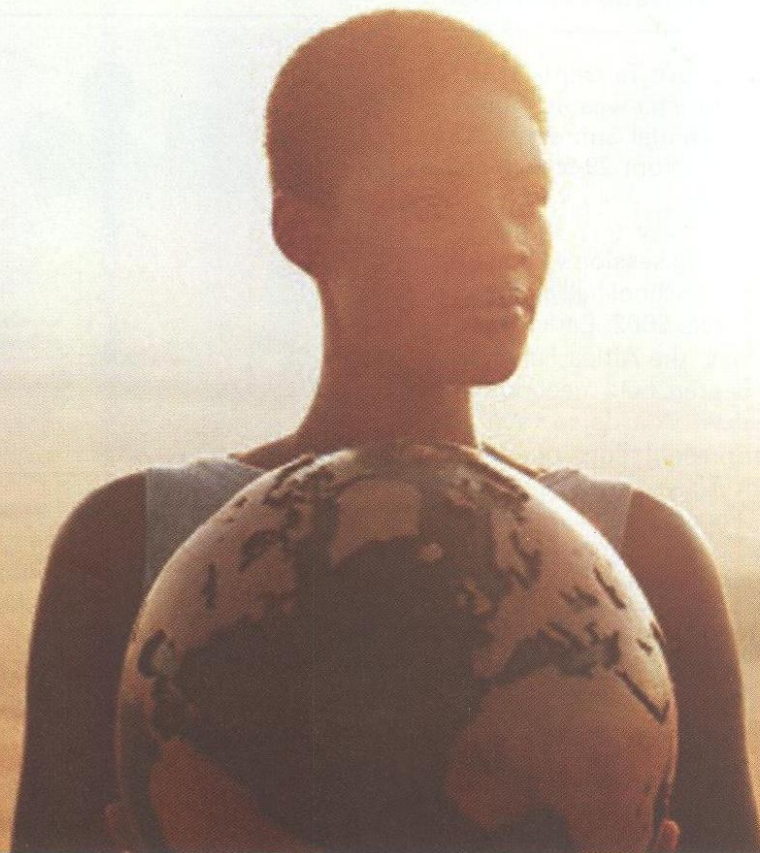
He also emphasised on the need to consolidate existent good relations with the World Federation and other regional Federations. He said that in Africa, the Federation has been monitoring the sensitive political situation in

(continued on page 55)



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Around Africa

(...from page 53)

Madagascar through constant contact with our leaders there. He said community members are informed of updates through circulars and constant updates on the Africa Federation Web page.

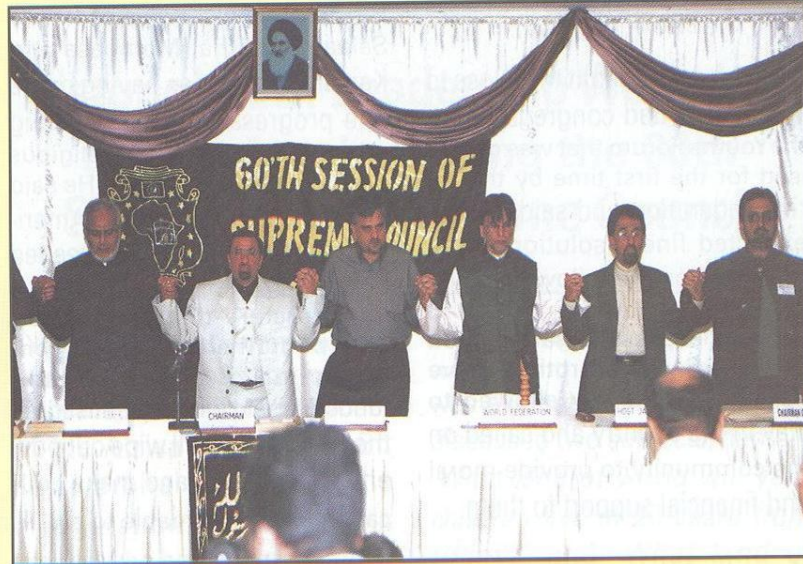
Talking of the official visits undertaken by the office bearers, he said that he considered it a matter of priority to visit as many Jamaats as possible in order to consolidate links and to obtain first hand information on projects and problems.

He said that his delegation has visited Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Arusha, Moshi, Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Morogoro, Dodoma, Bukoba, Songea, Tunduru, Zanzibar Kuwvat and Hujjat, Masasi, Nachingwea, Mikindani, Mtwara, Lindi, Kilwa, Mwanza, Magu, Kampala, Jinja, Bujumbura, Tananarive, Mourandava, Tulear, Tamatau and Majunga Jamaats in Africa that covered Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and Madagascar.

Outside Africa the visits included New York, Orlando, Allentown and Toronto Jamaats in North America while in Europe they had visited London Stanmore and Peterborough Jamaats. A visit has also been made to Dubai Jamaat.

On links with the World Federation he said that in addition to other joint consultations and ventures like the Mulla Asgher Child Sponsorship Scheme, it has also been agreed to globalise the *Federation Samachar*. He said that through a centralisation policy, all the funds destined for various institutions in Africa are now channeled through the Africa Federation.

On education, the Chairman said that the community is spending over US\$ 500,000 for higher education abroad each year. He said that the Federation is eyeing to start some form of college or institute for higher education that



The head table stands up to recite Dua-e-wahdat.



The Africa Federation Chairman, Zulfikarbhay Khimji with his Board Chairmen. From left: Amir Somji (Sports Committee), Safderali Jaffer (Central Health Board), Azim Dewji (Setwel Committee), Munir Daya (Federation Samachar) and Iqbal Sunderjee (Education).

is affordable, practical and which provides a link to affiliated colleges overseas for students wishing to graduate there. He also said that degrees cost less in the east and that students could begin their further studies in countries providing cheaper but recognised education before going to the UK or to North America for the final year or two to graduate.

He said that in their first year in office over 40 students were offered scholarships and said they hoped to offer even more in the second year. He said that in conjunction with the World Federation a few gifted students would get 100% funding scholarships.

On the community's schools in the region he said that it was heartening to note that excellent results were notched in Dar es Salaam, Mombasa, Arusha and

Nairobi. He paid special reference to Dares Salaam for its tremendous rise in the standard of education and good results compared to previous years.

On the tabligh front he said that there is a need to spread tabligh further and that the Tabligh Board has identified over 140 centres performing actively as Tabligh Centres all over Africa that currently are operating with limited contact with each other rather than working jointly.

On madressahs, he said that many madressahs have been inspected and new ideas to improve these would be forthcoming. While stressing on the importance of tabligh propagation he reiterated the need for global unity in these harsh times for Muslims around the world.

(continued on page 56)

Around Africa

(...from page 55)

He expressed delight that close to 100 youths had congregated for the Youths Forum that was organised for the first time by the Africa Federation and said that he expected fine resolutions from their session the following day.

He also expressed satisfaction that our Somalia brothers have now been officially allowed to stay in the country and called on the community to provide moral and financial support to them.

He praised the Trust Board for its activities and emphasised that properties should be correctly valued with rental income being satisfactory.

He also said that to ensure regular income the Federation should think of investing into viable business projects, the income from which can sustain social, religious and economic programmes. He said the Federation should purchase two buildings for commercial letting, the income from which can go towards tabligh and supporting welfare cases.

He said that despite the Federation being registered as a non-profit organisation, separate parallel bodies can be registered to make profit through business. He also called on community members to build bridges with members of other communities.

He praised all the Board Chairmen for their hard work and called upon the congregation to ensure that they visit the Africa Federation Web page which provides constant updates on what is happening at community and Federation level.

The Secretary General of the World Federation, Sibtainbhai Panjwani called on members of the community to take pride of the fact that they are Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri who have excelled through unity and fine leadership. He said the community should have a vision of contributing to humanity as well as consolidating its faith and infrastructure in the years to come.

He cited the examples of Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mombasa and Karachi Jamaats as having made fine progress towards boosting education, welfare and religious needs of the community. He said many European and North American Jamaats have also succeeded in building a religious and social infrastructure that he said can only be furthered through centralisation of objectives and funds. He said with centralisation, the community will wipe out poverty in ten years and make education easily affordable to all.

He praised the Dar es Salaam, Mombasa and Arusha schools for their excellent results and expressed happiness that hospital, tabligh work and other activities are also progressing well. He said success can only be engendered through loyalty to leaders.

The Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Mohamedbhai Dhirani read out a message from the Regional Council of KSI Jamaats of Indian Ocean that could not send a delegation because of the bad political situation there.

Dr. Moledina spoke of the increasing tabligh activities in South Africa and said that though youth forums are helpful in guiding children, the ultimate guidance can only come from parents. He said children get puzzled by double standards of their parents who see television in some months or who hear music on some days but refrain during Muharram or wafaats. He also called for workshops to be held during council sessions to enable more focused discussions and supported the centralisation of khums collection.

Sayyid Murtadha Murtadha from Madrastul Akram Nairobi delivered a message from Agha Seestani conveying greetings to the community and calling for taqwa, accountability, unity and supportive mingling with our Muslim brothers and sisters. He said the Khoja community is blessed with a strong infrastructure which is experienced enough

to advance tabligh methods to stay with the times.

The Vice Chairman of Kampala Jamaat, Hassanbhai Ramji relayed a message from Kampala Jamaat following which the Editor of *Federation Samachar* and the Education Secretary of Dar es Salaam Jamaat, Munirbhai Daya delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of Dar es Salaam and Kenya Jamaats.

The following morning minutes of the previous meeting and conference were confirmed and discussions were held on matters arising. Thereafter the secretariat report of the Federation was read by Hon. Secretary, Barkatbhai Rajani and the Trust report by the Hon. Treasurer, Mustafabhai Pirmohamed.

Barkatbhai reiterated the need for councilors to be more involved and called for stronger action on loan defaulters. He also said that some of the Council's resolutions were outdated while some Jamaats have no constitutions and even no title deeds for old properties. He raised the issue of dormant charitable trusts and asked if the huge amounts spent on tabligh by parallel organisations was not against the concept of centralisation. He also informed the gathering that the Jaffery Education Trust fund had been deregistered apparently because of no submission of returns.

On Trust properties, the trustees were asked to ensure that maximum returns are fetched from Council properties without any legal infringements or undue inconvenience to sincere tenants. Shirazbhai Rashid and Shaukatbhai Jaffer were elected as trustees to replace Gulambhai Janmohamed and Ahmedbhai Alloo who had earlier resigned.

During deliberations, Past Chairman Mohamedbhai Dhirani outlined the history of Bilal Muslim Mission in Tanzania and explained

(continued on page 57)

(...from page 56)

how the Jaffery Education Trust Fund was discontinued. He also explained the situation with regard to khums and corresponding ijazas.

Dr. Moledina then delivered a power point presentation on activities in South Africa following which youths were provided time to present their aspirations for the community. It was agreed to give the youths some time to formalise their objectives before considering them to be directly under the Supreme Council.

Thereafter Board Chairmen presented their reports. The Education Board report was presented by Iqbal Sunderjee; Tabligh Board report by Br. Chandoo, Central Health Board report by Safder Jaffer, *Federation Samachar* and Africa Federation Web page report by Munir Daya; Setwel Board report by Azim Dewji, Sports Council report by Amir Somji and the World Federation report by Sibtain Panjwani.

The report of the Tabligh Board was withdrawn pending further deliberations because it contained issues that affected the policy, constitution and finances of the Federation. The reports of the Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya and Tanzania, the Arusha Shia Centre and tabligh reports from constituent Jamaats were however adopted.

No resolutions were received by the Secretariat from any Jamaat or Councillor for presentation during the session.

Finally the accounts were discussed and after being adopted a vote of thanks was delivered by the President of Mombasa Jamaat, Mohamedbhai Hemani who also invited the Council to have their next session in Mombasa.

The organising committee ensured that all visitors were well cared for and proved once again that Arusha Jamaat is capable to host such events efficiently.

Historic Youth Leadership Workshop held in Arusha during the 60th Session of the Supreme Council

"Youths gathered under one roof ...a dream that has come true" were the words of the President of the Africa Federation, Br. Zulfiqarbai Khimji, in his inauguration address to the youths who had congregated in Arusha for a workshop during the Supreme Council Session.

The preparation for future leadership is not a new phenomenon. The work for the coming generations started the day our community was born and has been ongoing since that very day. This is evident by the existence as well as emergence of great leaders in our community around the world - all being youths of yesterday.

The fact that nearly one hundred youths within the age band of 15-35 years represented their Jamaats for the Arusha event, shows that future leaders are being nurtured on a continuous basis.

The Arusha workshop provided a confirmation on a number of issues. First and foremost, it showed commitment from the youths' side. Travelling by bus from Dar-es-Salaam to Arusha takes nearly the same amount of time as for a plane to fly the London-Dar-es-Salaam route. Other youths also traveled from far and wide for this workshop showing that they are ready to sacrifice their time - a scarce resource in today's world - for the community, and most importantly for Allah (S.W.T).

The Arusha workshop also showed that youths are thinking ahead by having a vision. The fact that they, at an early stage, have realised their responsibility

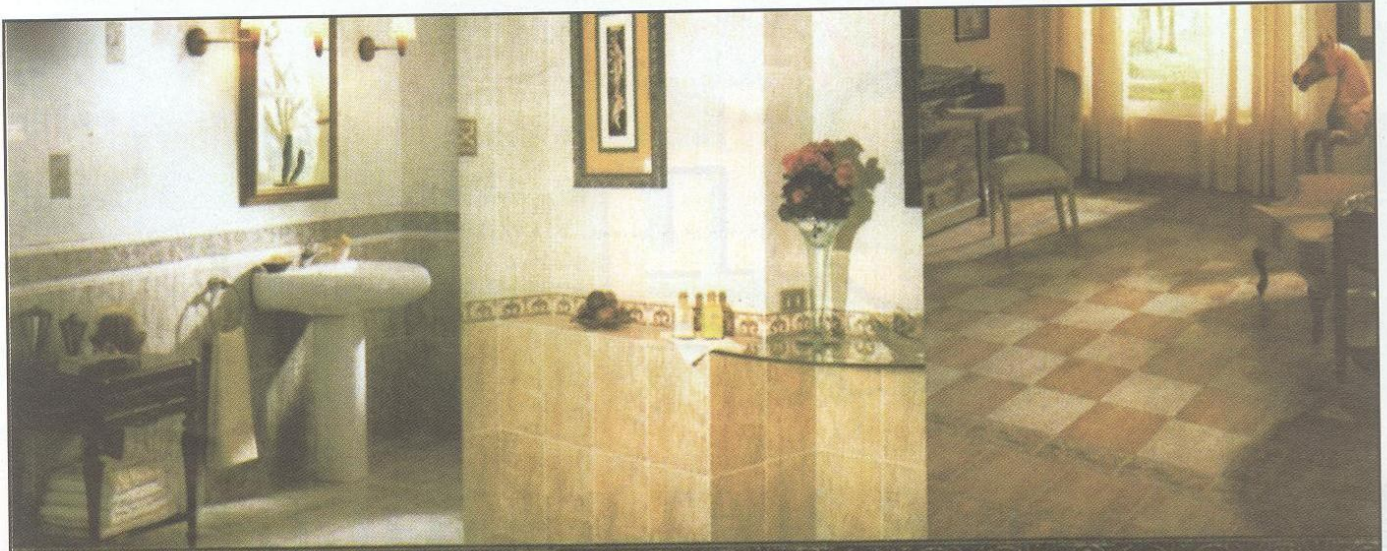
of preparing for their children, as well as for the future leadership, was evident from the way they discussed two subjects, namely 'What kind of world will your children live in 20 years from today?' and 'What kind of leadership will they require?'

The Arusha workshop also showed the understanding that youths have of issues concerning our community. They were able to identify some strengths and weaknesses that we possess, as well as the opportunities and threats likely to be faced.

Healthy deliberations took place among the youths during the workshop and their report was presented at the Council Session. The workshop was organised under the expertise and experience of facilitator, Br. Murtaza Jaffer who managed the workshop in an excellent manner.

It was nice to see that our community possesses human and intellectual resources of this kind with the challenge now being to capitalise on such resources more than we currently are doing. The young members of the community are a resource in numerous aspects. The number of attendees, nearly a hundred, showed that they are a resource in terms of manpower. The thoughts and ideas produced in the course of the workshop showed that they are a resource from an intellectual perspective. The workshop also showed their religious commitment as they agreed that before becoming leaders, one's roots have to be made firm through a higher level

(continued on page 64)



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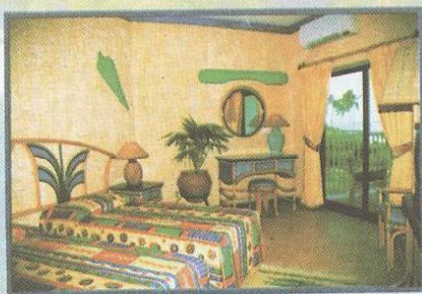
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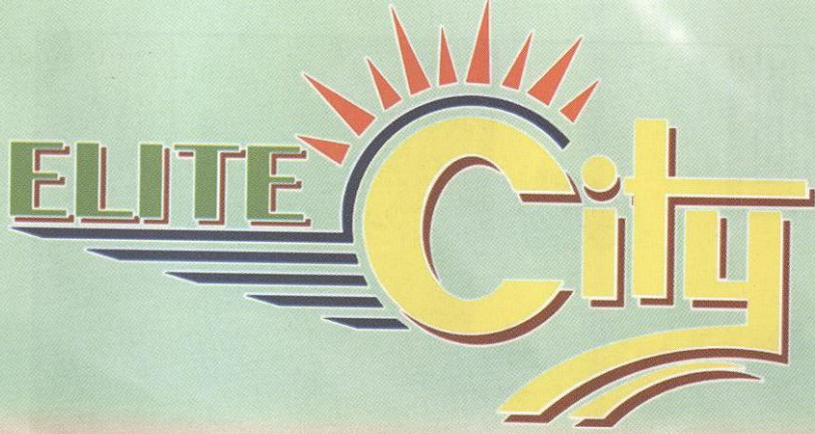


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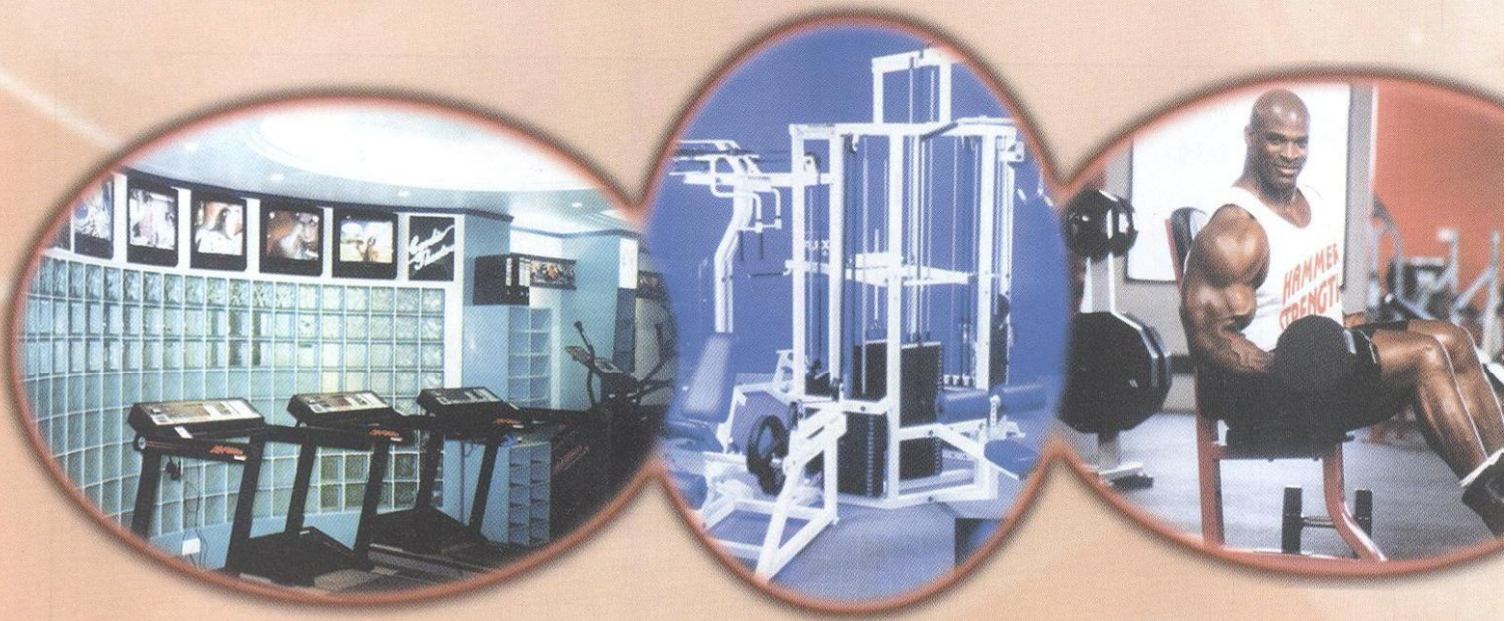



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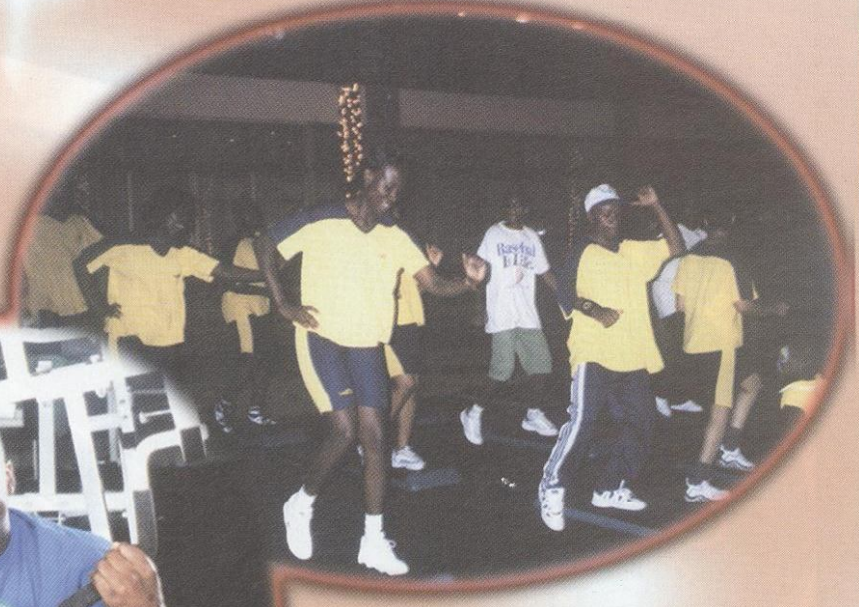
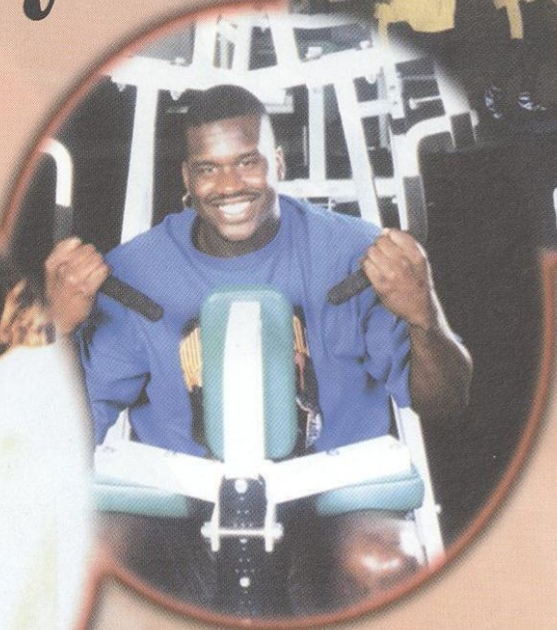
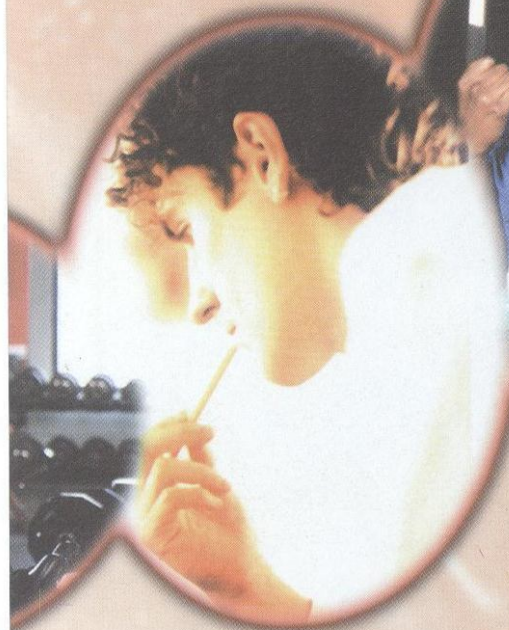
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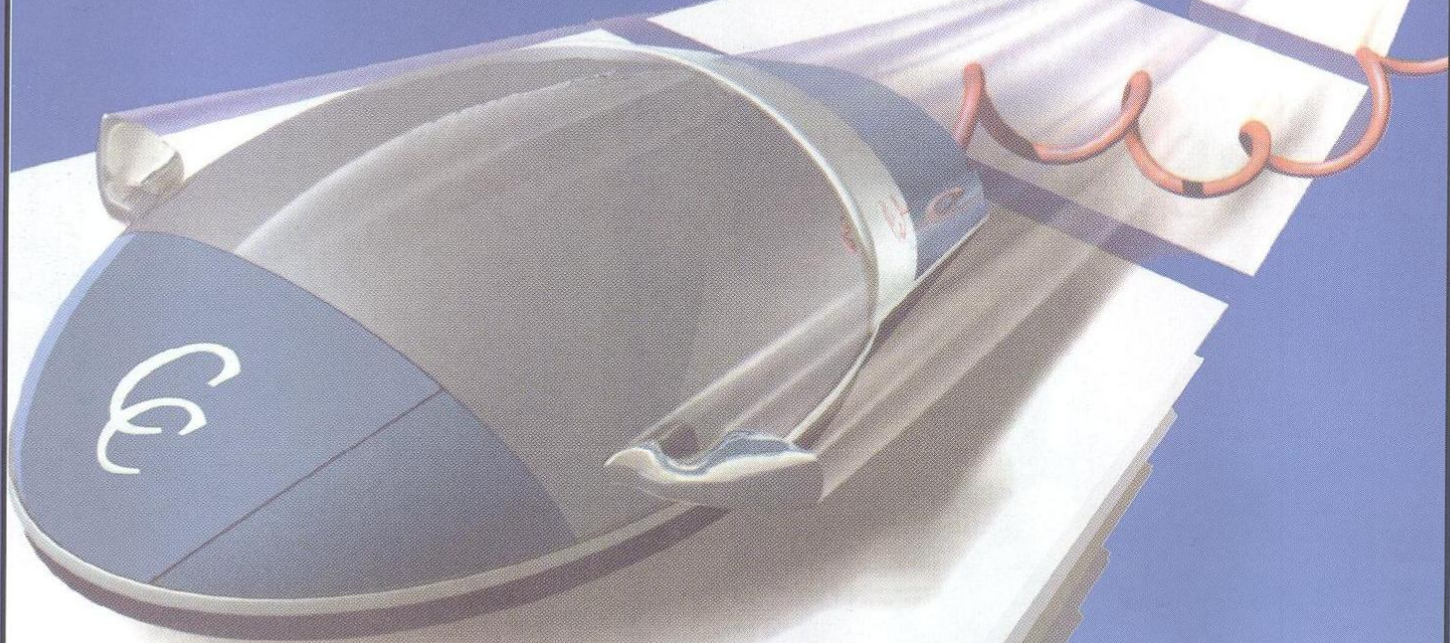


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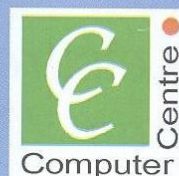
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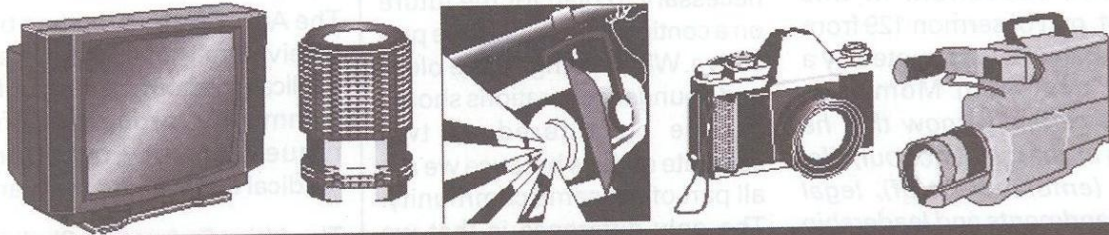


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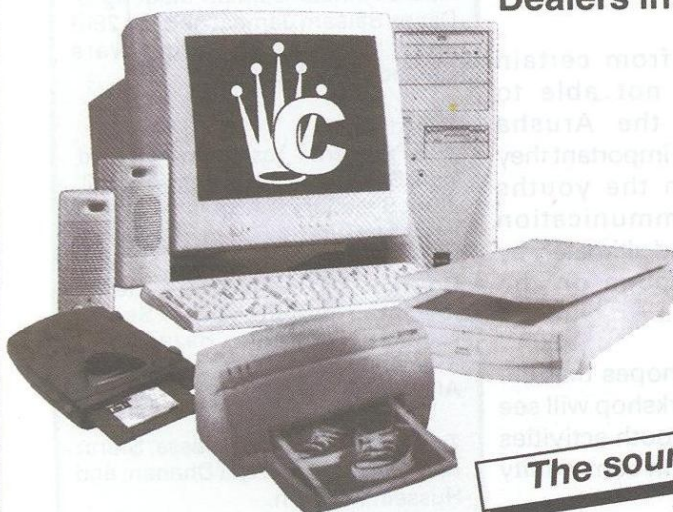
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(...from page 57)

of knowledge, in particular religious education. In this context, part of sermon 129 from Nahjul Balagha was quoted by a young man from Mombasa: "...you certainly know that he who is in charge of honour, life, booty (enforcement of), legal commandments and leadership of the Muslims should not be a miser as his greed would aim at their wealth, nor be ignorant as he would mislead them with his ignorance...."

There do exist areas where the youths have to improve. One area is the need for better communication. Although they communicate with each other to a certain degree, there is still a gap. The gap exists on two levels, intra and inter-jamaat. The first one means that the youths have to come closer to each other within one Jamaat, and consequently make themselves stronger. Once this is done, there is a need for increased communication between and among various Jamaats, on a national, regional as well as global level.

Another area, which needs to be considered by the youths, is apathy. There are times when opportunity comes but the youths do not make the most of it. It is important that each and every opportunity is grabbed and fully exploited. The positive result of the Arusha workshop is an excellent example of how to make most of an opportunity given.

The Arusha gathering was a milestone in the history of our community, but only the end of the beginning. The President of Arusha Jamaat, Br. Mehdi Rashid said, "The youths of today are the leaders of tomorrow, with the guidance of the elders. We the older, younger and future generations have to build on what

exists today."

Following the workshop it is necessary to plan for the future on a continuous basis and be proactive. When doing so the older and younger generations should not be considered as two separate entities because we are all part of the same community. The only difference is that we have different roles to play.

Secondly there is a need for alertness so that opportunities are not wasted. "We should not wait for a mango to fall down from the tree, but should stand ready in front of it and be able to catch it", was the analogy used by Africa Federation Chairman, Zulfiqarbai Khimji when telling the youths not to miss out on opportunities.

Dr. Sibtain Panjwani, the Secretary General of the World Federation, said the Youth workshop provided a sight of future leaders of the Africa Federation. He said "This is a cross-road and a defining moment for all of us. We are about to enter a phase where the leadership will be handed over to the leaders of tomorrow. This will not, and should not, happen over night. We must make sure that the process is managed smoothly and appropriately. This will require co-operation, patience, and understanding from everyone in the community."

Youth leaders from certain Jamaats were not able to participate in the Arusha workshop but it is important they are included in the youths network of communication through emails and ultimately by way of a web page on the Internet.

The community hopes that the Arusha Youth workshop will see a new dawn for youth activities and involvement in community affairs.

APPEAL

The Africa Federation has been receiving a growing number of applications from members of the community throughout Africa requesting for Educational, Medical and Welfare assistance.

The Africa Federation Chairman Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji has therefore decided to launch a special Fund and appeals to all well-wishers, benefactors, donors of the Khoja Shia fraternity in Africa and worldwide to donate generously towards this Fund for the needy amongst us who seek education, medical and welfare assistance.

Mumineen depositing hukuk payment i.e. Khums, Nazar, Sadka etc. are requested to specify so that receipts can be issued accordingly.

Donation towards this Fund can be made to the Bank Accounts of the Africa Federation or to the Africa Federation Secretariat offices in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. Details of the bank accounts have been outlined on page 69 of this issue.

STOP PRESS

Dar es Salaam Jamaat Elections

At the Annual General Meeting of Dar es Salaam Jamaat held on 29th June, 2002 the following were elected into office:

President - Pyarali Shivji
Vice President - Yasin Nurmohamed
Hon. Secretary - Razahussein Manji
Joint Secretary - Asgher Alidina
Hon. Treasurer - Sajjad Jaffer

Committee members - Salim Kassar, Mehboob Somji, Mohamed Hassam, Raza Virjee, Mohamed Lalji, Murtaza Dhalla and Aliraza Rajani.

Trustees: Mohamed P. Jessa, Shiraz Rashid, Mohamed Taki Dhanani and Hussein Hasham.

Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall

opened in Mombasa

....Jaffery Academy extended

A newly built auditorium with an imposing stage and a mezzanine level overlooking the stage with a seating capacity of over 600 has been dedicated by the Mombasa Jamaat to the memory of Late Al Haj Mulla Asgharali M. M. Jaffer and named the 'Alhaj Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall.'

The opening ceremony of this newly built auditorium and the extension of the Jaffery Academy was performed on Friday 4th January, 2002. This function coincided with the Executive Council Meeting of the World Federation of K.S.I. Muslim Communities held at Mombasa in the same hall on Saturday 5th January, 2002.

Hon.Sajjad M. Rashid, a nominated member of the Kenya Parliament and a Trustee and former Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat, declared the hall and the extension of the Jaffery Academy open at an imposing ceremony. A large 8 x 4 feet oil portrait of Al Haj Mulla Asghar prominently displayed on the stage was also unveiled on the occasion.

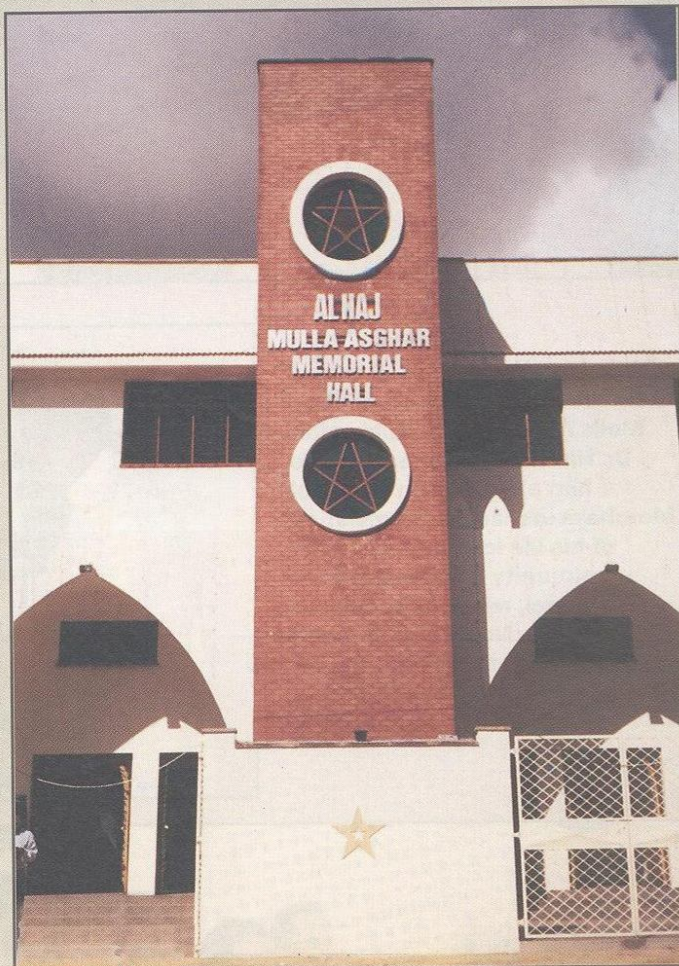
The World Federation President, Dr.Hasnain Walji and his office bearers, the Africa Federation Chairman, Alhaj Zulfikar H. Khimji and his office bearers, the ex-Chairman of the Africa Federation Al Haj Mohamed Dhirani, Councillors of the World Federation and Africa Federation, Representatives of Nasimco, Council Regionale De Malagasy, Council of Europe, Presidents and Representatives of various Jamaats from all over the world, a number of local Muslim scholars and dignitaries, elders and members of Mombasa

Jamaat, and students and teachers of the Jaffery Academy were present at the well attended function.

The hall was filled to capacity as the function started with recitation of the Holy Quran in Arabic with translation in English by the students of Jaffery Academy.

Al Haj Mohamed Hemani - Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat, in his welcome address stated that Mombasa Jamaat had decided to dedicate the hall in memory of Al Haj Mulla Asghar in recognition of his services to the worldwide Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Community and for his life long devotion. Mr.Hemani recalled that Mulla Asghar was born in Mombasa and had exemplary record of service to the Mombasa Community before he ventured out on the world scene.

Numerous messages were received from different parts of

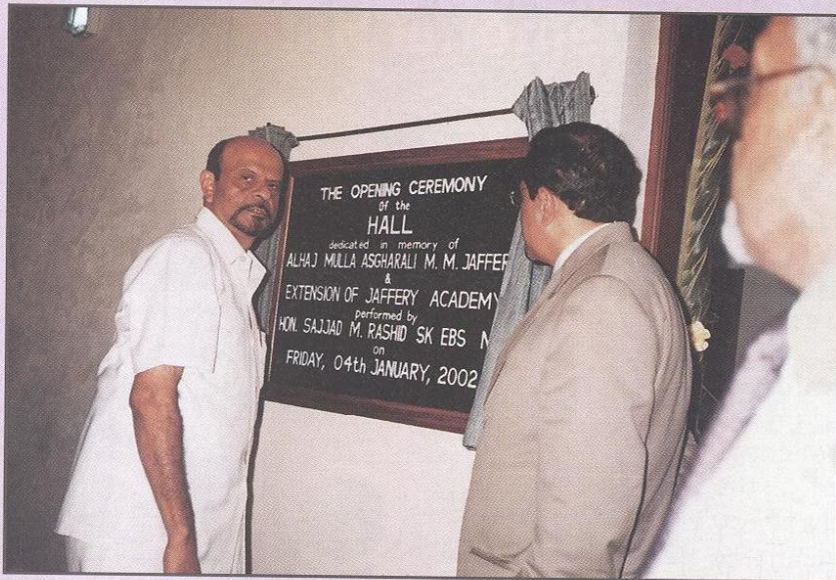


Roadside entrance view of the Alhaj Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall.

the world. Excerpts of the messages received from the office of Marja-e-Taqleed Ayatullah al Udhma Syed Ali Hussein Seestani, Past Chairman of the Africa Federation, Al Haj Habib Mulji and Past Chairman of the Education Board of the Mombasa Jamaat, Al Haj Aunali Fidahusseini Rashid Moledina were read out by the long serving Hon. Secretary of the Education Board Mr. Fazleabbas Mohamedtaki Bhanji.

Mr. Roshanali Jafferli Merali, the newly appointed Chairman of the

(continued on page 67)



Hon. Sajjad M. Rashid unveiling the plaque for the opening of the Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall and the Extension of the Jaffery Academy.

Mohamed Hemani, Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat congratulating Mulla Abdulrasul H. Khaki after Dr. Hasnain Walji presented to him a citation on behalf of Mombasa Jamaat in appreciation of his life long service to the community in various educational, religious and social activities. Next to Dr. Hasnain Walji is advocate Mustafa Tharoo who officiated as Master of Ceremonies.



Prayers at the ground-breaking ceremony at the Zainabiyya Housing Project for 12 flats. Left to right are: Zulfikar Khimji, Chairman Africa Federation, Dr. Hasnain Walji, President World Federation, Yusuf Dattoo, donor of the piece of land on which the flats will be built, Aunali Kanji, Vice Chairman Mombasa Jamaat, Mohamed H. Jaffer, Chairman Mombasa Housing Development Committee and Roshan Merali, Chairman Mombasa Education Board.

A section of participants at the ground-breaking ceremony.



Around Africa

(...from page 65)

Education Board of Mombasa Jamaat then made a detailed presentation of the history of the establishment of educational institutions in Mombasa dating back to 1904. He paid tribute to the forefathers for their vision and understanding in laying firm foundations for promoting the cause of education. He also outlined the system of education presently in existence and vowed to firmly establish the ethos and religious identity of the educational institutions in keeping with the aspirations of the community.

The immediate Past Chairman of the Education Board, Br. Mohamed Iqbal Sunderji Jethbhai who served the Board as its Chairman from 1994-2001 and who is presently Chairman of the Education Board of the Africa Federation, outlined salient points related to 'from vision to reality' and deliberated upon his intentions of expanding the scope of activities of the Education Board of the Africa Federation and establishing a liaison and cohesion among the various educational institutions of our community in Africa with a view of enhancing the common cause of education.

Rich tributes were paid to Al Haj Mulla Asghar by Al Haj Zulfikarali Khimji and Al Haj Dr. Hasnain Walji whose Urdu eulogy moved the crowd. Hon. Sajjad Rashid who is now the Chairman of the Education Council recently formed by Mombasa Jamaat to oversee the activities of all the Education Boards managing the Jaffery Academy then paid tribute to Al Haj Mulla Asghar. When doing so, he declared his firm commitment to promote the cause of education and stressed upon his firm resolve of not compromising the principles of maintaining our religious identity at our educational institutions.

The Pesh Imam of Mombasa Mawlana Syed Riyaz Akber



This large 8 x 4 feet oil portrait of Al Haj Mulla Asghar, prominently displayed on the stage, was also unveiled on the occasion. This was made by a local artist Mrs. M. Nasser.

offered dua and Hon. Sajjad Rashid, accompanied by the Pesh Imam, Chairmen of the World Federation, Africa Federation, Mombasa Jamaat, Education Board and AFED Education Board, unveiled the Plaque for "Al Haj Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall" and cut the ribbon for the "Extension of the Jaffery Academy".

A citation was presented to the immediate Past Chairman of the Education Board, Mohamed Iqbal Sunderji Jethabhai and mementos were awarded to the architect, contractor and engineers of the complex.

Towards the end of the programme, all present at the function stood up and joined hands in reciting Dua-e-Wahdat led by students of the Hussayni Madrassah.

The "Al Haj Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall" is a multipurpose Hall situated in the complex of the Jaffery Academy, which will be utilised by the community for multifarious socio-welfare and religious activities.

Previously for numerous ladies functions, for Husein Day and Meelad un Nabi programmes and other such activities, the community had to hire other public halls. The availability of this new auditorium is expected to serve the overall needs of the community including the hosting of marriage parties because it houses a fine reception area and a kitchen and provides ample parking space.

The Extension Block of Jaffery Academy consists of eight classrooms, an administrative room and prayer rooms. This will assist in the expansion of the Jaffery Institute of Professional Studies (JIPS) and to establish separate sections for boys and girls of the Jaffery Academy.

To mark the occasion of the opening of "Al Haj Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall" and "Extension of Jaffery Academy", a special variety programme for ladies was also held on Sunday 6th January, 2002, which was presided over by the Past Chairlady of Nasimco, Sis. Noorzehra as the Guest of Honour.

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They said it.....

The following messages were read out at the opening ceremony of the Mulla Asghar Memorial Hall.

In a message sent from the office of the Marja-e-Taqlid, Ayatullah al Udhma Syed Ali Hussein Seestani, Sayyid Murtadha Kashmiri wrote: "It is very appropriate that Marhoom Mulla Asghar be eternally remembered by the Sadqa-e-Jariyah project, thus adding to the list of established charitable acts that he left in numerous places in the world. We consider his death as a great loss to all momineen, because he had a unique scholarly personality coupled with social stature. Such incomparable characteristics are hard to find these days in our Khoja brothers."

The Past Chairman of the Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaats of Africa, Habibbhai Mulji in his message to the Mombasa Jamaat stated:

"It is a matter of great elation and satisfaction that your Jamaat has pioneered a suitable memorial in tribute of Marhum Mulla Asgharali M. M. Jaffer for his services to the community starting with that of Mombasa, then extending to Africa and later across the world.

"The occasion taking place in Mombasa is quite understandable as it was under the auspices of your Jamaat that Marhum cultivated and demonstrated his first commitment to serving the community. Your Jamaat has gone down in history of the community as having produced an illustrious leader whose examples are rare in the history of the community."

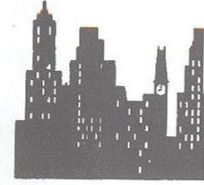
To mark the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Mulla Asghar memorial Hall and the Extension of the Jaffery Academy plus the convening of the Executive Council meeting of the World Federation in Mombasa, a special memorial edition of the Mombasa Jamaat Chronicle was published on the occasion. This issue contains messages from the Chairmen of the Africa Federation, World Federation and Mombasa Jamaat along with a biographical sketch of late Mulla Asghar. It also carries historical records of the educational activities in Mombasa dating back to 1904.

An excerpt from the World Federation President, Hasnainbhai Walji's message said, "As the community moves towards the horizons of progress, let us not lose sight of Marhum Mulla's legacy of simplicity and sincerity that has made the World Federation what it is. That is the greatest tribute we can pay to him. 'simplicity' and 'sincerity' as concepts must be uppermost in our minds as motivating factors..."

The Africa Federation Chairman, Zulfikarbhai Khimji said in his message that, "...personalities of the stature of Mulla Saheb who dedicated his whole life towards the promotion of academic and religious education for our Shia World globally, are rare to find. He was an institution in himself and we should count our blessings for having had an opportunity to work with him. We should also commit ourselves to fulfill his mission of having a united and educated community."

The Mombasa Jamaat Chairman, Mohamedbhai Hemani termed it as a "matter of historical coincidence that the first chairman of the Africa Federation hailed from Mombasa in the person of Marhum Abdulhuseinbhai Nurmohamed. By the same token, the founding father and the first chairman of the World Federation is also from Mombasa in the person of Alhaj Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer."

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Jaffery win inter-school debating competition



Sponsor Najib Balala (second left) receives a token of appreciation from Chairman Lion Hussein Walji as Convenor of the Education Committee Lion Murtaza Dunganwalla (left) looks on.

The finals of the Mombasa Inter-Secondary Schools Debate Competition hosted at the Pandya Auditorium by Lions Club of Mombasa Pwani saw quite a fierce battle between Jaffery Academy and Coast Academy with the motion "Western Policies are Detrimental to Developing Countries". The auditorium was packed with parents, supporters, teachers from various schools, children, judges and Lion members. Eight secondary schools participated in the competition.

Sponsor Najib Balala and his family attended the final. He was quoted by a local newspaper as saying, "the high standard of these debates and to see our young ones mastering the art of public speaking makes me very proud that we at the Coast definitely have a bright future in selecting our leaders of tomorrow."

For the first time ever, Jaffery Academy won the Debate. Jaffery speakers, Mohamed Sarwar Jagani (leader), Zohra Karim, Sayyeda Kanji, Mohamed Abbas Virji and Mohamed Mehdi Bandali portrayed quality and confidence in their speeches with the very young Mohamed Abbas Virjee being nominated the Best Speaker of the day. Many presentations were carried out during the function and the best overall speaker for all these debates went to Mustafa Khanbhai of Coast Academy who carried home with him the Bandali Floating Trophy.

The Chief Judge, Miss Feiruz Abdelhady commented that all debates between participating schools were neck to neck with Jaffery Academy emerging in full force in the finals.

In the semi-finals on 25th February 2002, Jaffery Academy were pitted against Oshwal Academy and Aga Khan Kenya Secondary against the Coast Academy. Jaffery Academy proposing that 'Nature is more Cruel Than Man' won the battle against Oshwal Academy with Priyanka Chotai of Oshwal Academy nominated as the Best Speaker and Zohra Karim of Jaffery Academy as the second Best Speaker.

Coast Academy and Aga Khan Kenya Secondary School battled it out with the latter proposing that 'The Media represents the greatest threat to Tradition, Morality and Culture' where Coast Academy topped the debate.

Dar Mosque being renovated

The Mosque in Dar es Salaam is currently in wraps while construction and rehabilitation work continues to make it more spacious.

With the number of Jamaat members increasing, limited space has been a bottleneck especially during Friday Prayers and other occasions when there are large gatherings such as during Idd prayers, Amaal nights, Muharram and Ramadhan.

To ease congestion, the Dar es Salaam Jamaat is extending the mosque vertically, a move that was approved by the general body prior to implementation.

Under the proposed plan the upper floor will provide additional space for 600 members. The extension will also enable the Jamaat to provide facilities to ladies to join the Namaaz-e-Jamaat during normal days. It is also planned to install a mobile and collapsible partitioning in the upper floor to create adequate space for the ladies. Additionally it is planned to have air condition facilities during important occasions.

The anterior design of the former Mosque will be maintained but the inside view will present a different appearance. Provision has also been made for additional wudhu facilities and the lighting and public address system is expected to be upgraded.

The foundation stone for the extension was laid by Hujjatul Islam Marhum Maulana Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi in August last year.

The renovated mosque will sure be a boon to our Jamaat population in Dar es Salaam which numbers over 6000.

Mombasa Jaffery Institute of Professional Studies (JIPS) makes its presence felt

Once a dream and a vision, the Jaffery Institute of Professional Studies (JIPS) is the most recent addition to Mombasa's centres for higher learning. The Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Education Board of Mombasa had a lofty vision of providing quality education at an affordable cost; this is the telling difference between JIPS and the rest. This vision is what makes JIPS a leader, a bastion in the provision of quality professional education to the masses. The following stand out when one talks of JIPS:

- The accreditation Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology (JKUAT) has endowed on JIPS to run Information Technology (IT) courses, as a center of its own, both at certificate and diploma level thereby making it the only one of its kind in Mombasa. This honour was bestowed after rigorous quality assurance protocols that JKUAT set, which JIPS met above and beyond expectations.
- The JIPS facility houses the most modern lecture halls that one can envisage and is compounded by a fully equipped computer library hosting a range of ultra modern machines that are at the disposal of its esteemed students.
- Books and reference material that are provided to scholars are updated editions by renowned authorities in their fields of expertise. The reference material provided is the most recommended both on hard and soft formats.
- Lecturers at JIPS are highly qualified individuals with a thorough understanding of their specialist fields and recommended by institutions

affiliated to JKUAT and JIPS. The rigorous personnel authentication channels available when recruiting lecturers ensures that those of a high calibre are selected for the Institute.

The IT future at JIPS is very promising because with the level of education and quality that JIPS offers, an aspiring student can very easily fit into any setting around the world. With the foundation that JIPS provides, aspiring students are encouraged to move upwards in the ladder of success.

JIPS is committed to the future of its students. With an initial intake of 27 students in July 2001 its student population has kept on growing as its reputation as a career beacon has spread fast among the youths. JKUAT will meanwhile continuously review its curriculum and administer final examinations for the course as well as provide technical assistance to help maintain the standard of education at JIPS.

Aptly put by Br. Mohammed Iqbal Sunderjee (former Chairman of the Education Board) in an address he gave at a ceremony of the official handing over of accreditation documents, he said, *"We noted that there is a great demand and need for post secondary and further education at the Coast and hence we took up this challenge to set up the college (JIPS) with the same underlining principle of providing quality education at an affordable cost."*

The college pass rate stands at 85% with over 75% of students scoring an overall credit and above. This is a milestone achievement considering that its facilities were still under

construction at the time the exams were held.

During his latest visit to the college, the Vice Chancellor of the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Prof. Ratemo Michieka and his dedicated team acknowledged the expanding facilities at JIPS and noted that the college has a bright future being one of the very few colleges to offer University Senate approved curriculum in Information Technology. He said that successful graduates from the Diploma Program can enter the JKUAT Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (B.Sc. IT) degree program. This is encouraging for all students who wish to pursue a career in the field of Information Technology and attain university qualifications.

Another arm of JIPS is the School of Management Studies (SMS). Here the latest updated syllabus of the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA) is offered and the college is registered under the mother body in the UK as a teaching center. Coupled with latest reference material in hard or soft formats, this college has become a vantage point for those wanting to pursue the course at international level. The high calibre of lecturers and their expertise in training and examination techniques makes the college unparalleled.

This was purely exemplified in the last results of the School of Management Studies (SMS). In the last ACCA/CAT UK based examinations, 90% of its students passed, with two students attaining one of the best results
(continued on page 73)

Around Africa

(...from page 72)

countrywide in their respective papers. This is no mean achievement for a college that has just started operations. With recent improvements in facilities and staffing, results could get even better; a testament to the never-ending dedication and commitment towards excellence from the staff at JIPS and the KSI Education Board.

The college initially started with the foundation level of ACCA and CAT syllabi but within six months now caters for the professional levels of both of these courses

with the same promise of quality.

During the accreditation ceremony for JIPS, the Chairman of Mombasa Jamaat, Mohamedbhai Hemani had said, "The future has no boundary as far as perfection is concerned and Jaffery has always been in pursuit of excellence." In its constant effort to improve and considering its excellent track record, it is not surprising that the desirability for JIPS has been insidiously rising. JIPS is on its way to becoming a household name in Kenya's education circles. Inshallah.

Election of trustees of the Africa Federation

In accordance with Article 35(g) and 35(h) the following were elected as Trustees of the Africa Federation at the 60th Supreme Council Session held in Arusha from 29th March 2002 for a period of two years from April 2002 to April 2004.

Alhaj Shaukat Jaffer – Dar-es-Salaam
Alhaj Shiraz Rashid – Dar-es-Salaam

Barkat Rajani appointed Hon. Secretary of the Federation

Due to business commitments outside the country for the foreseeable future, the Hon. Secretary of the Africa Federation Alhaj Hussein Aliasger Rashid, requested that he be relieved of his post and duties.

The Chairman of the Africa Federation, Zulfikarbhai Khimji regrettably acceded to Husseinbhai's request and under the powers vested upon him under Clause 16(a) of the Constitution of the Africa Federation he has appointed Alhaj Barkat Rajani as the Hon. Secretary for the Africa Federation for the remaining term of office.

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New Directions

You may have a fresh start any moment you choose, for this thing we call "failure" is not the falling down, but the staying down.

East Africa Jamaat schools to hold Career Guidance Course in July

The four East African Jamaat schools are scheduled to hold Career Guidance courses in July 2002 to be conducted by Br. Aliasghar Sheriff, an Educationist from the United Kingdom.

The Career Guidance Course will run for three days in each Centre, which will comprise of two days of training and one day for counselling.

It is expected that each school will invite participants from another school. The dates scheduled are

- 15-17th July - Arusha
- 18th-20th July - Nairobi
- 22nd-24th July - Mombasa
- 25th-26th July - Joint Workshop of four Centres
- 29th-31st July - Dar es Salaam

As part of the training course Br. Aliasghar will attempt to cover working with the low achievers and those disengaged from studies as part of student counselling.

A Joint Careers Teachers Workshop (JCTW) will meanwhile be held at Mombasa Jaffery Academy from 25-26th July. The main focus will be to exchange ideas and experiences among career teachers from the four Centres and possibly other schools.

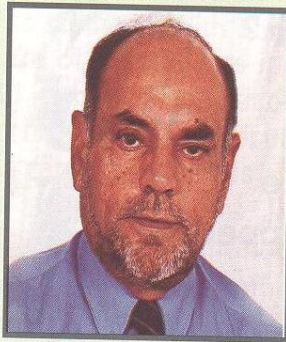
The Chairman of the Africa Federation Education Board, Iqbalbhai Sunderji has called on each of the schools to extend invitation to other selected schools in their city or town with intake being limited to about two teachers per school.

It is believed that there are only a handful of other international schools running such career programmes and this offer may prove very educative and attractive to other schools. This would also promote and project our schools within the school fraternity, and further improve our

already existing cordial relations with other schools as well as contributing towards the overall cost of running this programme.

The Education Board is looking into the possibility of getting two professional consultants to come for the JCTW and enlighten Careers Teachers on the overall perspective and the skills needed in working with various student groups.

The overall costs for organising the programmes will be shared out between the four centres, as was done for the last seminar.



Mustafabhai Kassamali Nasser (65) pursued his studies in Dar es Salaam and Mombasa where at the Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education he pursued an engineering course. He worked with the Shell and Total companies for 38 years at technical and managerial level before migrating to Dubai in 1975 with his late wife Ashraf Banu and two sons. In 1992 he joined the family business of 4X4 Motors LLC where he is still the director and advisor.

He got married to his late wife (in whose memory the school building is donated) in February 1959 at Tabora, Tanzania. He is a father of two sons and grandfather to five grandchildren.

He is a keen golfer, a compulsive traveler and enjoys entertaining guests and friends. He believes no contribution is too small or too big for the development of the community.

New Nursery school for Dar

To coincide with the auspicious occasion of Eid el Ghadeer, the Al Muntazir Nursery School was opened in Dar es Salaam on 3rd March, 2002. This school has a capacity to house 700 children in its 22 classrooms.

Following recitation of the Holy Qur'an and Hadithe Kisaa, the Master of Ceremony, Mushtaq Damji briefly outlined the history of the school following which the CBE Chairman, Habibbhai Virani addressed the gathering of over 150 people that included various dignitaries.

He thanked the donor of the plot, Mustafabhai Nasser for his philanthropic gesture and said the building would be called the Ashrafbhai Memorial Building in memory of his late wife.

The President of the Jamaat, Asgherbhai Bharwani also thanked Mustafabhai Kassamali Nasser for his kind gesture and said that an adjacent plot had also been acquired to serve as a playground for school children. He thanked Mehboob Versi for donating half the cost of that plot.

He said that in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and hadiths of our Aamma (a.s.) the Jamaat has given education a high priority.

After the speeches, Mustafabhai Nasser unveiled the curtained plaque to endorse the official opening of the school.

Thereafter salat was offered prior to lunch being served.

The number of children studying at the Al Muntazir schools are close to 2600 and with the new nursery school the numbers are expected to grow further. It is planned to increase the duration of the nursery school from two to three years.

Madagascar situation tense but stable

Following the political crisis in Madagascar the Chairman of the Africa Federation, Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji has been in constant contact with the Regional Council in Madagascar.

Prior to us going to press he had a long conversation on 17th June, 2002 with the Chairman of Re-Union Jamaat, Br. Munir on the situation in Madagascar. He was assured that arrangements have been made through the Government of Re-Union that should there be any need of evacuating our brothers the government will allow a stay of four weeks and then make necessary arrangements for their future destination. He also said that similar arrangements have been made through Br. Amir Lalji in Mayot (near Comoro Island).

Roshanbhai Jameel, Vice President of the Regional Council

also called to inform that the situation in Madagascar was improving.

The Chairman earlier spoke to Alhaj Moajiz Khamis, Chairman of the Regional Council who is based in Tamantavo. Br. Khamis reported that the situation in Majunga had been tense with a lot of looting in which some of our community members were also looted. Our brothers are however reported to be well prepared in case the situation turns bad. Fortunately other small towns and the City of Antananarivo are calm and business is going on as normal.

A delegation of all the Chairmen of various Jamaats in Madagascar visited the Indian High Commission for protection. The Commission availed full cooperation. A delegation also visited the French Embassy in

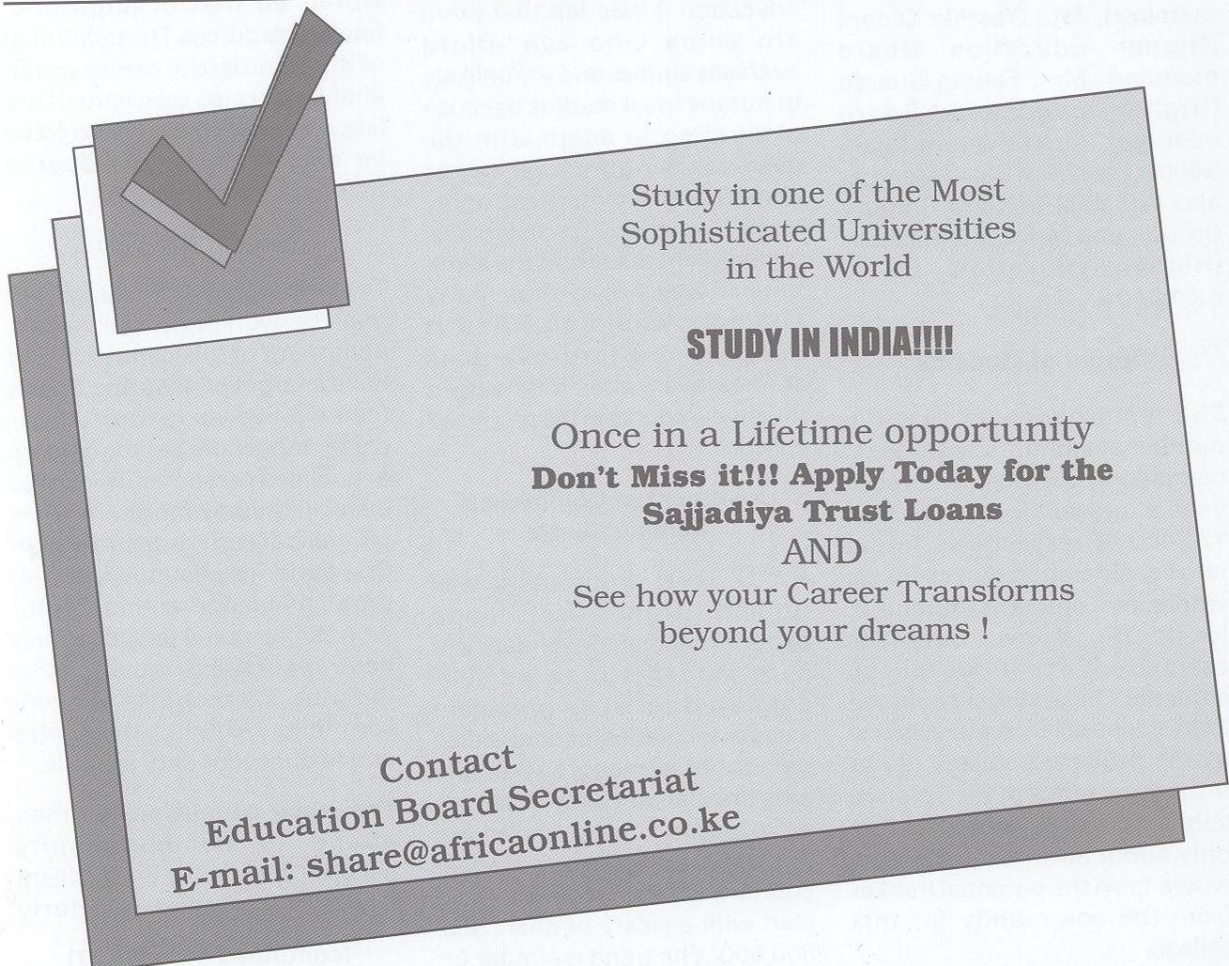
Antananarivo to request for similar assistance.

At the time we went to press the situation appeared to be under control in Majunga but for regular updates, readers are requested to visit the Africa Federation Web page <http://www.africa federation.org>.

The problem in Madagascar dates back to December last year when, in Antananarivo, the opposition party proclaimed themselves as winners of the December elections.

On Friday 22nd February, the opposition inaugurated a President for Madagascar, who the present regime does not recognize.

The political problems did not affect the community's Majalis programmes for Muharram and we pray that the situation normalises at the earliest.



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Dar Jamaat ad-hoc team considers it pre-mature to have a community college

An ad-hoc committee was formed in February this year by the Dar es Salaam Jamaat to discuss the viability of a college in Dar es Salaam. The committee, chaired by the Dar es Salaam Jamaat Education Secretary, Munir Daya included Hassan Hirji (Higher Education Board Chairman), Mustafa Pirmohamed (Chief Executive Officer, Al Muntazir Schools), Pyarali Champsi (ALMIS), Kermalli M. Kermalli (ALMIS), Asgher Manji (Past Africa Federation Education Chairman), Najaf Dhalla (Higher Education Board member), Siraj Akbar (Higher Education Board member), Mrs. Yasmin Dinani (Higher Education Board member), Mrs. Fatima Sherah (Higher Education Board member), Mrs. Maryam Tejani (Higher Education Board Member and Principal of Girls Primary School) and Mrs Latifa Hasham (Higher Education Board member).

Output of students

The team observed that the number of community students completing O' and A' levels each year, at present levels, is about 120 and 45 respectively. Taking into consideration other schools where our students pursue A' levels, the A' level output is estimated at about 60-65 students. These students pursue both art and science subjects and as the projected college is not initially intended for science subjects, it was estimated that only about 30 A' level students would form the potential market from the community for this college.

It was therefore felt that if the objective is to have a college for serving community students, the capital outlay required would not be justified. If the objective is essentially commercial, with it being accepted that most students would be from outside the community, it was opined that this would probably not fall within the ambit of the local Jamaat or the Africa Federation.

Overseas studies

While the proposed college is meant to prepare students who qualify to pursue overseas education it was felt that there are some who can afford overseas studies and are unlikely to pursue local studies because of wanting to adapt with the overseas set-up earlier rather than later. This would also apply to children receiving scholarships for excellent results. At the same time it was noted that many students would still find it difficult to afford overseas studies even after following a three-year course in the proposed college.

Upliftment of Commercial Training Centre

For O' level drop-outs it was opined from first hand experience, that the tendency of such students is to be self-employed because prevalent salaries for graduates or qualified personnel is meagre. Suitable jobs are also not easy to get. As an example it was pointed out that a student pursuing a six-year course for the post of GP would start with a salary of only TShs. 300,000/.

The trend is similar for other qualifications and even lower for the art profession.

Under such circumstances it was felt that the Commercial Training Centre currently under the Al Muntazir Islamic Seminary should be uplifted in status to a full-fledged college to provide subjects intended for the proposed college.

This would allow the community to gauge the general response following which concrete plans on our future educational infrastructure can be drawn. The advantage of uplifting the status of the commercial centre would be that it is an ongoing institution and would not require the form of investment required for a new college. This would also probably help bypass the bureaucratic red-tape that the locally based Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) has outlined for new institutions of higher education. One would envisage that the biggest investment required here would be that of additional human resources. The upliftment of the commercial centre would enable it to also take care of the less academic children who could be made to take pre-degree training for say one year.

The next five years

The ad-hoc committee suggested that the working paper on the upliftment of this centre should have a target of ensuring that in the next five years most of our students become degree holders or qualified personnel. This could be facilitated by monitoring the progress of each student through first-hand interaction by a full-time counsellor at this Centre who can be asked to submit first hand reports, say quarterly, to describe the progress of every community child at the centre and at our secondary schools.

The same counselor can then attend to non-community children with equal enthusiasm but the proposed quarterly

(continued on page 77)

Around Africa

(...from page 76)

reporting should be for the Jamaat to know the progress and efforts being made to encourage community children to seek educational advancement. Such reports should identify drop-outs or children with potential or those with a lackadaisical or lacklustre performance who require scrupulous attention.

Blend of professional qualifications and entrepreneurial skills

The ad-hoc committee report points out that for those who are not academically qualified, the community has a responsibility of guiding them and providing them with adequate skills in whatever field in order to enable them to fend for themselves. Thus while the bright students can be encouraged and helped to pursue higher education those gifted with other skills should be helped to become independent. The present situation in our community proves that it is those who have developed their personal skills and ventured out for progress who are among the most successful. The ideal blend is to have both, professional qualifications and entrepreneurial skills because we have a tough and mean world out there that is becoming more competitive by the day.

Foundation Fund

It was also felt that the Africa Federation should establish a Foundation Fund that could source scholarships to encourage community students to pursue higher education.

Online courses

The report points out that online courses for many subjects would soon be available in Tanzania at nominal rates. The courses would cover most subjects intended for the proposed college. This information was informally cross-checked and confirmed with a

resident partner of Messrs. Pricewaterhouse Coopers in the perspective of eyeing the future of ACCA training in Tanzania. Already there are some students pursuing ACCA courses through online Internet lectures.

Conducive Environment

It was accepted that a college would provide a fine facility for our students, particularly girls, to study in a conducive environment where Islamic ethos prevail. However it was pointed out that intake could not only be restricted to Muslim students as local Government regulations outline that each educational institution should have a certain minimum percentage of outsiders.

Other colleges

It was also pointed out that a number of our girls pursue higher education in science-oriented subjects at others institutes while there are already a number of other non-resident institutions that provide evening courses for the subjects earmarked at the proposed college. This would reduce the potential number of girls wishing to pursue higher education in the proposed college.

Local institutions offering courses include VETA, IFM, IDM, Dar School of Journalism, Institute of Social Welfare, Muhimbili College of Health and Sciences, Walford College, Ardhi Institute, Institutes offering CPA courses, Institutes offering ACCA courses, a number of private colleges plus various correspondence school courses conducted by the International Correspondence Schools (ICS) and others. Some of these institutions were considered unsuitable for our students but it was reported that others are drawing our students.

It was pointed out that banking is offered at the Dar University and the Walford college while Information and Technology and

Computer Science degrees are offered by not less than five private schools. Similarly many colleges offer a diploma in education while the present Commercial Training Centre under the Seminary is already offering a City and Guilds teaching degree. The report also points out that a Diploma in Education course is available at a Zanzibar college.

Limited selection

It was meanwhile felt that if the courses proposed in the working paper are the only ones that the proposed college will begin with, many students would not want to pursue the selection available. It was also felt that one degree may not be enough and if students want to pursue other degrees it would only be of convenience to them if the basket of their selection were fully available at the proposed college.

Local statutory requirements

As the Africa Federation was considering to establish such a college by the end of this year in Dar es Salaam the committee opined that there are various local statutory requirements that need to be fulfilled prior to registration to appease the Tanzania Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) that was established under Section 64 of the Education (Amendment) Act, No. 10 of 1995. Among its statutory functions provided under Section 65, the HEAC has a duty to recognise, approve, and accredit higher education institutions, programmes, examinations and awards given by relevant institutions inside and outside Tanzania. The HEAC would only register a new college after stipulated guidelines are fulfilled.

The curricula and syllabi for all programmes of courses initiated or adopted by higher education institutions have to be submitted to the HEAC for validation and

(continued on page 78)

Around Africa

(...from page 77)

approval before they are released as formal academic programmes in higher education institutions. This would take some months before being approved.

The HEAC guidelines stipulate that institutions are not allowed to advertise their proposed courses nor invite potential students to apply for admission until a written approval approving the establishment of a college is obtained from them. Under exceptional circumstances where advertising is required, it should be specifically pointed out that an HEAC approval has not been obtained.

Minimum Entry Qualifications

There also are various guidelines that prevail which could affect the flow of intake of students who wish to join the proposed college. For example it is stipulated in Section 64(J) of the Education (Amendment) Act, No. 10 of 1995 that when selecting applicants to join courses offered, all higher education institutions have the obligation to ensure adherence to HEAC approved minimum entry qualifications of namely, credits at O' level and two principal level passes of not less than a total of 4.5 points in relevant secondary education subjects. Many of the O' level 120 dropouts from our school would not have these minimum qualifications required.

The same Act also stipulates that applicants who have A' level passes at grades which fall short of the HEAC approved minimum entry requirements for higher education, should be subjected to and required to pass a HEAC approved one-year pre-university programme.

Human resources

Furthermore the report points out that the manpower needed to run the proposed college would have to be professional and very likely

would have to come from outside to maintain high standards. This might gainsay with local Government policies that emphasise more on recruitment of local manpower. This factor has been considered in the original report and while the problem can be countered this will require special efforts in recruiting, financing, maintaining, agreeing on terms of reference and accommodating personnel who could well number over 20 from outside.

The report presented by the ad-hoc committee is not meant to close doors to the establishment of a college. Rather it proposes that this be considered for the future at a suitable time. Similarly the report does not intend to portray a situation to say that there is no need for better higher education facilities within our community in Dar es Salaam. Rather it calls for action that should be tailored to the existent market situation.

At face value, having a community college is a noble idea but because economies of scale are outweighed, the report calls for a delay in implementation. The ad-hoc committee report points that this still places an onus on the Jamaat and the Africa Federation to monitor our students, through the existent education infra-structure, immediately after they enter secondary school. It states that with community children making up between 70-80% of our Junior and Nursery Schools and between 60-65% of our Seminary students, adequate monitoring is essential to ensure all students are provided with a fine chance of making progress.

Have an opinion on the viability of a college? Please write or email your views to the Federation Samachar.

Arusha Jaffery's first attempt reaps rewards

The Arusha Jaffery Academy whose students sat for the Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (CSEE) for the first time in 2001 will establish Form V classes effective July this year. The Chairman of the School, Br. Amir Somji said that the school which evolved from a nursery school to a high school in just over a decade will have three core streams pursuing Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics; Physics, Chemistry and Biology; and Economics, Commerce and Accounts.

The first batch of Form Six graduates from the Academy will be awarded in 2004. The school located at Themia area was among the schools in the country that ranked highly in the 2001 Form IV National Examinations scooping 36th position out of 619 schools country-wide.

All the 31 candidates from the school who sat for the examination passed, six of them in Division I, four in Division II, eleven in Division III, and 10 in Division IV. One student, Faheem Gulamabbas scored straight A's in seven subjects.

Jaffery Academy comprises Hemani Nursery School, Jaffery Primary School and Jaffery High School. It was established in 1991. Standard seven pupils of the school sat for the National Examination for the first time in 1999.

The school headmaster Mr. Yakub Dalal said he was impressed by his school's performance in the Form Four National Examinations given the fact that this was their first attempt.

Dar Tabligh organises Nakuru Summer Camp



Visitors, dignitaries and instructors at the opening session of the Nakuru Camp.



Instructors at the Camp with the President of the World Federation, Alhaj Hasnain Walji and the Vice President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam.

The Nakuru Summer Camp 2001 held at a secondary school built by the Nairobi based Rasul-al-Akram Academy in Nakuru adjacent to a primary school proved to be an ideal venue allowing separate camps for boys and girls in one location.

Having the girls and boys camps side by side allowed much flexibility in terms of sharing instructors, reducing costs, and minimising administrative arrangements. A strict policy of complete segregation (save for the sharing of male instructors) was formulated, agreed and implemented throughout the entire camp duration. The camp

was organised by the Tabligh Sub-committee of the Dar-es-Salaam Jamaat, under its Chairman, Malim Mehboob Somji.

Instructors were carefully, meticulously and purposefully chosen from around the world to ensure campers got more exposure from experienced scholars. English was the medium of instruction and the instructors were Sheikh Abdillahi Nasser, Mombasa, Hujjatul Islam Shaikh Shabbir Maisami, Qum, Sheikh Dr. Murtadha Alidina, Qum, Sheikh Mujahid Sheriff, Mombasa, Brother Hasanain Rajabali, New York, Brother

Aliasgher Sheriff, London, Brother Mohamedarif Suleman, Nairobi, Brother Munir Chagpar, Nairobi and Dr. Mahmood Dattoo, London.

A variety of religious and targeted secular topics were identified by the organisers and allocated to instructors for delivery. The subjects included Quran recitation, Quranic commentary, Islamic beliefs, Islamic akhlaqiyat, Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic ideology, Islamic history, Sexual morality, Comparative religious beliefs, Current affairs affecting the Muslim world, Communication and public speaking skills, Career guidance, Study skills, Lateral thinking and Islamic/general knowledge quizzes.

The campus had enough in-house grounds for outdoor sports. Activities including cricket, football and volleyball were the most popular with many inter-campers matches taking place. Swimming was organised at the nearby in-door swimming pool at the El-Dorado Leisure facility. More serene board games like scrabble, up-words, mastermind and uno were also popular.

Four outdoor outings were organised during the stay in Nakuru. The first was to the Bagoria Valley to witness and feel the hot water spring fountains, surrounded by the hundreds of colourful flamingoes in nearby Lake Bagoria.

The second outing was to the Baringo Natural Reserve Park, to admire the vast open natural space of lake and cliffs.

The third trip was to Nairobi City, where the girl campers went to Sarit Centre and the orphanage, and the boys campers went to the Giraffe Centre and then to the Village Way for indoor amusements.

(continued on page 80)

Marja bestows Ejaza to the Africa Federation Chairman

The Chairman of the Africa Federation Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji during his meeting with the Marja-e Taqleed Ayatullah Al-Ozema Seyyed Al-Husaini Seestani (May Allah (s.w.t.) protect him) in mid February was granted an *Ejaza* for collection and disbursement of Khums within Africa.

This is a clear sign of the Mujtahid's continued confidence in our institution and further encouragement to the community to channel all their *huqquq* dues through the offices of the Africa Federation.

Zulfikar bhai had asked for a close

door meeting with the Marja who willingly granted this due to the Supreme Council's good past track records. The Chairman was accompanied by Seyyed Mourtadha Mourtadha, as a translator. The Marja's son, Seyyed Mohamed Reza was also present.

The Marja was very hospitable and sent greetings to the community in Africa. He then handed an *Ejaza* copy to the Chairman the wording of which was translated by Seyyed Mourtadha Mourtadha. The contents of the *Ejaza* were also explained by the Marja who

emphasised on the need for khums money to be used correctly.

The *Ejaza* is an official appointment of the Africa Federation Chairman as a Vakil for khums collection. The Marja meanwhile agreed to issue his own receipt to individuals should a prospective khums payer wish to have one. It was also explained that there is a possibility to obtain a special *Ejaza* for our institutions should there be a viable project for the benefit of tabligh or related to the benefit of our community at large.

The Africa Federation Chairman informed the Marja at length on all the activities carried by the Supreme Council in the field of Education, Tabligh, Welfare and Medical. He also briefed him on the situation in Madagascar. Aga was very pleased with all our activities, and the unity that exists within the community.

The Chairman has appealed to all our brothers and sisters to channel *huqquq* funds to the Supreme Council office in Dar-es-salaams or Nairobi, or to respective Jamaats and to collect the council's official receipt. Should someone wish to pay directly to the council's bank account, these have been outlined on page 61 of this issue.

The Chairman has called upon prospective *huqquq* paymasters to realise that there is dire need of substantial funds in Africa for ongoing activities within our communities all over Africa, especially in the Tabligh, Educational and the Welfare sector. He has assured that all *huqquq* channeled through Africa Federation is as good as paid directly to Aga!

....Nakuru Summer Camp

(...from page 79)

The final trip was to the nearby Nakuru National Park – a coach tour through wildlife, and a scenic view of Lake Nakuru with its trademark flamingoes, and finally to the peak of the Nakuru park for a panoramic view of the Rift Valley.

A total of 75 boys attended, representing 7 Jamaats namely Dar-es-Salaam (29), Mombasa (26), Nairobi (12), Tanga (4), Burundi (2), Sweden (1) and Dodoma (1). The ages of the boys ranged from 14 to 19 year-olds. They were grouped into three Camps of appropriate age groups.

A total of 90 girls attended, representing 7 Jamaats. The ages of the girls ranged from 13 to 22 year-olds. They were grouped into four Camps of appropriate age groups.

For the closing session the Boys and Girls Camps each had their own separate functions. In the Boys session, Instructors were

each given a chance to reflect on the Camp, and a representative from each of the Boys Camp spoke of their observations.

The Camp Supremo, Mehboob Somji thanked all those who made the Camp possible. After the closing ceremony, a final BBQ with a bonfire under the open sky was held, amidst a number of "shairis", stories and jokes.

Various dignitaries visited the site. They included: Alhaj Hasnain Walji, President of World Federation, Alhaj Zulfikar Khimji, President of Africa Federation, Alhaj Dr Ahmed Hassam, Vice President of World Federation, Alhaj Husein Jaffer, President of Nakuru Jamaat, Alhaj Husein Rashid, Hon Secretary of Africa Federation, Alhaj Aliraza Nanji and Alhaj Gulamabbas Nanji of Nairobi, Alhaj Muhammad Suleman of Dar es Salaam, Alhaj Gulamhusein Fazal Kermally of Dar es Salaam and Mrs Jamilabai Dewji of Toronto.

Tanga Hyderys emerge into the limelight

The participation of Tanga Jamaat's Hyderys team in the K.S.I.S.C. Marhaba Sports Festival in Dubai was historic because the team has never participated in an event outside East Africa in the past. Hyderys went with a contingent of 15 players, 5 fans and 2 officials.

For Hyderys this was a fine achievement because the team was just formed a year ago. In the opening match they played Dubai "A" whom they drew 3-3 against. They went on to beat Mombasa 2-1, defeated New York 1-0 and also won 2-0 against Antananarivo. In the semi finals they played against Paris and won 1-0 but in the final they lost against Antananarivo 0-2. The team did however leave an indelible mark on spectators and participants by their fine performance.

During the closing ceremony Br. Feisal Abdillahi of Hyderys received a trophy and a cash prize of US Dollars 500 as the Best Player in football.

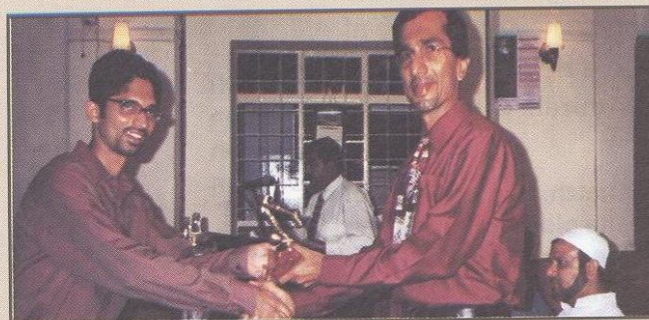
The organisers of the Sports Festival also awarded every participating player a token and a souvenir. Additionally a Team Manager's Shield was presented to Br. Mustafa Kara while the Captain of Hyderys, Br. Sameer M. Chandoo was presented with a beautiful runners-up trophy.

After returning from Dubai, Hyderys arranged a grand dinner reception in Tanga where all community members were invited to witness the handing over of the runners-up trophy to the Tanga Jamaat. The Chairman of Hyderys, Br. Shabbir M. Sachoo handed over the trophy to the Tanga Jamaat Chairman, Br. Mahmod Y.J. Dhirani.

(continued on page 82)



Hyderys Group Photo taken in Dubai.



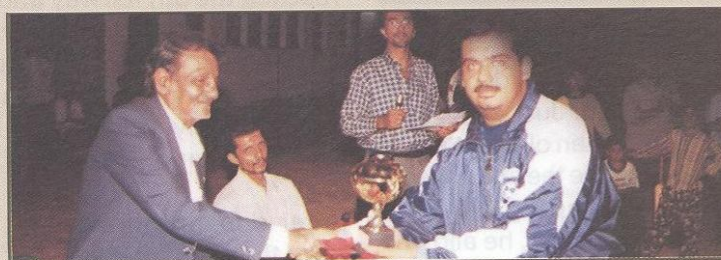
Hyderys Chairman, Shabbir Sachoo (right) receives a players' appreciation trophy from Hyderys Captain, Sameer M. Chandoo.



Hyderys Chairman, Shabbir Sachoo hands over the runners-up trophy to the Chairman of Tanga Jamaat, Mahmod Dhirani.



Hyderys Sports Master, Hassanali Dhirani presents a souvenir signed by all Dubai participants to the Tanga Jamaat Chairman, Mahmod Dhirani. Sitting on the right is the resident Alim of Tanga Jamaat.



Hyderys volleyball captain, Mustafa Kara receives the Winners Cup from sponsor Gulamabbas Hemani.

Around Africa

(...from page 81)

A souvenir signed by all participants was also handed over to the Jamaat by Hyderys Sports Master, Br. Hassanali Dhirani. In appreciation of their Chairman, the players of Hyderys presented an appreciation trophy to their Chairman, Br. Shabbir M. Sachoo which was presented by the Captain, Br. Sameer M. Chandoo.

Meanwhile in a recent volleyball match against Annadil Burhani Hyderys emerged victors to win a cup donated by the family of Gulamabbas Hemani in memory of Late Amirali Gulamabbas Jadawji.

After the match, Br. Husein Fazal received the oldest player token from Hyderys side while Br. Mohsin Meghji was declared the most outstanding player. The sponsor of the one-day match, Br. Gulamabbas Hemani presented the winning trophy to the Captain of Hyderys Volleyball side, Br. Mustafa Kara.

And during recent elections, Br. Shabbir M. Sachoo was once again nominated as the Chairman of Hyderys Sports for the new term (Jan 2002 – Dec 2003). The present Hyderys Committee consists of the following members:-

Sports Chairman
Shabbir M. Sachoo
Sports Secretary
Mustafa Kara
Sports Master
Hassanali M. Dhirani
Sports Treasurer
Moh'dKazim S. Bhaloo

In a light vein

Golfing with an older man

A young avid golfer decided to play nine holes. Just as he was about to tee off, an old gentleman shuffled onto the tee and asked if he could accompany him. Not being able to say no, he allowed the old gent to join him.

To his surprise the old man played

Federation Samachar

Al Muntazir Seminary achieves best result in nine years in 2001 Form 4 Results

The Al Muntazir Seminary has achieved its best result in nine years in the National Form 4 examinations taking 31st position out of 619 schools in the country.

The results are as follows:

	Total	Girls	Boys
Division I	= 21	10	11
Division II	= 15	11	4
Division III	= 29	17	12
Division IV	= 32	24	8
Failed	= 0		
Absent	= 1	0	1

Subject-wise rankings:

- Civics 58 / 619 Schools
- Geography 65 / 607
- Kiswahili 125 / 619
- English 16 / 619
- Physics 24 / 587
- Chemistry 14 / 610
- Biology 22 / 604
- Basic Maths 40 / 619
- Commerce 20 / 243
- Book keeping 43 / 240

Over-all ranking: 31st out of 619 Schools countrywide as compared to 60th out of 556 in 2000.

The school rankings for the last three years were:

1998 - 78/611
1999 - 42/666
2000 - 60/556

In 1999 the school had 22 Div 1 holders (23% of total no. of students) compared to 21 this time (22%).

fairly quickly. Finally, they reached the 9th fairway and the young man found himself with a tough shot. There was a large pine tree right in front of his ball - and directly between his ball and the green.

After debating how to hit the shot the man finally said, "You know, when I was your age I'd hit the ball right over that tree."

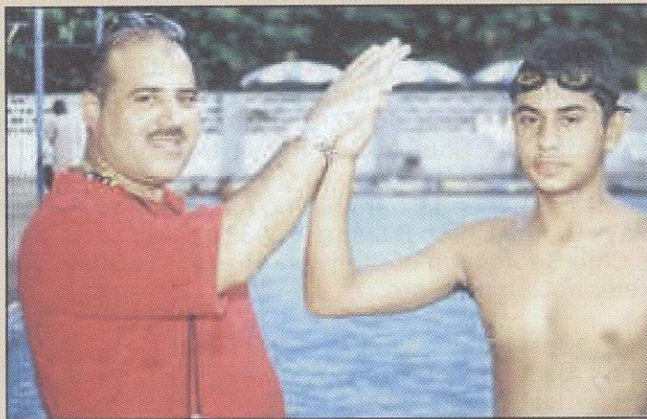
With that challenge placed before him, the youngster swung hard, hit the ball up, right smack into the top of the tree trunk and it thudded back on the ground not a foot from where it had originally lay.

The old man offered one more comment, "Of course, when I was your age that pine tree was only three feet tall."

Rising swim star Mohamedali Jiwa specialises in 'shattering' records

At 13, Mohamedali Jiwa has achieved what many sportsmen and women would probably never achieve in their life time. He has broken four Kenya swimming records that had stood intact for 27 years. There are now new records in the 400 metres free style, 200 meters back stroke, 100metres butterfly and 200 meters butterfly.

Jiwa, a standard eight student at the Mombasa Academy, has brought pride to his school, family and particularly to his coach Mr. Mohamed Farid. Swimming for Bandari Swimming club, he broke the old record for 400 meters free style at the Oshwal Academy swimming pool during Time Trial on February 6th 2002. He clocked 4:52:72 seconds thereby shattering the 27 year old record of 4:51:22 held by another Kenyan. The enterprising Jiwa did not stop there. He went ahead to shatter the 200m back-stroke record. He clocked 2:39 seconds to smash the old record of 2:42 seconds. Jiwa also set a new record of 1:10:50 seconds in the 100m butterfly to erase the old one of 1:11.51 seconds. Another record to tumble was the 200m butterfly where Jiwa clocked 2:42:32 seconds compared to the old one of 2:48:50 seconds. He broke this record during the Kenya Open competition relay held in March this year.



Swimming coach Mohamed Farid (left) with Mohamedali Jiwa.

The young Jiwa also became first in the Mombasa Open Sea Swimming Gala. He won both the open events in his age group category to become a double champion.

His proud coach Mohamed Farid remarks: "It's now the ripe time to take Mohamedali Jiwa abroad. The swimmer is ready after preparing him for years"

Farid says some swimmers were given scholarships to go abroad and never broke any records. "Will they now give Jiwa a scholarship now that he has broken the 27 years old records?" he asks. Farid thanks the Kenya Swimming Federation for support along with officials and stakeholders. And the Chairman of the Kenya Swimming Federation, Mr. Ben Ekumbo simply said, "I am delighted."

Farid who is associated with Kenya's success in swimming has taken Kenya swimmers to Japan, Athens (Greece), Switzerland and Egypt. Farid and Jiwa are set to go places judging from the boys sterling performances. Congratulations Mohamed and his coach Farid!

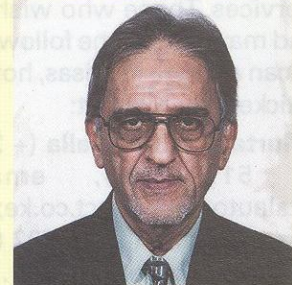
Calling for delegates to the 4TH Constitutional Conference of the World Federation

The 4th Constitutional Conference of the World Federation of K.S.I. Muslim Communities is scheduled to be held in London on Saturday 14th September 2002.

According to the World Federation Constitution, the Africa Federation is entitled to send 20 delegates.

Those wishing to attend the conference or those who may be traveling around that date are requested to submit their names to the Africa Federation Secretariat by Monday 5th August 2002.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE



Read on Alhaj Jaffer Rawji a devoted stamp collector who has been awarded for promotion of Tanzania stamps.

He has a collection of stamps going back to over 100 years, a collection which drew special interest from Tanzania Hon. Minister Zakia Meghji.

Around Africa

Businessmen urged to participate in Trade Exhibitions

The Golden Crescent Group of Nairobi has organized the following visits to different countries for Trade Exhibitions:

17th to 22nd September 2002 – FRANKFURT – GERMANY: AUTOMECHANIKA Trade Exhibition: where Motor car accessories and spares (of all Models), garage equipment, mechanical tools, hardware, Car Security etc. will be exhibited.

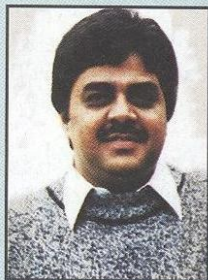
15th to 20th October 2002 – GUANZAUO (CANTON) – SOUTH CHINA: where Motor car spares and accessories, car security, crockery and cutlery, electronics, mobile phone accessories, textiles, giftware, motorbikes, motorcycles, bicycles and spares, hardware and tools, garage equipment, light trucks and small and big scale industries machinery will be exhibited.

The objective of participation in Trade Fairs is to obtain ideas for starting small-scale industries and to enable entrepreneurs to expand their range of products or services. Those who wish to attend may contact the following who can arrange for visas, hotels and tickets on request:

Cr. Murtaza H.M. Dhalla (+ 254 722 517 110), email: crystalauto@iconnect.co.ke; **Cr. Aliraza A. Manji** (+ 254 722 687 895), email: royal@nbi.ispkenya.com or **Cr. Zeeshan S. Hassanali** (+ 254 733 786 114), email: hasnain@skyweb.co.ke.

Those interested should send in their details by 15th August 2002. An invitation letter for Visa purpose can be arranged while Yellow Fever Vaccination Cards are essential for residents of Africa and the sub continent. If larger groups attend these Exhibitions bulk purchases can be arranged resulting in special bargain rates being obtained. Twelve have so far confirmed participation.

Afzal Peera bestowed 'Sportsman of the Year' award for 2001



At the 60th Supreme Council Session held in Arusha in March 2001, the Africa Federation Sports Council Committee adjudged Br. Afzal Yusuf Peera of Dar-es-Salaam, popularly known as Jimmy, as the Sportsman of the Year 2001.

Afzal's interest in sports lies in the fields of cricket, volleyball, squash, football and indoor games. He was born in Zanzibar in 1959 and moved to Dar es Salaam in 1969 where he resides ever since. He showed leadership traits since his early school days when he formed a cricket team known as 'Fighters XI' that he led for six consecutive years. It was during this time that he joined Union Sports Club.

At school he was named the best opening bowler when captaining St. Joseph Upanga Primary School at a tender age of 9 years. When he moved to Shabaan Robert Secondary School he developed his cricketing skills and was named captain for the Form IV combined team. In 1976 he was selected along with nine others to undergo cricket coaching under an Indian coach.

He has been an active member of Union Sports Club since 1973. He played for the UNION A team during the 1975, 1977 and 1980 cricket seasons in Dar es Salaam and has accompanied the club team on several tours outside Tanzania to places such as Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, UK and Dubai.

A good off spinner and a hard hitting middle order batsman, he now plays for the Union B team. In 1983 he was declared Union Sports Club Sportsman of the year. His other achievements as a cricketer at club level are:

1981	Best Fielder Award
1982	Best Bowler Award
1983	Best Bowler Award
1984	Best All-rounder Award
1990	Best All-rounder Award

Afzal also plays volleyball. He was captain for the Union Sports Club volleyball team in 1986 and participated in local annual tournaments such as the Sajida Cup and Yusuf Nathoo Memorial Trophy. He also led the club in Songea in 1981 to participate in the Khimani Trophy.

At community level he has been an active organiser of the annual Chehlum Majlis in Zanzibar. He also regularly participates in organising Charity Walks and Ramadhan night sports where funds are collected for the club and Jamaat. During the last Ramadhan Sports Festival 176 trophies were presented to winners, past sportsman and organisers which indicates the popularity of the event in Dar es Salaam.

Afzal has served Union Sports Club in many different capacities. In 1982 he was given a special award for his outstanding services to the club. He was also the Hon Secretary of the Organising Committee of the 4th Supreme Council Sports Festival held in Dar es Salaam and has been involved in all the nine Sports Festivals in one way or another including as a Team Manager of the Dar es Salaam contingent. Congratulations to Afzal for winning this prestigious award!

Safder Jaffer among Top Ten Lions worldwide



The Central Health Board Chairman, Safderali Jaffer who is also the Regional Chairman for Tanzania Region A was recently declared one of the top ten Lions in the world by Lions Club International. This is for enhancing international understanding and co-operation.

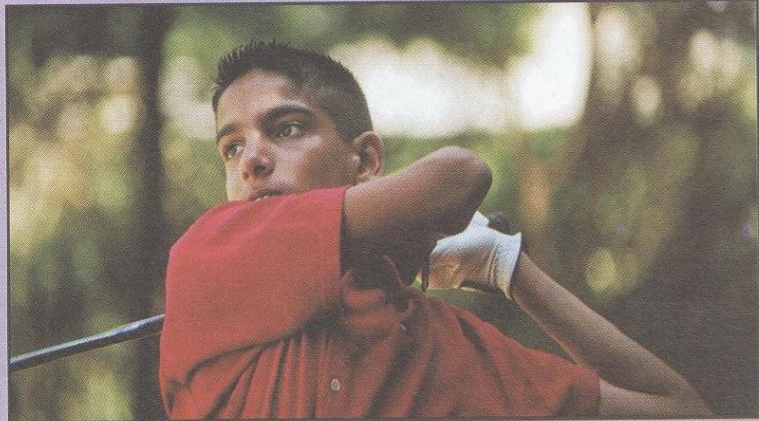
Lions Clubs are service organisations that serve the less privileged members of society. Safderali joined Lionism in 1979 as a member of Lions Club of Dar es Salaam and has served in various Club positions including the post of Chairman. He was declared the best Chairman and Secretary in the district covering Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Tanzania when he held the Chairmanship and Secretaryship positions respectively.

At district level, he has served in various positions including District Chairman, Zone Chairman and Region Chairman. He is also a recipient of many international and district awards.

Among the philanthropic activities he has been able to put his heart to is the initiation of a heart surgery project in collaboration with the Ministry of Health whereby heart patients in Tanzania have been availed facilities for further treatment abroad. Through this programme the Ministry of Health finances the project while the Lions Club arranges for necessary facilities. Over 1000 patients have so far availed of this facility.

There are 44,700 Lion Clubs with more than 1,375,000 members worldwide. Congratulations to Safder for this international award!

Sarfaraz Daya qualifies for Junior World Golf Cup



Young Sarfaraz Daya (15) of Dar es Salaam made the community proud when he became the first boy from the community worldwide to qualify for the Junior World Golf Cup scheduled to be played in Edinburgh, Scotland in mid July. He along with another Tanzanian girl, Aisha Patel qualified to become Tanzania's flag bearers in the fifth edition of the World Junior Open Championship.

The World Junior Open Championship will be held from 15th July at the Royal Musselburgh Golf Course three days ahead of the 131st edition of the British Open Championship. All junior participants in the World Championship will be given an opportunity to watch the British Open with the participation of Tiger Woods from the USA and other renowned golfers being a fine attraction.

Playing off handicap seven, Sarfaraz has won many local tournaments with his biggest achievement being his victory in a KLM sponsored Dutch Golf tournament that was contested by over 150 golfers.

At community level he has played in events in Arusha, Nairobi and recently in Dubai where he was part of the Dar es Salaam golf contingent that participated in the Dubai Sports Festival. With Dar es Salaam courses having browns he has yet to get used to courses with greens and this is what Sarfaraz expects to do for the next two months when playing golf overseas.

Sarfaraz began playing golf at the age of twelve. He is also a regular swimmer, plays squash, table tennis and snooker. In table tennis he has won the Juniors title for the community Ramadhan sports festival for the past two years. He has a collection of over thirty trophies for his sporting ventures, which he says inspires him to strive for more.

When asked about his future in golf, he said he planned to concentrate on his studies at the International School of Tanganyika, where he currently studies, so that he could obtain admission to an overseas college of his choice. He said he would meanwhile try to improve his game and seize any opportunity to advance his golf. He hopes exposure to the best juniors in the world at the World Championship will give him a good insight on how to handle his future.

Reflecting on his progress, Sarfaraz says he has preferred to take advice from senior golfers irrespective of their handicap and says that watching golf on television has also helped him understand and play the game better. He also appreciates the encouragement he receives from his family and hopes more community juniors will begin playing golf. Congratulations to Sarfaraz!

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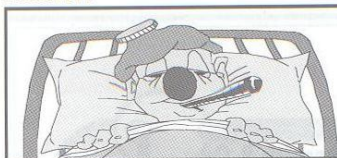
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HEALTH ISSUES

Dietary relief for constipation

Constipation is defined as infrequent or difficult passing of hard bowel movements. Because normal bowel movements vary from person to person, you may consider yourself constipated when your normal pattern changes. But what causes

normal bowel patterns to change? What measures can you take to alleviate constipation?

Many factors are to blame for constipation. A decrease in physical activity or a lack of it may alter your normal bowel

routine. Certain medications can cause hard, infrequent stools. Many pregnant women also experience constipation. In most cases, constipation is a result of low-fiber intake and lack of physical activity.

To prevent becoming victim to constipation, follow these basic guidelines:

- Eat 20 to 35 grams of fiber a day.
- Fiber holds water and adds bulk in the intestine, promoting normal bowel patterns. Cereals, fruits, and vegetables are all excellent sources of fiber.
- Try a hot beverage first thing in the morning to stimulate the digestive tract.
- Drink plenty of water to flush your system.
- Take a brisk walk daily. Exercise stimulates the intestinal tract and "keeps things moving."

South Africa offers fine medical options

One of South Africa's biggest private Health Care provider is the MEDI-CLINIC PRIVATE HOSPITAL GROUP that runs over 30 Hospitals country-wide with nearly 5000 beds.

They have specialist doctors in almost every field and their care and services are second to none in the world. Further information can be obtained on their website - www.mediclinic.co.za.

Costs obtained from them in May 2001 are outlined hereunder. At that time the USDollar rate was South Africa Rands 8=US\$1. All rates below are in Rands. The current rates are likely to be 25% higher keeping in mind the devaluation of the Rand. Today the Rand hovers around Rands 10=US\$1.

CORONARY ANGIOGRAPHY - Left - Rands. 1963.00

CORONARY ANGIOGRAPHY - Right - Rands. 981.00

ANGIOPLASTY - Single lesion - Rands 3645.00
2nd lesion - Rands 841.00

OPEN HEART SURGERY - Rands 13670.00

MASTECTOMY - Rands 3856.00

HIP/KNEE REPLACEMENT - Rands 5832.00

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT - Rands 9463.00

These are consultant fees. Anesthetist fees are additional, where applicable and would normally be expected to be about 35% of consultant fees.

Hospital costs for a ward bed are an average of 1000.00 Rands per day. ICU costs are on an average of Rands 3000.00 per day. Operation theatre use plus equipment use and laboratory tests also involve additional costs.

This information was sourced from Dr. S.A.H. Fatmi, a consultant and neurosurgeon and was sent to us by Dr. Asghar Moledina. As these costs applied to May 2001, there could be slight changes in the actual rates quoted then.

We have a good number of our doctors in South Africa who can provide updated information and guidance. For more information readers are welcome to contact Dr. Asghar Moledina on email address: amoledina@usa.net.

The importance of Magnesium...

Magnesium is a mineral that your body cannot live without. Magnesium is important to your body because it plays a part in bone metabolism, helps transmit nerve impulses to muscles, helps transport calcium and potassium, and regulates blood pressure. But where do we get magnesium and how much magnesium do we need in our daily diet?

Magnesium can be found in drinking water and in many foods, especially nuts, legumes, whole grains, and green vegetables. Magnesium is safe in appropriate amounts but when consumed excessively, magnesium intoxication can occur. Symptoms of magnesium intoxication include drowsiness, lethargy, sweating and slurred speech.

While all efforts are made to carry sincere advice and information on our health page, readers are advised to confirm accuracy with their family doctor prior to adopting any changes.

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Women

Too many majlises?

Muharram majlises especially for us ladies is one typical venue where you find a battle ranging within you, mixing guilt and intellect, feelings and faith, tradition and progression until you are left totally muddled up about the whole issue, that of course is, if you think along my line of thought.

Since childhood, one aspect is ingrained in our minds and hearts. Come the first of Muharram, adorning black clothes and attending several majlises a day is but second nature. And there is a lot of good in that tradition, no doubt. No matter how hard and strong passages in life have made you, tears flowing from your eyes at the mention of the name Hussein (a.s.) can only be accounted for the deep love of the hero of heroes that our parents instilled in us since childhood.

I remember so vividly the 'preparations' my mother made every year at the onset of the sad month. All normal wear jewellery came off, black clothes of previous years were taken out from a stored place, unlike the present day rush of buying the latest designs and even meals became simpler at least during the first 12 days.

And I also remember her describing how in her mother's days they used to move their sleeping places from beds to



By Sakina Zainul Dato

floors and adhere to severe black clothing throughout the two-months! That was called mourning.

And I tried a little to follow my mother's ways of at least removing my jewellery and making a point of attending majlises and to adorn black as much as I could over the two-months period particularly during the first 12 days.

Then I moved away from home and traditions. A lot changed. There was hardly one majlis a day sometimes none depending on where I was as I moved around the globe. My circumstances did not allow me to wear black all the time anymore, except to mosque when I could make it.

After all, the days of Muharram are to reflect on how we can practically follow Imam's footsteps and become better people. Does it matter what colour one wears and how many majlises one attends? Logically as long as even one lesson from one majlis in a day is adopted, the real mourning can be considered to have been adopted.

I remember days when I felt so much pain because I couldn't find a majlis to go to. On every Ashura though, I somehow found a Shia gathering and that to me, was the biggest miracle. I felt painfully for the massacre and I figured Bibi Fatema (a.s.) always found me a spot to release that pain.

And now I'm back in Dar es Salaam where it all started - in an atmosphere where at least three majlises are held officially for ladies everyday and a score of others. And I am so busy working that I can hardly attend one. And I feel damn guilty.

I tell myself all the time that what matters is to modify myself

through sensitisation of these days. I must go to mosque at least once, to remember the incident of Kerbala, to hear and learn the messages given but moreover to continue jihad through my work and my family and my friends and to get ready for my Imam. But the guilt doesn't go away.

And what is shocking and compelling me to voice this is the fact that I am not alone in my thoughts. Dozens of ladies I spoke to go religiously to each and every majlis because they feel guilty not to attend.

Maybe that is what the miracle of Ashura is all about. That despite all our logical thinking, something within us, a powerful force, pushes you to go to mourn for the Imam in a social gathering where unity can increase, love and care exchanged and hearts mellowed with *fazail* and *masaal* of our ahlulbait.

Then again, maybe that is an easier way to explain it all and the simplest form of appeasing ourselves that we indeed are true Shias for see how we love majlises. And then we continue with our other not-so-holy deeds and don't feel too bad about ourselves. We will go to Jannat, we tell ourselves, for we cry so much in the love of our Imam.

Have I muddled you up? Give it a thought and tell me what you think. At least there is no confusion about this matter. If you write back to discuss the concept of true majlis, you certainly have nothing to lose. If you don't, you have every right to feel guilty!

*Azzamallahu ujuurana,
waujuuraku bimasaebil Hussein
alayhi salaam.*



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Our Mujra mania

by Sakina Zainul Dattoo

Many of the illicit Mujra Indian dancing attendants in Dar es Salaam are members of our community, amongst them well-known and influential members according to sources interviewed by the *Samachar*.

And those involved are not just men. A group of community ladies have their own special table at one popular drink and dance restaurant in the city. Not only are they regulars at such functions, they are said to be involved in the arrangements of bringing in Mujra girls from India.

What is really shocking is that Mujra was said to be on even during the first 12 days of Muharram with some members of our community in presence. One source said he had every reason to believe, through some telltale marks, that a fellow Ithna-asheri friend had been there very recently when he met him on Ashura night.

The names revealed include those who are *marshiya* and *nawha* reciters and those who are regular *alam* and *lash* holders.

In February this year, immigration officials cracked down on Mujra in the city since the girls brought in from India to perform the dances lacked work permits. This however did not halt the practice for investigations revealed that Mujra is still on albeit under cover and at secret locations.

A member of this community, an insider on the practice who has now ceased involvement with the dances told the *Samachar* that apart from the one popular restaurant, "it is on at another secret location in Msasani, which is very hard to track since it is

mainly for big shots."

The source said he used to be involved in Mujra and the way it works is that dealers go to India and negotiate with the girls a three-month contract. They are offered approximately Indian Rupees 30,000 (Tsh. 600,000) with some variations depending on the girl's dancing ability, looks etc. When girls arrive in Dar es Salaam, they are received by dealers who are well known at the airport.

"They come on visitor visas but the guys at the airport recognise why they are here and let them through. Later on, they come and collect US \$ 100 (Tsh. 98, 000) per girl," the source said.

He said each place has about six to seven girls and they are well protected. They live in one house and are not allowed to mingle with the locals. At the famous restaurant, he says, there is a chain on the stage and they can't come down near the customers. However, once the rough crowd leaves, the regulars stay behind and then the chains come off.

Customers bid for girls by putting on garlands of money on the girl of their choice. At the end, highest bidders get to sleep with the chosen girl. It is not uncommon to witness heavy fighting when someone turns out to be a bad loser.

The source revealed that on those days when he used to attend Mujra, he had once thrown away Tsh. 7.5 million in a period of 32 days. He said the appeal lay in thinking that these girls were clean and because the place provided drinking facilities, it was ideal. One of the Mujra dancers

though is alleged to have died of AIDS while in the country.

"That incident scared me but a lot of people don't think about it and it goes on," the source said. Mujra is held every day of the week.

Some of the restaurants are said to have been earlier invaded by immigration and Tanzania Revenue Authority officials because the girls were working illegally and dealers didn't pay taxes on the dancing business.

Most of these restaurants however are said to have now acquired work permits for dancers hence legitimising the shameful practice at least on the surface and in the eyes of immigration officials. And according to our sources, most of the assistance in getting work permits and sorting out legal issues pertaining to Mujra comes from well-to-do and influential members of our community.

For the Mujra, some people spend up to half a million shillings per night while others from upcountry drive to come to Dar es Salaam on weekends for the event. Those who become too besotted are said to travel all the way to India with the girls, while some decide to marry and keep them in the country.

Society is divided into two groups when it comes to the morality of our actions. One group says, "What's the harm?" while the other says, "What's the good?" Sanity and the continuation of civilisation rest with the latter group.



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When a rosary snaps and becomes scattered beads

by Mohamed Khalfan, Dar es Salam

Where a community is bound together by mutual religio-cultural concerns, common language is the cohesive factor acting like a common thread that strings the beads into a Rosary. Snap is inevitable if the stress that builds up along the string reaches the stage when it is irreversible.

It is more a common language than anything else which is crucial to a common identity and it is combination of common language and faith which sustains a common identity to bind those sharing it to a viable and functional community regardless of geographical barriers. All this is a stark reality of life applicable to any community whatever may be its religious beliefs and cultural values. In this respect, our Khoja community is no exception.

With a gradual loss of a common language over a span of a generation or two, our presently united global community of some 110,000 souls will be fragmented regionally and even further in each region along the lines of the languages spoken and understood.

The glory of a global unity over the past century and the performances in terms of co-operation, co-ordination, mutual assistance and shared concern will be relegated to history with no hope of retrieve or revival. What will remain will be a debate on ascribing the responsibility for the lack of foresight.

With the spread of the community to other parts of the West, the challenge to "continue" to preserve the common language - Gujarati - has become more urgent and serious; urgent because the loss of the language is beginning to set and to be felt, and se-

rious because the loss is not reversible with the same ease as it is let.

The community has surmounted many challenges in its glorious history of one century outside the subcontinent. The new challenge is even greater because it is this which will decide whether the community continues as such, which is possible only if the common identity continues to hold.

The situation is not hopeless yet because with an exception of a tiny minority of some individual families, almost the entire community still speak or understand Gujarati.

CULTURAL VALUES IN A COMMUNITY

Tribes do exist and will continue to exist in human society as stated in the Holy Qur'an:

"O you men! surely we have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is knowing, Aware." (49:13)

One tribe can be differentiated from another by their tribal culture, traditions and language. During the time of Prophet Musa (a.s.) his own followers comprised of twelve tribes having a recognition for its distinctiveness.

"And when Musa prayed for drink for his people, We said: Strike the rock with your staff and there gushed from it twelve springs; each tribe knew its drinking place;..." (2:60)

As the existence of tribes is a re-

ality so is the existence of their cultural distinctiveness in human society.

We therefore find that faith and culture co-exist in a community, though it is the religious values which should supersede and subordinate the cultural values. In this context the same verse 49:13 of the Holy Qur'an ends with a clear exposition that the horror before Allah lies not in the tribal standings but in the attainment of "taqwa".

We know of the Iranian culture co-existing with Islamic values for centuries now through compatibility and not in competition, and we also know of the contribution of the language of Farsi as a common spoken language in the propagation, preaching and spread of Islam in Iran and in the unification of the Iranian adherents.

LANGUAGE AS A CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

As the existence of tribes is a continuous reality in human society, so is the case with the existence of diverse mother-tongues (languages), for, in this respect too, the Holy Qur'an explains:

"And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours; most surely there are signs in this for the learned." (30:22)

The continuity of the mother-tongue in each tribe as a cultural heritage from one generation to another is by design and not default.

COMMON LANGUAGE AS A COHESIVE FACTOR IN THE COMMUNITY

Ours is a very small (approx. 110,000 persons) and young (a century old) community but matching others in its spread over certain parts of the world. The main majorities are located in

(continued on page 94)

Culture

(...from page 93)

India, Pakistan and East Africa.

It began as a community about a century ago as a result of a historical secession by a few devout from the main stream in the struggle for truth and in protest against a deviation from truth. Such secessions featured in many towns in India, Pakistan and East Africa.

What bound us together as a community was and fortunately still is the "close" common identity in the form of a common faith, common cultural traditions which include social and dietary traditions and, above all, the most binding force was and still is one common language, Gujarati, (supported by Kutchi), as the mother-tongue.

These characteristics with the common language as a pivot made it possible for the community to be organised, managed and developed and its interests and welfare to be taken care of on democratic principles and therefore in a strong spirit of understanding, fraternity and mutual trust. In this process a healthy climate was cultivated congenial for co-operation and co-ordination between the Jamaats at national, regional and inter-continental levels resulting, as is seen today, in the formation and operation of regional Federations and the World Federation. Such an achievement, as a continuation of the struggle to adhere to the truth, could not have been foreseen by our predecessors, few as they were, a century ago.

A NEW TREND HAS SET IN

The recent past has however shown that as one generation succeeds the other, there is a gradual increase, though small at present, in the number of families in the community in some parts of the world including Africa where children are made to lose their mother-tongue.

The close common identity will be

Federation Samachar

eroded, communication will be hampered, the fraternity will weaken, the concern for each other at the global level will diminish and the community and its Federations will become vulnerable to divisive forces and pressures if this trend, innocent as it may seem, is allowed to catch-up or continue to the danger point of no-return.

Two generations from now, mutual understanding and trust will be hard to sustain for successful operation and administration of Jamaats and Federations if members, office-bearers, councillors, delegates, etc. find themselves able to speak but only if or when there are facilities for a simultaneous interpretation in other languages. Ours will cease to be a community of members with a "close" common identity.

MAN HAS NATURAL PROPENSITY FOR LANGUAGES

It is this and not the next generation which can be effective in embarking upon and ensuring the preservation of our common language.

It cannot be argued that a language is possible to preserve only at the expense of missing another language. It is said that a child of up to the age of ten years can master as many as six spoken languages if taught through speaking practice, for such is the natural human propensity for languages. Examples of four languages are common in certain families.

(continued on page 95)

SOME FACTS ON "GUJARATI"

- + The name "Gujarati is derived from the name of the land "Gujarat" which is on the Western part of India. Gujarati is the language of the people of Gujarat. Gujarat is an ancient land with its own civilisation and history. The people of Gujarat have their own culture and traditions and their links with the outside world through trade, high seas fishing and maritime occupations are very old. The people of Gujarat are said to be the descendents of an old and strong tribe called "Gurjar".
- + The language itself is also very old, as any whose origin is from Sanscrit or Latin. Gujarati is said to belong to the Indo-Aryan family, it having descended from Sanskrit and incorporated many words from Arabic and Persian. A large number of Portuguese and English words enriched the Gujarati vocabulary.
- + The language has a vocabulary of some 30,000 words.
- + The dialects of Gujarati are mainly four: Kathiawadi in Saurashtra, Uttar Gujarati in North Gujarat, Charotari of Middle Gujarat and Surti in South Gujarat. Our community speaks the Kathiawadi accent.
- + Gujarati is spoken by some 30 million people who reside in Gujarat and some 4 million who reside in other parts of India, in Pakistan and also overseas in Africa, in the West and Far East.
- + The Gujarati script is almost similar to the Devangri one.
- + The language is famous for some of its best reputed old literary works.
- + Gujarati is still the language spoken by almost the entire community worldwide except for a tiny minority made up of certain individual families.
- + A resolution was adopted at the 1988 Triennial Conference of the World Federation in the United Kingdom to preserve the language at community level.

Culture

(...from page 94)

PRESERVATION SHOULD BE A RESOLVE OF EACH OF US

Adoption of resolutions by itself cannot guarantee implementation. Implementation at Jamaats' level by itself cannot guarantee success.

Each and every member of the community should with a foresight appreciate the importance and urgency of the subject if he or she values the current existence of his or her community as a viable and functional community and desires that his or her progeny should also enjoy the same advantages and blessings derivable from the functioning of the community as witnessed in the last one century.

The extent of success is dependent squarely on the extent of endeavours on the part of all concerned. For Allah (S.W.T.) says: "And man shall have nothing but what he strives for" (53:30)

POINTS TO PONDER

The famous book "Roots" by Alex Hailey mentions in one of the episodes of the protracted story, a major weakness felt among the slaves on the high seas of the Atlantic. They spoke different tribal languages.

Though they were chained together closely like salmons in their sleeping bunks under the deck for days except for periodical short breaks for an open air exercise on the deck, they did not seem close enough to each other to inspire mutual confidence and courage to stage a mass rebellion, that is unless a way could be devised to be able to communicate and win mutual trust.

Certain West African countries upon gaining independence found it congenial to group, plan and work together as francophone countries because the leaders and administrators spoke one common language - the only one - French! The neighbouring ones which spoke English seemed distant and strangers!

قَالَ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْحُرِّ فِي مَقْتَلِ الْحُسَيْنِ

Ubaidullah b. Al-Hurr said regarding the murder of Al-Husayn (a.s.)

يَقُولُ أَمِيرٌ غَادِرٌ حَقٌّ غَادِرٍ أَلَا كُنْتَ قَاتِلَتِ الشَّهِيدَ ابْنَ فَاطِمَةَ
Says a treacherous prince, (i.e. Ubaidullah b. Ziyaad), treacherous in the real sense: Why did you not fight the martyr, the son of Fatimah?

فَيَا نَدَمِي أَلَا أَكُونُ نَصْرَتُهُ أَلَا كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَا تَسِيدُ نَادِمَةً
O my sorrow (alas) that I did not help him! Is not every soul, which does not act rightly, penitent?

وَإِنِّي لِأَنِّي لَمْ أَكُنْ مِنْ حُمَاتِهِ لَذُو حَسْرَةٍ مَا إِن تَفَارِقُ لَارِمَهُ
And I, because I was not one of his protectors, am possessed of a lasting sorrow that will not go away.

سَمَى اللَّهُ أَرْوَاحَ الَّذِينَ تَأَزَّرُوا عَلَى نَصْرِهِ سُقُبًا مِنَ الْعَيْثِ دَائِمَةً
May Allah quench the spirits of those who banded together in his aid and defence with a perpetual quenching from the rain.

وَقَفْتُ عَلَى أَجْدَانِهِمْ وَمَجَالِهِمْ فَكَادَ الْحَشَا يَنْفُضُ وَالْعَيْنُ سَاجِمَةً
I stopped at their graves and the scene of their conflict and my bowels were almost bursting and my eyes were flowing with tears.

لِعَمْرِي لَمَقَدْ كَانُوا مَصَالِبَتٍ فِي الْوَعَا سِرَاعًا إِلَى الْهَيْجَا حُمَاهُ خَضَارِمَهُ
By my life they were (like) unsheathed swords penetrating into the tumultuous war, swift into the battle as defenders - they were lords giving generously.

تَأَسَّوْا عَلَى نَصْرِ ابْنِ بِنْتِ نَبِيِّهِمْ بِأَسْيَافِهِمْ آسَادَ غَيْلٍ ضَرَاعِمَهُ
They consoled themselves in helping the son of the daughter of their Prophet, with their swords they were the lions of the thicket - men of valour.

فَإِنْ يُقْتَلُوا فَكُلُّ نَفْسٍ تَتِيَّتُهُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ قَدْ أَصْحَتْ لِيذَلِكَ وَاجِمَهُ
And if they were killed then every pious soul on earth became silent because of it.

وَمَا بِنَ رَأَى الرَّأُوُونَ أَفْضَلَ مِنْهُمْ لَدَى الْمَوْتِ سَادَاتٍ وَزَهْرًا قَمَا قِمَهُ
No one has ever seen (lit. those who see have never seen) finer than them at the time of death - they were lords, noble and valiant.

أَتَقْتَلُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَتَرْجُو وَدَادَنَا فَدَعُ خُطَّةَ لَيْسَتْ لَنَا بِمَلَأِئِمَهُ
Do you kill them unjustly and hope for our affection? Abandon a course of action that does not suit us!

لِعَمْرِي لَمَقَدْ رَاعَمْتُمُونَا بِقَتْلِهِمْ فَكَمْ نَا قِمٍ مِنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ نَا قِمَهُ
By my life you have become our enemies (lit. you have broken away from us) by killing them: and how many an avenger (man and woman) there is upon you from us?

أَهْمَ مَرَارًا أَنْ أَسِيرَ بِجَحْفَلٍ إِلَى فَيْتَةٍ رَاغَتٍ عَنِ الْحَقِّ ظَالِمَهُ
Many a time have I intended to march with a numerous army against a wicked band which deviated from truth.

فَكْفُوا وَإِلَّا زُرْتُكُمْ فِي كَتَائِبٍ أَشَدُّ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ زُحُوفِ الدَّيَالِمَهُ
So leave off, and if not I will visit you at the head of a squadron of horses which will deal more severely with you than the troops of the Daylamites.

(Translated by Dr. Ja'far Tijani)

Current legal issues

Cosmetics

Q: It is normal these days for a woman to put on mascara and make-up, wear rings, necklaces and bracelets for beauty and then go out in front of people in the markets and streets. Is this okay?

A: This is not permissible for her except for mascara and rings provided that she is safe from falling into forbidden activities and does not intend by it to excite non-mahram men.

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to go out of her house for some errands perfumed, with the fragrance of her perfume reaching non-mahram men?

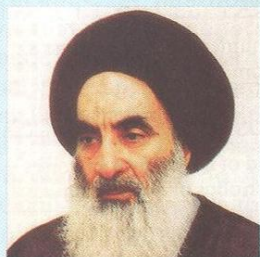
A: She ought not do that. It is not permissible if it tempts a non-mahram man or normally causes him excitement.

Miscellaneous Rulings Pertaining to Women

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to learn to drive a car with a non-mahram man, which necessitates being alone with him and going with him to places appropriate for practice, when these places are normally free from traffic?

A: This is permissible for her provided that she is safe from falling into a forbidden activity.

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to look at the parts of the body of another woman between the



Ayatullah al Uzama Syed Ali
al-Husaini Sistani

Some rulings pertaining to women....

waist and knees with the exception of the anterior and the posterior?

A: Yes this is permissible for her if there is no physical excitement.

Q: Is it okay for women to embrace and kiss among themselves at airports, on public streets, in parks and at markets?

A: Embracing and kissing of women among themselves is permissible provided that it does not lead to a forbidden act.

Q: Does all fluid which issues forth from a woman during the state of passion or sexual arousal require performance of ghusl for her? Or are there distinguishing characteristics for it as some ulama have indicated? Does her ghusl exempt her from performing wudhu'?

A: It is obligatory for her to perform ghusl when the fluid is discharged in a state of passion without regard to other characteristics — like languor — and it exempts her from wudhu'. God knows best.

Q: Is it permissible for a Muslim woman to display her hair in front of a non-Muslim woman?

A: That is permissible, but it is discouraged (makruh) if it is highly probable that she (non-Muslim) will describe the beauty of the Muslim woman to her husband.

Q: Following the death of a beloved, women wear black as a sign of grief and beat their faces, chests, etc. Is that permissible?

A: Yes, that is permissible.

Q: A woman faithfully observes the hijab but her husband prevents her from this and gives her a choice between abandoning the hijab and divorce. What should she do?

A: It is not permissible for her to abandon her hijab even if the matter ends in divorce.

Q: But divorce would entail for some of them (women) great difficulty, distress and hardship.

A: She should endure the difficulty and hardship, and recollect the saying of the Almighty: "...and whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, and give him sustenance from whence he thinks not..." (Qur'an, 65:2-3).

Q: Is it okay to give a film to a non-mahram man for developing and printing, that contains pictures of women who observe hijab but are unveiled in the photos?

A: This is permissible if the one who will develop and print the pictures does not know the women pictured in the film, and such pictures are not suggestive or will not cause any attraction.

Q: Is she allowed to have a picture of herself taken without the hijab to place on a passport, for example?

A: If she is forced to place the uncovered picture on her passport or other official documents, then it is permissible. But, the one who takes her picture must be her husband or her mahram. However, should the need arise, it is permissible for her to have the picture taken by a non-mahram photographer.

Q: How about a woman who comes out in public and the upper part of her feet are exposed to the sight of non-mahram?

A: This is not permissible for her.

Q: Some husbands who are not religiously committed demand that their wives neglect prayers, remove the hijab, serve alcoholic beverages to guests, participate in gambling games, shake hands with guests, etc., forcing them (wives) to do it if they refuse. Is it permissible for the wife to leave his house in order to preserve her shar'i obligatory duties?

A: Yes, it is permissible for the wife to leave his house at that time to the extent required by the circumstances, and in spite of that, she is entitled to full maintenance..

Your questions answered

Q: SLAUGHTERING CHICKENS DURING WEDDINGS

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

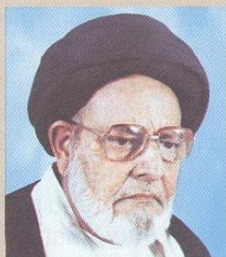
A: This rite is un-Islamic, and should be discarded.

Q: SHOULD ONE WAIT FOR A GOOD WIFE?

I am a young man and I want to marry for physical comfort and peace of mind. But the difficulty is that at present I can't find a good wife, having Islamic manners and back-ground. Now, what should I do? Should I wait for a good girl? Or, should I choose from the girls presently available?

A: If someone cannot remain without a wife and is afraid that by remaining unmarried he may fall into sin, then it is wajib to enter into marriage; he must try, in any case, to teach Islamic ways and manners to the wife.

If, on the other hand, he can control his emotion and is confident



by Maulana Sayed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

that he can save himself from falling into sin, then it is better to remain unmarried and search for a good wife.

Q: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NIKAH AND MUT'AA

What is the difference between Nikah and Mut'aa? Why is the institution of Mut'aa not being widely used in Africa?

A: The differences between permanent and temporary marriages are as follows:-

- 1) A woman married by Mut'aa cannot be divorced. The parties become absolutely separated upon the expiry of the period agreed upon.
- 2) A husband can dissolve the marriage of Mut'aa by making to the woman a gift of the remaining term, i.e. to waive his right to her.
- 3) The wife, married by Mut'aa cannot be subject to 'ILA' or 'LAAN'
- 4) A Mut'aa marriage creates no right of inheritance to either party. But, if there is an express condition stipulated in the formula (Segha) of 'IJAB' and 'QUBUL' the parties would inherit from each other if the death occurs during the period of Mut'aa or its Iddat.
- 5) In Mut'aa marriage, the woman's Iddat period extends for two full terms of her monthly course, if she is not pregnant. But if she is pregnant, the Iddat lasts until the delivery of the child. The Iddat of a widow of a permanent marriage is four months and ten days if she is not pregnant. If she is pregnant, the Iddat of death lasts until the delivery of the child, or four months and ten days, whichever is longer.

If she is in the age of having her monthly course, but does not have it owing to any reason other than pregnancy, her Iddat will be forty-five days.

There are some other differences but this much is sufficient for practical purposes.

People nowadays see no harm in committing adultery; but are shy of taking advantage of the permissions given by Sheriat.

Q: IS MUT'AA FORBIDDEN?

What should a young person do if he finds it difficult to control his sexual desire while he refrains from sexual immorality and masturbation? He can't afford to marry, but though he can afford to marry temporary (Mut'aa) for at least 3 days, he cannot perform this Mut'aa as it is not recognised by the Marriage Law of Tanzania.

A: Non-recognition of 'Mut'aa' does not mean that it is a crime. It just means that if there is any dispute the courts will not recognize the parties as husband and wife.

Q: MUT'AA, ADULTERY AND MAINTENANCE OF WIFE

- 1) Mut'aa amounts to nothing but adultery?
- 2) If a woman married in Mut'aa is in a better financial position than her husband and refuses to accept maintenance from him, is it allowed in Islam?
- 3) In the above case, if the woman is married in permanent marriage, can she forego her maintenance?

A: 1) Is not the "marriage" (in all its forms) just legalized adultery? All conditions which are necessary for a Permanent Marriage are necessary "Mut'aa" (Temporary) Marriage. Even the word "Permanent marriage" is misleading, because in Islam no marriage is a "permanent". The husband can terminate the marriage by the simple device of Talaq. So where is the "permanency"?

- A Sheriat which recognizes Talaq, cannot ridicule Mut'aa.
- 2) There is no maintenance in Mut'aa marriage; so this question does not arise.
 - 3) The wife of a permanent marriage is entitled to maintenance.

(continued on page 98)

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(...from page 97)

It is her right. But every right may be waived by the right-holder, and the wife may, accordingly forego this right if she so desires.

Q: HOW TO RELEASE SEXUAL TENSION?

I am a healthy 27 year old man with normal sexual desires. Due to some extremely serious unavoidable circumstances, it is virtually impossible for me to

marry at present. In East African environment at present it is impossible to do 'Mut'aa' with a woman.

Now in order to relieve my sexual tension, without involvement with a prostitute or committing adultery (Zina); is there anything wrong if I masturbate? I know Islam forbids masturbation but then in the circumstances mentioned above, is it not the best solution? If not, why?

A: You better try to find some woman for Mut'aa.

**From the
Nahjul
Balagha**

SERMON 41

**In condemnation
of treason**

O' people! Surely fulfilment of pledge is the twin of truth. I do not know a better shield (against the assaults of sin) than it. One who realises the reality of return (to the next world) never betrays. We are in a period when most of the people regard betrayal as wisdom. In these days the ignorants call it excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? Allah may destroy them. One who has been through thick and thin of life finds the excuses to be preventing him from orders and prohibitions of Allah but he disregards them despite capability while one who has no restraints of religion seizes the opportunity.

SERMON 45

**About Allah's greatness
and lowliness of
this world**

Praise is due to Allah from Whose mercy no one loses hope, from Whose bounty no one is deprived, from Whose forgiveness no one is disappointed and for Whose worship no one is too high. His mercy never ceases and His bounty is never missed.

This world is a place for which destruction is ordained and for its inhabitants departure from here is destined. It is sweet and green. It hastens towards its seeker and attaches to the heart of the viewer. So depart from here with the best of provision available with you and do not ask herein more than what is enough and do not demand from it more than subsistence.

Family issues

.....When Privileged to Grow Old

When the father gets old, older and still older there comes a time when he is perceived in the family as a person who is also getting to be different and more different from what he was...as if he is a new person with however the same face. This is more evident if he is a widower past seventy and feels lonely and dependent at home.

This is the time then for the family to get to know this new person even better in order to get closer to him and to respect and serve him well. He is the father, the same father as he always was, after all, and that is all that matters to the family.

His sense of concern and anxiety for the well-being of the family even with regard to small matters is sharpened. However, when it comes to his own personal comfort his concern is now even more pronounced.

The biological aging has its physiological and psychological effects on the behaviour of a person. The older the person grows the more prominent are the effects. The symptoms are normal in the case of the majority of aged persons, and yet they are lucky because growing old is a privilege denied to many.

It is believed that with the thickening of the blood vessels



by Mohamed A. Khalfan,
Dar es Salaam

in the process of advanced aging, the constrained supply of blood and oxygen to the brain dims mental alertness to a level which is scaring to those who were mentally sharp during their active life. It is this which is the reason for the slide in self-confidence. The degrees in the slide vary.

With the self-confidence gone, the personal situation becomes aggravated when the old person additionally finds himself also dependent for his mobility or movement because of failing vision and hearing and weak limbs along with perhaps a certain illness or more for which there is no cure, and therefore, has to be endured to the end. The dependence for the upkeep and pocket expenses is even worse. Dress and personal appearance therefore become less important; survival through a maze of dependence is.

With all these anxieties characterised by dependence and lack of self confidence, the aged persons strangely derive a sense of security, however false, in clinging to a daily routine of life which he has grown used to and befriended with.

The feeling is that if they went through unharmed last month the life of dependence and uncertainties, and continue to scrap through safely the current month, they will feel safe and secured if they continue with the same routine undisturbed the following months, as they see themselves living and surviving from month to month.

The following experiences which are not uncommon offer an insight to the behaviour as a few examples:

I took copies of Islamic magazines in Gujarati to an old person past eighty who anxiously asked me if I had received my last electricity bill from the mail, because his family had not received theirs though it should have arrived a day before and paid for the next day.

When I was about to depart after a few minutes, he pointed out to me an electric night lamp which he would switch on at night. He said that he needed it on while he was asleep! He kept a yellow coloured bulb as a spare for the lamp in the event of the need arising for replacement at night.

I thought that he would gladly do without light at his dinner once or twice but not without the night lamp with the coloured bulb...yellow, to be precise... even for a single night! He derived a sense of security in the nightly routine of the use of a lamp for secured sleep and the supply of electricity was indeed important.

A landlord, who was our client, agreed to fumigation being carried out at his cost when his new tenant complained of crawling pests. For the fumigation to be effective, the entire premises have to be covered in one operation. The old grandfather in the family, however, warned that he would not abandon his "fortress" (bedroom). To him fumigation was not as important as the satisfaction in his sense of security derived from the continuity of his daily life routine as an old person! Fumigation was no part of it!

(continued on page 100)

. . . . *Blind Loyalty*

There surfaces now and then a peculiar culture in the service-organisations of many communities across the world. The culture is of the leadership of an organisation taking it upon itself to defend, rationalise, trivialise or indeed even patronise the mistakes or weaknesses of its immediate predecessors, as if it is a moral obligation to do so by virtue of succession.

This blind defense in turn serves to spill over the adverse ripple-effects wrought by such mistakes and weaknesses. A futile show of a brave face does little credit to the leadership.

The culture appears to be rooted in a sort of a misplaced loyalty on the part of a leadership which steps into a tenure by an arranged succession through either prior grooming or candidature supported by the leadership which ends its tenure.

It is true that assuming a role in leadership in any organisation means volunteering a good deal of time and energy with a possible drag on the pockets also. This may not be an attractive proposition to many who may have the time and ability to join in a leadership to serve their community.

There therefore does arise the need for scouting and persuading the right caliber of people to volunteer joining others in taking up positions in an organisation, especially in socio-religious ones. A few of such new volunteers, however, then see the predecessors as their "gurus" or mentors deserving of a personal loyalty. This concept of blind loyalty is unfortunate, as it is retrogressive in vision for any organisation.

A worthy loyalty is always that one which is broad and that too only for the organisation. This can neither be compromised nor subordinated. A personal loyalty to the mentors in the immediate past leadership is wrong if it is at the expense of the broad loyalty to the organisation.

On the contrary the mistakes or weaknesses of the past leaders should serve as a spring-board for improvement in the caliber and quality of current leadership.

Let us be the slave of our conscience so as to be free in our judgment. This should be the culture or indeed the code of leadership free of personal loyalty.

(...from page 99)

No wonder that there would also be a resistance to shifting from a small room to one which is more ventilated and convenient and yet no valid reason for refusal can be given because the subject himself cannot even comprehend the reason for his obstinacy. This is strangely more common with those who are otherwise intelligent by their standard!

For those in the family who fail or are slow in appreciating and sympathising with the behaviour of aged persons in the family, especially those aged persons who are single, then let the Qur'anic exhortation prevail: *"not a sound of Ooff! comes out from the lips with disrespect to them, if the family lacks the tact of persuasion; for they too will most likely be no different when they too are privileged to grow very old."*

Perhaps very few of us realise that the most productive period of this earthly life in terms of gaining the spiritual reward for the Hereafter is the old age during which a constant declaration of patience gratefulness (*sabran wa shuqran*) to Allah for the old age and all the helplessness, illnesses and bereavement of the dear ones that go with it is pleasing to Allah swt. But then the blissful opportunity is soured instead by a constant declaration of complaints for all these to fellow mortals.

(In the last issue, the author of this Family series wrote on "...And When Aunty Becomes Mom")

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Off the cuff

Seeking Performance Management of the Institution of Azadari

We recently went through yet another spiritually uplifting period of mourning during the months of Muharram and Safar. Unquestionably, an institution by itself, Azadari, has been the most potent force in maintaining, organising and even rejuvenating the Shia communities the world over. Today, centuries later, Aza-e-Husain continues to draw ever-increasing crowds to the many centers round the world as soon as the Muharram crescent is sighted. The very spirit of observing Aza has resulted in the establishment of majlis and centers for holding majalis (Imambaras). In various ways these centers have been the focal points for Shias all over the world. For the Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri community the world over, the imambargah is a central piece of their existence as a community, and the multi million dollar projects that are ventured into are often considered as a yardstick of the vibrancy of a Jamaat.

The mode and manner of Azadari from 61 AH to the modern day has gone through a process of change in accordance with the needs of time. The paradox that the mourning assemblies began in Yazid's own backyard is not lost



by Dr. Hasnain Walji,
USA

on historians of Aza-e Husain. Maulana Syed Ali Naqi Saheb Qibla (Naqqan Saheb) In his "Aza e Husain par tarikhi tabsera" writes that what happened at Damascus was... "astounding. While the Ahle haram sat hushed in silence in the court of Yazid, his own womenfolk were wailing aloud inside the ladies apartments." Such was the power of patient silence which the survivors (of the tragedy of Karbala) exercised through their speechless eloquence on the world at large. Yazid's own Capital became the very first place where the tale of Kerbala and Yazid's tyranny was narrated. The monument in Damascus today bears testimony to Janabe Zainab's determination to carry the message of Kerbala to the world at large.

Up to the time of the Ghaybah, all the Aamma made the remembrance of the tragedy of Karbala very much an integral part of their lives and this was evident in many rituals. It was not just an occasional affair but very much infused into the lives of Ahlulbait (a.s.) in their daily lives. Indeed commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) often proved a rallying cry to those opposing the oppressive ruling dynasty of the time.

Despite suppression by the Umayyads and the Abbasides, Azadari continued to spread and was no longer confined to Damascus, Makka Madina, Kufa and Kerbala. Eminent scholars and towering literary figures like Da'abal, Kumait, Humeri, Tabari, Yakubi and Masudi all

contributed with their historical descriptions and interpretations. Historians like Abu Mukhnaf and Mashriqi made Kerbala an integral part of history.

In India there was much regional diversity as to the mode and method of Azadari. In some areas the commemoration was with the blessing of the state authorities, in others it was despite the rulers that Azadari was practiced. It is interesting to note that Naqqan Saheb records that "The inception of Azadari in the Indian Sub Continent is synchronous with the arrival of the refugees from Iran who had fled their country in various guises. It was these hapless and dislodged persons, not yet established fully in their foreign surroundings, who initiated azadari in India with all the pathos that is inherent in it. One can visualize a community of men, women and children, struggling desperately for their existence in a land away from their own, congregating to mourn and lament for Imam Husain (a.s.) after themselves being the target of the brutalities at the hands of unscrupulous men in their own homeland."

Indeed this is not very different to what happened when the pioneering families moved from India, Pakistan, East Africa and the Shii community began its settlement in the West. In the last decade some 35 centres have sprung up in Europe, North America and Australia.

While Islamic ideals and values

(continued on page 102)

Off the cuff

(...from page 101)

cannot change, it is evident from the above review that the mode and manner of azadari have undergone a metamorphosis from Sham and Madina to modern times.

It is important to emphasise that, in a place where the masses are not literate enough, the majalis require emotional inspiration to fire the religious spirit in them. When the audience lives in an area where they are in a minority and have to bear the brunt of taunts by other sects who are not in favour of azadari and the Jafari faith, they then need to be equipped with sufficient knowledge of their religious tenets and history to be able to counter the polemics of their opponents. More relevantly to this submission, when the audience lives in a multi-cultural pluralistic society, it becomes all the more important to offer solutions and assistance in living within the fold of Islam and at the same time be adjusted members of the wider society.

"We have to face the fact that, if offering the same menu of rituals and sermons year after year is no longer as appetising as it once was, then the menu will just have to change."

The form of majalis and the nature and organisation of the community's center must address these aspirations and cater for them in a way that addresses the real needs of members of that community. The style of oratory, the language medium and the level of scholarly debate has to reflect the expectations of a literate and educated community and not the 'perceptions' of preachers and elders as to how the *status quo* may be maintained in the ritual of azadari 'back home'. We have to face the fact that, if offering the same menu of

rituals and sermons year after year is no longer as appetising as it once was, then the menu will just have to change.

Consequently, to cater for majalis and other activities, as we spend millions on building bigger complexes, the vision of an Islamic centre too needs to be revisited. What is required from our centres is an image that here is a centre of learning first and foremost. For example a spacious reading room and library staffed from ten to ten with an array of reading material not necessarily only "Islamic" in the normal misused sense of the term but at par with any other reading room library in the best of institutions. A video room with a running documentary at intervals, a permanent exhibition area where a different theme may be displayed on a regular basis. A research data bank for students and researchers to come and pursue their studies. A faculty for continuous education for adults offering evening and modular courses, not just for the community but for the world at large. A cafeteria or a friendly place for the young to congregate and socialise, sports facilities second to none and much much more.

Any future Islamic Centre must be a synthesis of the best Islam has to offer in a wider cultural sense and at the same time conform to the high aesthetic and technical standards that we have come to expect in all other areas of our daily life. Such a centre, multi-purpose in all facets would be welcoming to non-Muslims as well as Muslims as a resource centre for finding out what Islam is really about. Our centres should propagate Islam by extolling proudly and as a direct antithesis to mainstream Western perceptions what a truly civilising force Islam has been for the history of the world. This is not a pipe dream but very much a practical reality if only we set our minds to it.

After all to aspire to have a centre that would cater for social, economic as well as religious needs of the community is really going back to basics. That is what happened at the mosque in Madina as students of Islamic history will testify.

Many years ago, I read an editorial in the Journal Tauhid (Vol II: 1 (this was reproduced by Marhum Mulla Bashir Rahim, in his excellent article on Azadari) that eloquently summarizes the kind of majalis that do justice to the cause of Imam Husain (a.s.) and discharge our responsibilities:

"The majlis should inform and instruct. It should inspire and enlighten. Like al-Hussain ibn `Ali (A), his dhakir, who occupies the minbar of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), should aim at resurrecting the spirit of Islam and the message of the Qur'an. ... Only when our majalis become classes for dissemination of the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) which lie buried in hadith texts, only when our majalis become platforms of Muslim unity instead of being instruments of division and disunity, only when our majalis and minabir become the seats of the duty of al-'amr bil ma'ruf wa al-nahy `an al-munkar, only when the Qur'an is made again the book of our life and the light of our majalis, only then can it be said that our majalis and minabir are doing justice to al-Imam al-Hussain (A) and to the people whom the majalis were originally instituted to nourish spiritually, morally, and intellectually."

So this year, with the period of intense activity over, let us do a performance management exercise on our endeavours. The performance of dhakirs, organizers, project committees, leaders and khadims of the community must be critically examined and judged upon our ability or otherwise of seizing the opportunity that no other sect in Islam has to exploit.

Why Education?

Community needs to be focused on higher education

Youngsters represent more than a third of the total population of our community and the higher the quality of life we provide them, the more we'll be preparing a generation of sound citizens who can play an active part in the development of society at large.

Unlike yesteryears, higher specialised education has become an absolute necessity if we wish to be in the global race. Wisdom and learning process has remained an important role in Islam - be it Information Technology, Architecture, Engineering, Economics, Archaeology, Aeronautics, Geology, Environmental Science, etc. and research has always been encouraged.

Some of the fathers in the community divested ourselves and our sons and daughters from the learning process by dragging them to be involved in family business enterprises prior to completing their studies.

Our community's education system therefore, needs to be revamped and this can only be done if there are a few - not too many - committed persons who

wish to provide their valuable time, efforts and monies as required. Although it would have been wise to handle this from grass roots, the present system is so outmoded that one has to pluck the ripe fruits first, nurture them and then attend to the roots. Many times, we go wrong in blaming the system that needs to be slowly but surely overhauled to produce better cadres. However, a business community like ours need not be blamed for the system that we've inherited and adopted. In fact, we should be commended to have tried it at all. In the global changes that we're experiencing today, our traditional way of working is apt to fail, hence the need for the pursuit to seek finer goals.

We should believe that every person deserves post-secondary education and this has to be afforded to him or her, and at times even enforced. From the statistics that I've reviewed as a Co-ordinator for the AFED (obtained from interviewing approximately 100 families from all walks of life), I have been able to gather that almost all are focused in providing university education to their children and most of them manage to enroll the students when they're academically qualified: 75% of meritorious students find a way to pursue their post-secondary education either with their own resources, family loans and grants, sponsorships and endowments or partial scholarship loans from the community's Education Board.

It is important to note that this awareness isn't long-standing because most of us did involve our children in pseudo business enterprises during the prior artificial boom period thus losing almost a generation. However, we should also believe that there's not much lost; the episode has been an eye-opener; we cannot repeat the same mistakes again or rather cannot live long enough to make the same mistakes again. The need to devise a system is eminent so that the next generation and the subsequent ones have a framework with which to function. We've always been followers - in traditions, religion, business, inventions, etc. But this new vision, if implemented, should make more of us leaders.

For current economic reforms to succeed, it is imperative that our community's educational system be expanded and empowered to produce graduates who can lead the community into a brighter future. The community therefore should aim to nurture excellence in all fields of study.

We should aim that each and every member of the community obtains post-secondary education whether they become specialised professionals through university education or via vocational training. And their mission, in turn, should be to train a new generation of ethical and entrepreneurial leaders who are not only technically competent in their chosen fields, but also care about the society in which they live.



by Akbar Jaffer,
Dubai.

Letter from North America

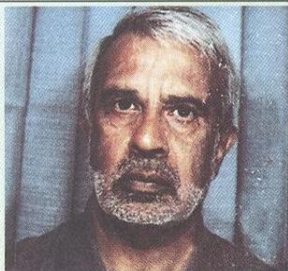
"Verily Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change themselves" (Qur'an 13:11).

"When we turn religion into rituals, customs and traditions, it stagnates man" (Ayatullah Sayyid Fadlullah)

He lay in pool of blood, gun downed in the cause of Islam. Malcolm X found true Islam in Hajj. Alhajj Malik Shabaaz (Malcolm X) was martyred as a true Muslim. He discovered the path of Imam Hussein (a.s.), although, in all probability he never heard of Imam Hussein (a.s.). His jealous former associates did not let him live even one year after he discovered true Islam. This was in 1965.

Imam Khumeini (r.a.) knew and understood Imam Hussein (a.s.). He was persistent. Not only did he liberate the people of Iran but gave the country a model Islamic government. He also told other nations that through struggle and sacrifice they too could be free. We have South Africa. What was the response of the Shi'a worldwide to propagate Islam according to the school of Ahlul Bayt? Nothing. This was in 1979.

Long time ago, a friend made a statement, "the day you accept Islam, you have accepted struggle and sacrifice". This friend discovered Islam but Allah (S.W.T.) wanted him to go through



by Ghulam Abbas Sajan,
Toronto

Muharram comes and goes but will I change?

a long illness. He never complained. My friend, Shaffiq Merali, died this year, having discovered true Islam.

Imam Hussein (a.s.) gave his life 1362 years ago according to the Hijri Calendar. This is a gross understatement of what he did. When we compare the sacrifices made by all the Prophets and Imams, Imam Hussein's sacrifice eclipses them all put together. Imam Hussein was tested, like no other human being and he succeeded as the principal candidate for "Oh you tranquil soul, return to your Lord well-pleased (with Him) and (He) well-pleased (with you)" (Qur'an 89:27/28)

Bibi Zainab (a.s.) carried on the torch lit with the blood of Imam Hussein (a.s.). Together, they showed us that it would take a lot to change our condition. After 1362 years, we still have not essentially grasped the message of Imam Hussein (a.s.) and Bibi Zainab (a.s.).

"...By merely weeping for the martyrs of Karbala as a group of unfortunate victims, we ignore the fact that they were deliberate victims of a grand scheme to wipe out the divine spark in humanity. ...But they clearly saw just as we fail to do, that Husayn ibn Ali (a.s.) was the embodiment of that human being created in the image of the Lord..." ("Towards Freedom and Dignity in the Paradigm of Karbala and Damascus" - Message of Thaqaalayn - vol. 6 No. 2).

Truly, we have ritualised Imam Hussein (a.s.). An Ayatullah lamented, "Muharram has become a billion dollar industry." Our rituals have no bounds. Perhaps we do not want to go outside the boundaries of rituals with the knowledge of the challenge from Allah (s.w.t.). For, the more committed we are to Islam, the more severe the tests

will be. Therefore, we want to be falsely convinced that Imam Hussein (a.s.) wanted us engrossed in the rituals, perhaps, an easy path to Jannah!

A glance at our practices tells us that we meet in our Imamwadats for almost 200 days in a year. The highlight is Muharram. We listen to the lecture (majlis) which includes a part of the event of Karbala and shed a few tears. This is fine but those who start gibbat while having tea, or fight outside the doors with the volunteers should ask themselves if it is really worth their while to even attend the lecture.

There is great attention paid to reading of dua kumail in the Shi'a world. The debate is "is it okay to read the dua before sunset or must it be read after sunset?" It does not matter that the next day is a school day for the children. We are not concerned about what Imam Ali (a.s.) told Kumail. We do not want to take the message from the dua. We must simply carry out the ritual for there is thawab in it. Our attitude is "why go into details, you have already earned your thawab?"

As part of the ritualisation, the word "lecture" is not acceptable. We must use the word "majlis".

Muharram is like an entrance examination for a university course for the ensuing year. All the material and guidance at this university is for the critical exams for the next 344 tests (days). In our case the visiting lecturer, most of the time, fails us miserably in getting us prepared for the crucial tests which are each 24 hours long.

Muharram ideally is the time to invite non-Muslims and non-Shi'a to our gatherings. However, one is afraid to do this anymore. In the rush for gold, the lecturers

(continued on page 105)

Letter from North America

(...from page 104)

have found an easy way out. They want to give as many lectures as possible in a day. Now to give a good lecture, it takes at least six hours preparation. They do not have the time for then they will loss out on the dollar rush. Therefore, a solution was found after the demise of Allama Rashid Turabi (r.a.). They started the hate campaign against the first three Caliphs. And in the process of abasing them, introduced entertainment by ridiculing the Sunni schools. This process does not take any amount of preparation, just practice and become perfect.

This also means that the lectures are devoid of any akhlaq or any meaningful substance, which means that we fail miserably in our exam. And we fail to learn from history. The so-called roohanuin (zakir) travel across the world, deliver their lectures inciting us against our Sunni brethren and there is no spiritual substance in the lectures. The lectures instead of being educational, provide entertainment with zero gain for the community and widen the generation gap for the younger generation does not digest this. Unfortunately, the one who entertains the most has a better chance of being invited again.

Instead of all this, we should be in a position to say, "Yes, we will meet the challenge, no matter what." And this is the first lesson we learn from our Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.). He changed the condition of the people of his time.

If anyone says that the task cannot be achieved since we are incapable of emulating the masoomeen (a.s.), an examination of the educational challenge in China could be an eye opener. For thousands of years the Chinese culture and practice was that it was only the scholars who should learn to read and write. It was assumed that

the ordinary peasant was incapable of learning. Yu-Chuen "Jimmy" Yen took the challenge. By the time communism came to China, 60 million Chinese learnt to read and write. Why was Yen successful? He found the real need and a strong desire to satisfy the need. (Source: "Leadership in Action", March 2002).

Yen did not have the advantage of guidance from Islam. How much more would he have achieved if he had known about the teachings of Masoomeen (a.s.)?

Therefore, we have to accept the challenge and take it from there. An Islamic scholar once said, "If we did everything fisabillillah, there would be no problems". Seems simple, but how close are we to merging into Allah (swt). How close are we to really affirming, "My living and my dying are for You, ya Allah".

The holy Qur'an is our principal source for meeting all sorts of challenges but we seem to have abandoned it – its both aspects; the book and the Ahlul Bayt.

With the globalisation of the world and extremely fast means of communication and propaganda, the challenges faced by Muslims have assumed grave dimensions – especially for the followers of Ahlul Bayt (a.s).

The Shi'a, who are on the right path, have more responsibility to shoulder. For the one who is right has more burden on him to discharge. This responsibility will include all aspects of the community – ulama, orators, community leaders, parents, youth and madressah teachers. Simply to affirm and proclaim that we are on the right path is not enough. We have to live it. Inciting public is the wrong way of asserting our rightfulness. Rationality and calmness should prevail, instead of the emotional upheavals based on half-truths.

I was aware that in some parts of the world to say "waladhaleen"

was not Shi'a way of saying it but it should be "walazaleen" which itself is wrong. On the day of Eid-ul-Adhah, I found more horror. You do not embrace each other more than twice - once with each shoulder. It is terrible to do it three times. The reason? The Sunnis do it. This is not how we should be responding to "hal min nassrin unurna" and affirm, "fuztu bi rabi kaba".

Imam Khumeni followed the examples that he had studied including that of the 14 infallibles and the other members of the household such as Zainab, Kulthum, Rabab, Laila, Abbas, Abu Dhar, Salman Farsi, and many more. They were all firm in their mission, yet humble and polite. But we refuse to live by the spirit of these very important practices. And then we complain that the generation gap is increasing!

Our Islamic scholars have become the clergy and they expect to be treated as a special class when there is no priesthood in Islam. True, respect is due to them for they are to be the vanguards of Islam but let us find out what is happening in practice. We have been commanded to follow the true scholars of Islam, not the pseudo-clergy who refuse to do manual work to the extent that they will not carry their own suitcases or briefcases. They are not involved in community affairs except as "advisors". They prefer being detached.

Every day non-Muslims are becoming Muslims, but few as Shi'as, even when we have 200 lectures in a year. Why?

In order to achieve the objective, we first must look at what our principal leaders have said. These of course are the fourteen infallible. Ayatullah Muthaharri in the forward to "Polarisation around the character of Imam Ali" states: "The basic mark of distinction of Ali (a.s.) and other

(continued on page 106)

Letter from North America (...from page 105)

people who are bright with the rays of truth is that as well as engaging peoples' minds and occupying their thoughts, they give light, warmth, love, joy, faith and strength to their hearts."

"On the other hand we have philosophers who produce students, not followers; social leaders (who) create followers but not complete men."

Dr. Shariati in his book, "What is to be done?" states: "Religion is an amazing phenomenon which plays contradictory roles in the life of human beings. It destroys and revitalises. Puts to sleep and awakens, enslaves and emancipates, teaches docility and revolt... The history of Islam itself is the story of these contradictory roles of religion among various social classes. It is the history of the war of Islam against Islam and even the war of Qur'an against the Qur'an (as in the battle of Sifayn). As it is true that always and everywhere the logical and progressive Islam and the Islam of motion and movement has been outmanoeuvred and defeated by the deviant and decadent Islam and by the Islam of stagnation and compromise. A truly enlightened and realistic person knows that the only way to outmanoeuvre it and eradicate it from the minds and lives of people is to substitute (it with) the true, life-giving and primordial Islam. At this juncture, we see that neither the intellectuals, who do not know Islam, nor the pseudo-religious people, who are unaware of their own time, can fulfill our immediate needs. Only the enlightened Islamic scholar is able..... to extract and refine, with the help of the miraculous revolution that exists in the very nature of spirit and thought of the true Islam, the vast religious energies which are entrapped now".

In "Imam Ali, Source of light, wisdom and might" Sulayman Kattani, a Christian quotes Imam

Ali (a.s.): "Ali said: Whoever sets himself up, as an Imam over the people must begin by teaching himself before teaching the people. He will announce his training by his example before doing it by his tongue. The man who teaches and trains himself is more worthy of honour than the man who teaches and trains the people."

Imam Ali (a.s.) in Nahjul Balagah Sermon 109 when talking "About the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah" states: "Go ahead with the remembrance of Allah for it is the best remembrance, and long for that which He has promised to the pious, for His promise is the most true promise. Tread the course of the Prophet for it is the most distinguished course. Follow the sunnah of the Prophet for it is the most right of all behaviours. Learn the Qur'an for it is the fairest of discourses and understand it thoroughly for it is the best blossoming of the hearts. Seek cure with its light for it is the cure for hearts. Recite it beautifully for it is the most beautiful narration. Certainly, a scholar who acts not according to his knowledge is like the off-headed ignorant who does not find relief from his ignorance; but on the learned the plea of Allah is greater and grief more incumbent, and he is more blameworthy before Allah."

In "Imam Al-Sadiq" by Shaykh Mohammed al-Husayn al-Muzaffar, the authour quotes Imam Al-Sadiq, "Whoever fears Allah, Allah will make everything afraid of him; whoever does not fear Allah, Allah will make him afraid of everything."

Have not many of us abandoned both the versions of the Qur'an - natiq and samit?

The moral and spiritual challenges faced by us are many but these can be surmounted. We must remember, being on the right path means more responsibility.

1. The role of Islamic scholars.

They have to be more involved with the community. Watching from a distance and advising from a distance is not enough. However, it has to be in the manner of Imam Ali (a.s.) - humble and caring.

At the same time, the religious lectures should be more geared to educate than to entertain.

If the lectures are meaningful, not only we Shi'a will learn, but the non-shia Muslims will join us. We would be encouraged to invite non-Muslims to our programs with a view to making them understand us. It used to happen more before than now.

Scholars have great responsibility to disseminate knowledge. Their behaviour and actions should encourage us to spiritually and morally uplift ourselves.

2. The community organisations

In his article "Role of the Masjid in Islam", Muhammad Baqir Ansari states that there are three salient features of the mosque:

- Sanctity of the mosque
- The mosque as pivot of cultural and spiritual movements.
- The mosque as pivot of social movements

(Al Tawhid Volume 1 No 4, July 1984)

Accordingly the community organisations have to organise better programs. The Dua Kumail instead of being a ritual, can be a college. The community should live by the messages in the dua.

The programs during important occasions such as Muharram must be very thoroughly planned and carried out. This is where we can invite non-Muslims to tell them why Imam Hussein (a.s.) did what he did. This will be our

(continued on page 107)

Letter from North America

(...from page 106)

university. The response to his call of Hal min nassarinna was not meant for ritualisation of his message. He wanted us to be part of living Islam.

Our Sunni brothers complain that we have beautiful books like Nahjul Balagha and Saife-Sajadiya but we have not made them aware of these or made these available to them. This will earn us friends.

The way our communities currently carry out their programs, drive the youth away. This happens in all communities, including the Islamic Republic of Iran. Change is needed, lengthy monologues will have to be replaced by dialogues and visual presentations.

If we do all these, we will meet our challenges not only now but also forever.

The Muslim should be proud to be a Muslim and develop a trend that a Muslim can be trusted as a friend. Again, with upright behaviour learnt from the new brand of lectures, he will meet the challenge with a smiling face.

And proudly proclaim, "I am a Muslim." We should be able to tell the world; yes you can trust us for sincere advice and we will not fail you, no matter what. Unless we take dramatic actions, we will only be in numbers – a billion with no voice. And we will lose again and will need another Khumayni or return of the Mehdi (a.t.f).

In conclusion, "Commitment to Karbala is a prescription not only for lending support to our ideational edifice but also most importantly for ensuring the imminent reappearance of the Imam of the Age, our Lord Mahdi (May Allah hasten his reappearance). Let us make sure then that with God's help we protect ourselves from becoming causes of another Karbala in our time." (Towards Freedom and Dignity...).

MUSLIM SCIENTISTS AND THE QUR'AN.

By Zaheer Bhalloo

The golden years for Muslim Scientists were between 700-1500 C.E, a time when the Muslims were at the pinnacle of all levels of science and their contributions sparked a new light of learning and heralded the dawn of a new quest for knowledge and discovery. The fact that the European Renaissance would not have taken place is evidence enough of the immense contribution of the Muslims in charting the course of civilisation. They made great contributions to our understanding of sciences, mathematics, medicine, technology, sociology, and philosophy. Indeed the world has all but forgotten these great Muslim scientists who were way advanced of their time. Pick up a history textbook and you probably might find some mention, nevertheless all their names have been latinised or changed with the effect of obscuring their identity and origin, and their association with Islam.

The world has seen many great Muslim Scientists like : Jabir ibn Haiyan, al-Kindi, al-Khwarizmi, al-Fargani, al-Razi, Thabit ibn Qurra, al-Battani, Hunain ibn Ishaq, al-Farabi, Ibrahim ibn Sinan, al-Masudi, al-Tabari, Abul Wafa, 'Ali ibn Abbas, Abul Qasim, Ibn al-Jazzar, al-Biruni, Ibn Sina, Ibn Yunus, al-Kashi, Ibn al-Haitham, 'Ali Ibn 'Isa al-Ghazali, al-zarqab, Omar Khayyam and more. As George Sarton says in his Introduction to the History of Science : "A magnificent array of names which it would not be difficult to extend. If anyone tells you that the Middle Ages were scientifically sterile, just quote these men to him."

The question that now arises is what has happened to the Muslims, why do they no longer produce great scientists. It seems crystal clear that the west has overshadowed the east, the Islamic world in particular, in advancements in science and technology. They have shifted the focus of the Muslims who are now busy fighting wars, trying to free themselves from oppression, division and more. They have swept us all into an eternal slumber. We need to wake up from this slumber.

The key for the Muslims I believe can only be one, the Glorious Qur'an. The Qur'an contains a vast amount of science surpassing even the basic concepts of fiqh etc. Maurcie Bucaille in his book, "The Bible, The Quran and Science" states, "The relationship between the Qur'an and Science is a surprise, especially when it turns out to be one of harmony." Indeed this is the beauty of the Quran which lies neatly on our top most shelf, which is read every day but from which we fail to gain true light and understanding besides spiritual thawab.

"However often we turn to it [the Qur'an] it soon attracts, astounds, and in the end enforces our reverence... Its style, in accordance with its contents and aim isgrand...andtruly sublime – thus this book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence." – Goethe, quoted in T.P. Hughes' DICTIONARY OF ISLAM, p. 526.

Letter from India

With the sudden downfall of "the strongest and staunchest American ally in the Muslim world," leading to the triumph of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, led by the awe-inspiring Ayatullah Khomeini, a centuries-old myth seemed to be falling apart: that Islam had lost much of its luster and ceased to be a social force in modern circumstances. It came as the shock-of-a-lifetime for those intellectuals and policy-makers who had written the obituary of Islam *per se*. As a comeback to this eye-opener, the mass media promptly generated medieval and monstrous images of the faith and its followers. Efforts for Islamic revival undertaken in different parts of the Muslim world were projected as the return of *political Islam* or *Islamism*—a fundamentalist and fanatical brand that was antithetical to modern values of freedom and progress (Jihad vs. McWorld)—and came to be viewed in diplomatic circles as austere threatening to U.S. and European interests in the oil-rich Middle East. A new enemy was found, a scepter that was haunting the West more than Communism did during the Cold War epoch.



by Syed Ali Mehdi, India

"Arc of Crisis", AXIS OF EVIL

In Pursuit of Middle East and South Asian Diplomacy

After the initial letdown in coming to terms with the new Islamic regime, President Jimmy Carter, in his State of the Union Address, in January 1980, enunciated the contention of his National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, that the Middle East and South Asia constituted an "arc of crisis". Precisely twenty-two years later, in January 2002, President Bush has cautioned against an "axis of evil"; with Iran as the common threat-target. This time, however, Washington has made it explicitly clear that it cannot afford to allow "another return to business as usual" (Foreign Affairs, January/February 2002, Martin Indyk, 'Back to the Bazaar') and that it is bent upon 'smoking the terrorists out of their holes'.

The U.S. foreign policy, originally since 1979, acutely post-9/11, has regarded nearly all forms of political activity inspired by Islam—the aspirations of Muslim states and individuals to reshape their societies in accordance with the teachings of Quran and *Sunnah*—as "terrorist". An attempt has been made to bracket revivalist movements of assorted nature and approach together in the same category. People like Syed Jamaluddin, whose passionate role in the pre- and post-1857 freedom struggle in India is perhaps less known, are being labelled as "adventurists" and identified as the precursors of "Osama's silly and messy manoeuvres" (The Indian Express, 12 December 2001, Prof. Mushirul Hasan, 'The

Myth of Brotherhood'). With such turn of events, no wonder then if some fine morning, we happen to come across a headline in our newspaper reading that Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose and the firebrand-trio "Bal-Pal-Lal" were in fact terrorists. With this yardstick, even now-the-hero revolutionaries like Marx, Mao and Mandela might not be spared of this tag.

Meanwhile, on occasions when Islamic parties have experimented with the ballot, as in Algeria and Turkey, and have achieved public mandate, they have been coerced to relent under intense U.S. pressure, reducing the case of democracy to merely a pretentious rhetoric. A further dimension of this *selective* approach has been the U.S. patronage to local, dictatorial regimes in a greater part of the Middle East and its blatant refusal to take any action against brutal violation of human rights perpetrated by the rulers to crush all, though legitimate, opposition. That which has added fuel to the fire is an enhanced build-up of "peace-keeping" forces in these lands, with no retreat in sight. It should not, therefore, come as a surprise that many of the top al-Qaeda leaders happen to come from Saudi Arabia (Osama bin Laden) and Egypt (Ayman al-Zawahiri), the closest U.S. allies in the region.

Iran is specifically perceived as the greatest troublemaker, or "the ultimate evil," upsetting regional peace and stability by

(continued on page 110)

Thinking Aloud

Dr. Pizada Qasim is a professor of Physics in Karachi University. He is also an accomplished poet in Urdu. Commenting on the common tendency among Muslims to gloat over their past, this man of science and letters has written:

- *Asre haazir dhundhta raha hai mujhko, aur mai.n:*

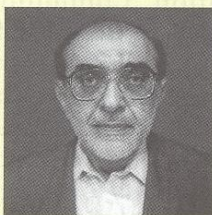
- *Maghan hu.n ah-de raftaga.n ki azmato.n ke darmiyan.*

- While the current realities have been beckoning me to come forward and accept the challenge of the time,

- I am deeply engrossed in my thoughts, content in drawing solace from; Recalling greatness of the monumental achievements of the period gone by.

Those were the days that they were, if at all they were, that shall never be again! To what extent do we, as individuals and as a society, think similarly?

In a previous column I started off with a question: What is a Jamaat? On a recent visit to North America, I was confronted by an avid reader of the *Federation Samachar* who had his own version for the question. According to him, a chairman of a small town Jamaat once visited a large North American city. Fascinated by the size of this huge metropolis, the visitor hired a taxi to take him round for a sightseeing trip. On their way back in the evening, our erstwhile



by Hassan Ali M. Jaffer,
Mombasa

North America – victims of printing press syndrome?

chairman suggested to the taxi driver to take rest while he drove the vehicle back to the hotel.

The taxi driver was a community member who knew the chairman. Perplexed, he responded: "You are a very kind and considerate person. With respect Sir, this is a taxi I have to drive and earn a living out of it. It is not your Jamaat that you can run in the belief: *"Chalte ki naam gharhi, sab kuch chalta hai, Allah ke bharose!"* (Whatever moves is a vehicle. Everything moves when left to fate.) Sadly, many appear to harbour such perceptions.

The community in North America appears to be at cross roads. It is a vast continent with community members scattered all over. Conflicts and egocentric posturing displayed in various quarters tend to sap energies and distract us from concentrating on the realities. The educated younger generation is getting more and more disenchanted with the endless quibbling and lack of enlightened sense of direction. As a result, the youths are increasingly alienated from the main stream of the society.

Thirty years after we have set up structured organisations like Jamaats, Mosques, Imambaras, Madrasah and other community centers, it is time to look ahead to focus our attention on the type of future we wish to evolve for our progeny.

Concentrating only on perpetuating traditional practices and conducting affairs modeled on the African experience, spiced with additions from the Indo-Pakistani and Iranian traditional innovations, we appear to be drifting.

We have to analytically review the current realities. The need for

providing Islamic higher education within the local North American environment is now recognised. Because of past experience with the traditional hawza established in Africa, U.K. and in North America, we are hesitant to take fresh initiatives.

We need to draw lessons from past experience, seek out expertise readily available and work towards evolving relevant educational programmes to fill the void being felt.

Generally we tend to repose sublime faith in divine intervention to ultimately bail us out, regardless of our conduct. We are therefore hesitant to be sufficiently pro-active. We expect of others to take lead and plunge into the murky waters. When the divers come out with pearls, we can always applaud! Meanwhile as a society we continue to maintain the status quo drifting aimlessly.

Fatalistic tendencies and refusal to march with the times have been the cause of much undoing for the Muslim ummah. A unique example is that of the printing press.

"In 1485, a decree by the Ottoman sultan, Bayazid II, banned this new invention, on the grounds that it would be sacrilegious to use the Arabic language in mechanical equipment. A press was sent from Germany to the court of Turkey to print Koran. The Ulama were called in to give a verdict (Fatwa) if such a contraption of infidels could be used to print a holy scripture. The unanimous opinion was **NO**."

"For next four centuries, Muslims were deprived of this privilege. Christians and Jews could use

(continued on page 110)

Arc of Crisis, Axis of Evil...

(....from page 108)

"exporting the revolution" to countries like Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Muslim states from the erstwhile Soviet Union, and now Afghanistan. As a proof, Israeli security forces

(....from page 109)

the printing presses in Muslim lands and they controlled the learning henceforth. The Caliph needed accountants for his business and not a single Muslim could apply for this job. All the applicants were Christians and Jews." (1)

The rest is history. Times have changed and the avenues have changed. Can we afford to let history repeat itself? It is probably in recognition to this urgent need that in the last issue of the *Federation Samachar*, Dr. Hasnain Walji has written: "As a community, that has learned to live as a minority over the last century, we now have a new challenge. We must begin proactively to consider our options to facilitate the upcoming generation to have access to those savants and thinkers who are firmly rooted in faith, and who act, speak and write with authority, conviction and without apology. To nurture this generation, urgent measures are required to create institutions of higher Islamic learning outside the hawza system, which can be a bridge between the ulema in the traditional hawza and the young intellectuals in the Western academia."

Having identified the need, let us develop a consensus to commit ourselves to the cause and take the necessary steps. Let us do our bit first. Then we can pray for divine intervention to help us through.

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1 Ref: B. Lewis; Nicholson; History of Turkey; Gutenberg and Printed Page.

recently held an Iranian arms shipment heading towards the Gaza to support the Palestinian *intifada* against the Zionists. It is seen as the eventual fountain of conspiracy and antipathy against the United States, with chants of "*marg bar Amrika, marg bar Israel*" (death to America, death to Israel) echoing vociferously in the deserts after every Friday prayers.

And America's Arab allies fear Iran as an inspiration for those of their citizens romancing with the 'Utopia' of an Islamic State and as a result have also harboured apprehensive perceptions of Western governments. The traditional, sectarian rift is brought into play to sow the seeds of discord and dissension against *Shia* Iran and the *innovative* (anti-Wahhabi) Ayatollahs. The West, in its turn, looks at Shi'ism as a mobilising and agitational force, reflected in the use of symbols during Iran's Revolution (Yale University Press, 1996, Nikki Keddie & Juan Cole, 'Shi'ism and Social Protest'). Some have even drawn parallels with the *Protestant Ethic*.

Overlooking or underrating Iran's abhorrence for the Wahhabi-backed Taliban and al-Qaida forces, U.S. lawmakers have accused the Revolutionary Guards of providing a safe haven to the fleeing mercenaries with an intention to use them for a possible future manoeuvre against the United States. In reality, however, with the sole exception of the hostage crisis of 4 November 1979, almost twenty three years have passed without a single incident of direct confrontation between Iran and the U.S. Ironically, the recent appellation of "evil" has come at a time when Iran offered the olive branch to its one-time "Big

Satan" (*shaitan-i buzurg*) and was already co-operating, albeit ditheringly, in the war against terrorism.

Even recommendations for "creative diplomacy, constructive engagement and calculated steps to rapprochement (with Iran)" by the Atlantic Council, involving more than sixty past and present policy-makers (Middle East Policy Journal, June 2001, James Bill, 'The Politics of Hegemony: The United States and Iran'), could not convince the overwhelming Pentagon officials to adopt a cautious and realistic strategy.

Nonetheless, there is a ray of hope from the moderate elements in the U.S. and international polity. But, evenly, we stand exposed to the "redemptive mission" of the arch-hawks who, emboldened by the unpredictably swift victory in Afghanistan, clamor for the widening of the U.S. war against terrorism to other Islamic nations (The Guardian, Margaret Thatcher, 'Unfinished Business'). In any case, the White House should pay heed to its former Advisor on Islamic and Muslim Affairs, John L Esposito, that "there are lessons to be learned from a past in which fear of a monolithic Soviet threat often blinded the United States to Soviet bloc's diversity, led to uncritical support for (anti-Communist) dictatorships, and enabled the 'free world' to tolerate the suppression of legitimate dissent and massive human rights violations by governments that labeled the opposition 'Communist' or 'Socialist.'" ('Political Islam: Beyond the Green Menace'). Perhaps, in these words lie a stable and peaceful future for the U.S. and its interests, and the possibility of averting a clash of civilisations which carries the potential of a Godzilla-ic fallout.

From Down Under

Growing community in South Africa needs religious scholars....is perplexed by some of our rituals

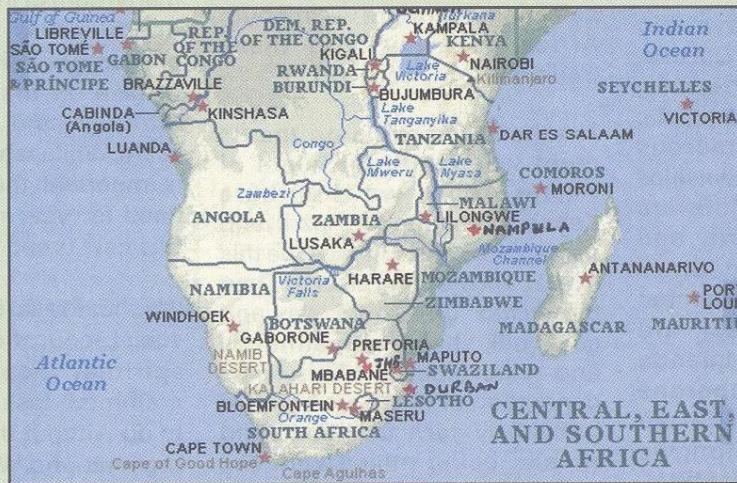
The world Shia community recently marked the Islamic New Year of 1423 A.H. with grief and in this commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) the Shias of Southern Africa were no exception.

Every year it is during these few days when we rejuvenate our faith and strengthen our beliefs while pondering on the greatest sacrifice in human history, that of the grandson of the Holy Prophet (a.s.), our third Holy Imam, Imam Husain (a.s.).

(s.a.) but at the same time seek knowledge and truth. This great sacrifice has brought about great revolutions in the minds and lives of millions of people after the tragedy of

made an offer of billions, if not trillions of Dollars if he was prepared to break sanctions against South Africa and supply them with oil. This was a time when the Islamic Republic of Iran

was confronted on all sides with war. The Iraq-Iran war was then at its peak. The Islamic Republic of Iran needed the monies badly!!! Their country was trying to fight an unjust war thrust upon them!!!! Any student of Political Science will tell you that to win any revolution you need money!!!! But this great personality, this man of principle, stood firm and said that his country would not supply



Regional map of Southern Africa region

During these few days of Moharram we clean up our hearts and learn to stay firm on our Islamic beliefs. This is the prime time of the year. This is the time when we search our souls and seek the truth and come closer to our Creator. During majaalis held in this month we not only send our condolences to the pure daughter of the Holy Prophet

Kerbala. Not surprisingly history has always recorded that any true revolutions in the Islamic World has always been inspired by the Shias.

This sacrifice by Imam Husain (a.s.) and his family and kin is being seen as an inspiration to the downtrodden and aggrieved people of South Africa. History is proof of their subjugation and repression. Of course the Iranian Revolution was to a greater extent a catalyst for inspiring the majority to rise for their rights!!!!

oil to South Africa, unless and until the apartheid regime of that time treated Black people equally like the white people. The Shia population was negligible at that time in South Africa. The Imam did not fight for the rights of Shias but for the rights of mankind including the thousands of Sunni Muslims. Therefore let the world know that this great son of Iran was a man of principle who stood firm in support of the majority of the population of South Africa.

Today Islam is spreading at a rapid rate in this part of Africa, specially the true sect of Islam, the Islam Original, Shiaism. The indigenous people of South Africa are in search of truth and



by Dr. Asghar Moledina, South Africa

(continued on page 112)

From Down Under

(...from page 111)

in this true sect of Islam, they see peace and justice. However it is important that those who preach the True Islam must be seen to be practicing it.

"...these Shias are new converts and most of them have converted to Shiaism with reason and understanding. It becomes at times absurd to make them understand some of the traditions that we the Khoja Shias of East Africa, India and Pakistan practice during the time of Moharram."

Alhamdulillah we have big Centers in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Gabarone, Maputo and Nampula. Besides there are numerous centers in the African townships and satellite towns. More are being built in Pretoria and elsewhere in the region. Small communities of Shias (a number of them Khoja Shias) are springing up in Luanda (ANGOLA), Gabarone (BOSTWANA), Harare (ZIMBABWE), Lilongwe (MALAWI) and Lusaka (ZAMBIA). The map of the Africa Federation is fast changing and is no longer confined to East Africa and Madagascar!!!!

Perhaps a need for a ??? Territorial Council of South Africa!!!! More regional organizations!!!!!! More leaders to throw their weight around !!!! More garlands and shawls when visiting our motherland!!!! More egos!!!!!! Will it be beneficial or detrimental to our progress? Some more food for thought for the community intellectuals!!!!!! Let us have their input!!!!!!

However these Shias are new converts and most of them have converted to Shiaism with reason and understanding. It becomes at times absurd to make them understand some of the traditions that we the Khoja Shias of East Africa, India and

...does the changing scenario in South Africa call for a need for a ??? Territorial Council ?

Pakistan practice during the time of Moharram.

Fortunately the reduction or complete absence of Zanjeer Mataam has taken one hurdle out. However for them to understand the taking out of Mendhi (Hinnah) on the night of 7th Moharram, when we mourn the young son of Imam Hassan (a.s.), Shah Qasim is extremely difficult and sometimes self-defeating. Therefore we in South Africa do away with these traditions.

Another example is on the 8th night when with the Alam of Hazrat Abbas we distribute Kebab in chappatis (Hazri) and some raddish in it. It must be this Niyaz and nothing else!!!! Then the Kichro on Ashura day and cold milk shake with almonds and pistachios!!!!!! This new generation of Shias are at times baffled by such traditions and rituals being mixed with the purity of Imam Husain's sacrifice.

During the last Moharram we were at a loss when a certain Mawlana brought these Hazri and placed it in the Mehrab or near the Mehrab and then asked these new generation of Shias to pray towards these Hazri and ask their Hajaat. That not being enough, he led the whole congregation to do Tawaaf in the mosque grounds with him holding the sacred Alam of Hazrat Abbas with the heavens opening up with rain. Following and teaching such traditions and rituals to this new generation of Shias can be very detrimental to our tabligh work in this part of the world.

There is a great need of a pure breed of Shia Muballigeens in this region. Young people who have thoroughly understood Islam and not bound by the

shackles of traditionalism and ritualism. Scholars who are able to explain the teachings of our Holy Prophet (a.s.) and our Aaimmaas with a deeper understanding. Scholars who can also by their behaviour and attitude set perfect examples to this new generation of Shias.

The best time to do this is when we commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.). There is now a great need to encourage our Khoja Shia youths to take on the Mimbar after a thorough and careful study of Islam. While tabligh in Muharram is important there is also a great need for year round training to this new breed of Muslims.

We should also be looking at their social, educational, health and spiritual needs. This is a mammoth task and impossible to do without the support of our regional and World Federations and the support of those of us who have been blessed by Allah (s.w.t.) and entrusted with this task of Amra bil Ma'aruf and Nahi Anil Munkar.

We should count our blessings to have been born in a Khoja Shia family where we are having the best of both worlds, spiritually and materialistically!!!!!! Thus we should consider it our foremost duty to spread this true word of God and spend our time and resources on it where and when possible. This will make our Imam Husain (a.s.) and the Ahlul- Bayt happy that the reason for their sacrifice has been understood. Therefore this is the prime time to learn, reflect, ponder and implement!!!!!! Let us not be lacking in it and let us pray to Allah (Subhanahu Wata'ala) to grant all of us Tawfeeq to do just that. Ameen!!!!!!

Wayside Wisdom

Physicians around the world are increasingly coming to accept that religion helps to promote health. Doctors are being advised that medical treatment should begin considering the spiritual beliefs of patients now that positive effects of religion have been found in most studies of drug use, adjustment or coping to a crisis, depression, marital disharmonies, anxiety and extra-marital or pre-marital sexual activity, among others.

Religion is seen to promote a feeling of peace and a sense of purpose in life whereby individuals live with fine moral standards and without the temptation of seeking fun, fame or money through amoral means. The religious live their lives with an intention of earning or serving their family, seeking to uplift themselves in life while they also consider and attend to the needs of society at large.

In the pursuit of noble objectives, it is not that life cannot be enjoyed. The religious enjoy living life honourably and with respect with their families and friends without being weblocked or addicted to vices that lead them to unethical behaviour.

The religious abstain from vices like drinking, illicit sex, gambling,



by **Munir H. Daya,**
Dar es Salaam

Safeguarding health through spiritual discussions

cheating, stealing or corruption and live with due tolerance of what others believe in. Understandably, in life human beings are not perfect and normally religious people do err when their faith is shaken by the society they live in or by the literature they read or the electronic media they are exposed to. For those who sin, Islam offer truly repentant transgressors mercy as one of the main qualities of God is that of being forgiving to those who sincerely repent and stop their past misdemeanours.

Physicians find that the religious recover well when treated for their medical ailments because they harbour a positive frame of mind. When people with faith are asked to adjust their lifestyle following a trauma, they do so better than others who do not believe in God or who believe in Him but do not follow what he has prescribed as right or wrong. What faith does is to tune the human mind to a state of peace and a sense of purpose thereby allowing medical treatment to be more effective. On the other hand, medical treatment to a stressed and unstable person is often undermined because of the patient's negative frame of mind, partly resulting from guilt or because of being deprived of the vices that one is addicted to.

The medical profession is therefore increasingly encouraging doctors to consider attending to their patients' spiritual beliefs, not with the intention of propagating their own faith but because patients are more likely to benefit from spiritual issues discussed in their healthcare.

A few months ago when I undertook a hernia surgery at Toronto's Shouldice Hospital, my session with the Christian Canadian doctor lasted about thirty minutes. Knowing I was a Muslim from the dressing of my wife, he spent about fifteen minutes talking of religion and the need for human beings to learn to respect each other's faiths in order to stop wars and to bring peace in the world.

He then produced a copy of the Holy Qur'an from his drawer and wondered why human beings would want to misinterpret "wonderful and peaceful" guidelines in this holy book to raise chaos in the world, very often also harming themselves because a cruel or boastful state of mind is deprived of peace and therefore is more vulnerable to ailments that could well lead to pre-mature death. Such spiritual discussions between a doctor and a patient help to build relationships and enable patients to face diseases, ailments and even surgeries more confidently.

Human beings often pray for an easy life for themselves and their families. We pray that we or our families should not face hardships but is it not inevitable in life for us all to encounter some form of hardship? The holy Qur'an tells us that the faithful will be tested in trying circumstances by the Almighty and the Nahjul Balagha teaches us on the importance of patience. When rendering spiritual advice, doctors can perform the duty of enabling their patients' to derive strength from their sickness or weakness through spiritual association with the Almighty instead of allowing them to be swept asunder by their disease.

SAMACHAR CLASSIFIEDS

...your quarterly guide to community businesses

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ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS

M.A. Hassam and Company
Authorised Accountants & Auditors
P.O. Box 20719, Dar es Salaam.
Tel: 2134071 / 2137352 / 2110129 /
2110648. Fax: 2112980.
Email: mahassam@raha.com

S.A. Jaffer and Company
Authorised Accountants & Auditors
P.O. Box 3598, Dar es Salaam.
Tel: 2115801/2114898/2115056
Fax: 2112728
Email: sajaffer@cats-net.com

Assad Associates
Authorised Accountants & Auditors
P.O. Box 21500, Dar es Salaam.
Tel: 2115688 / 220521

S.R. Auditors
Authorised Accountants & Auditors
P.O. Box 10967, Dar es Salaam.
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NAME THE PERSONALITIES!!!!

The photographs on this page were received without captions. The Editorial Board welcomes readers to send in pertinent captions for each photograph. In our next issue we will mention all those who came in with the right captions including names, occasion and the year of the event.



PRIDE (KIBR)

by Muhammad Tejani, Dar es Salaam

The deadliest of all sins is Kibr (arrogance). Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) warned that a person having even an iota of it in his heart will never enter paradise. No one likes arrogance. We never like a person who is over-bearing, proud or condescending. We detest a person who belittles us and has a huge ego.

Contrary to that, we love people who are humble, polite and friendly to talk to. To respect and honor others is a sublime virtue. The principle of treating others the way we like to be treated is the key to the solution of basic social problems. Treating arrogance, hence, requires serious thought.

However, it is possible to have manners without morals. The first concerns itself with how a person deals with others. The second is related with what a person thinks of himself. Imam Ali (a.s) says, *"The one thing that is better not expressed, even if it is true is a man's praise for himself."*

People show humility in their dealings in two cases – either out of generosity or after becoming genuinely convinced that he is not superior or better than the person standing opposite him. *"The humility of a man in a position of high rank protects him from the malice of others when he falls."* (Imam Ali). Therefore be nice to people as you go up, because you may meet them as you go down. The sense of feeling equal leads to a quality of being free from arrogance.

Real greatness belongs to Almighty Allah, our Lord, Creator and Master. Human beings are just a creation of His and a very small creation in comparison to the unimaginably vast universe. Anyone who understands this is will realise that our proper status

is only as servants of Almighty Allah (s.w.t.)

For a Muslim, the real human model is none other than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), who is the greatest of all human beings. His greatness lies in being the humblest of all the servants of Allah (s.w.t.). It is impossible for any person who has this consciousness to entertain any notion of his own greatness.

This leads us to the definition of Kibr (Arrogance) in a famous hadith, "Arrogance (Kibr) is rejecting "Truth" and to belittling other people."

This hadith exposes two strains of this ailment, both dealing with our exaggerated ideas of self-importance. The first suggests that one considers himself to be more important than the truth if he is arrogant.

The second suggests that he considers himself to be more important than other people if he is arrogant.

Islam's teaching is that one should never consider oneself greater than others because that judgement can also come from Almighty God on the day of Judgement. *"Pride impedes progress and mars greatness."* (Imam Ali)

A person who appears to be nobody here may end up in eternal bliss because of his goodness that only Almighty Allah knows. Meanwhile a person who considers himself a big shot here may end up among the sinners and shall be punished because only Allah (s.w.t.) knows his evils and hidden follies. And he who tries to be higher than others, Allah (s.w.t.) will rub his nose in dust (that is lower him). *"O respected and elite, test the*

punishment" (Q:25:49) -- this being a reference to the aristocrats who considered themselves as such.

To take pride over our fleeting and material superiority is the business of those who live in a fool's paradise. Almighty God has created all human beings as equals, regardless of cast, creed or religion. Men and women cannot impose superiority upon themselves. *"Oh you men! Surely We have created you of a male and female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); Surely Allah is Knowing and Aware."* (Q:49:13).

Islam expects us to stick to reality, pragmatism and moderation. Rather it asks to take a deeper look at reality and not be misled by superficial perception of it.

The simple realities that are evident in the form of our health, wealth, talents and power are not of our creation. These are gifts of Almighty Allah to us and He can take them back from us when He wishes. *"You exalt who you like and abase whom you like"* (Q. 3:25). Those who are conscious of this reality bow before Allah (s.w.t.) in gratitude and only those who are oblivious of this fact fall prey to pride and arrogance.

Nineteen and twentieth century sociologists and scientists have misled people by putting forward the phenomenon of superiority and inferiority complexes, whereas the obvious reality is that a humble person is a happy, content, grateful person who thanks Allah (s.w.t.) of his blessing and has no notion of his own superiority.

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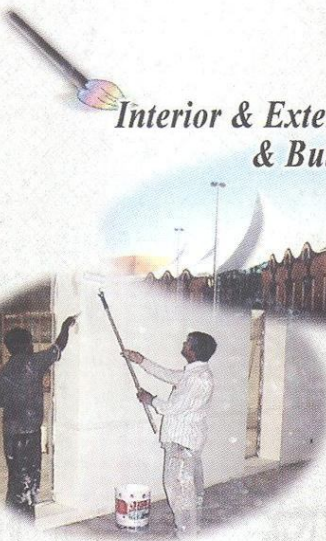


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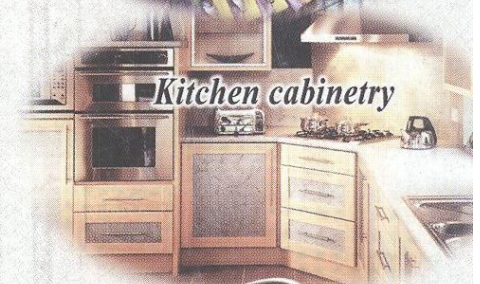


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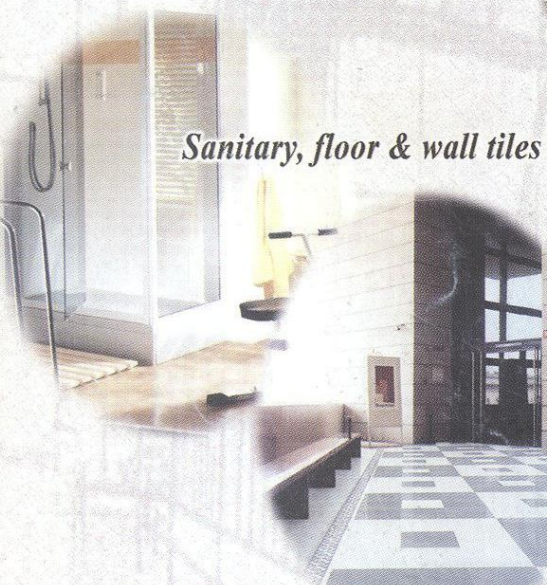
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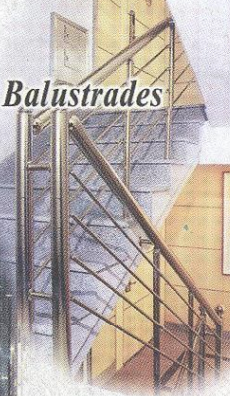
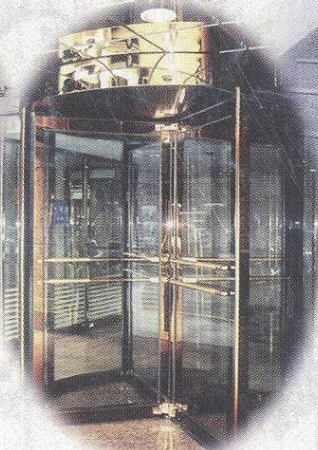


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