

Ponzi Firms Overrun Bengaluru

By Maqbool Ahmed Siraj

Bengaluru: The booming job opportunities that Karnataka's capital provided for well over the last quarter century had won it the sobriquet of 'a land of opportunities'. But of late, the city has also emerged as the

hundreds of investors, have been looted by a clutch of fraudsters who had barely anything to do with business or finance. Several of them are on the run, eluding the law's hands, while some among them have even managed to get bail even as they do not tire of vowing 'to return every single

Thousands of Muslim investors have been defrauded of their life's savings by firms who offered 'Halal' and 'Shariah-compliant' investments.

and investments promising unrealistically high returns. Some of them, in fact, did return some

the trap larger numbers. What is plain from the investigations into the affairs of these companies is that they floated the companies not to do business but to lure gullible people with promises of attractive returns and had no

principals—but without any success. Several police stations were even refusing to register the FIRs against the defrauding companies. Strangely enough, no Muslim politician has come forward to listen to the pleas of the aggrieved 'investors'. The task of organising them was left for Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Bengaluru to organize a public protest at Maurya Circle against the organized fraud and complete



prime destination for fraudsters, mostly mobilizing money from gullible techies through Ponzi schemes. A host of such schemes have sucked thousands of naïve Muslims dry during the last three to four years. Ironically, these investments were sought in the name of 'Halal', 'interest-free' and 'Shariah-compliant'. Virtually thousands of crores of rupees, hard-earned money of

penny due to the investors'.

Defaulters all

Names like Ambidant, Injaz, Morgenall, Ajmera, Easy Pay Cash (EPC), Aala Ventures etc appear prominent among the companies who have defaulted payments to the investors. Mainly based in north-eastern quarters of the city, these companies had mobilized deposits



money by way of 'dividends', only to go back on their promises later. The ones who were lucky to receive a few 'installments of dividends' spread the 'good word' around and brought into

“Sentimental appeal of 'Halal' and 'interest-free' investment has blinded investors from examining the veracity of claims being made the fraudsters.”

business activity on the ground to show. Several of these companies advertised their schemes in Urdu dailies and even flashed pictures of the directors with leading Islamic clerics of the city to lend credibility to their exaggerated claims of Halal profits.

Life's Saving Gone

People who have invested their life's savings are now running from pillar to post to get their money back—at least their

insensitivity by the powers that be to bring the offender to book on December 15.

Downed Shutters

Meet Syed Yusuf, a retired principal of the Govt PU College at Srinivasapur in Kolar district. The retired civil servant, who now lives in Bengaluru, and six members of his family, some of them doctors, had invested over

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Ponzi Firms ...

Rs. one crore in a company called 'Injaz International' in 2016. Besides they invested Rs. 1.80 lakh in Ambidant and another Rs. 14 lakh in Easy Pay Cash (EPC), a firm based in HSR Layout. The companies have all but downed their shutters.

Enticing Offers

Zakir Hussain, aged around 50, a leather businessman from Chennai, is also cursing his fate for investing Rs. 2 lakh in Morgenall Cooperative Society

Bit of Luck

Mohammed Atheeq, a computer operator who had invested Rs. one lakh in Ambidant in November 2017, was luckier. He got back Rs. 36,000 in December 2017. But that was the end of 'dividends' from the defaulting firm. In fact, that was how the Ambidant Marketing established its credentials to lure more investors into its net. The firm's managing director, Syed Fareed Ahmed was arrested, but is out on bail.

installments, lured vast number of investors into their devious parlour.

Fraudulent Offer

Look at this! The Ambidant Marketing had offered (through advertisements) a new scooter to all those who book a bike by depositing Rs. 40,000 and wait for four months for the bike to be delivered. Many were taken in by the offer. Syed Mahmood (name changed on request) of Bengaluru indeed got his bike within four

months. But his Mysuru-based niece Sufiya Begum (named changed), who believed the Ambidant's offer (and believed her uncle's words) and deposited the money a year ago, is still waiting for the bike now that the firm is snared into legal cases and is almost out of business.

Deceitful

What is galling is the fact that even those who know for sure that no business can yield such unrealistic profits get deceived

by such fraudulent firms. Maaz Ali Khan (name changed on request), 51, a businessman is one such victim. Himself being a businessman, invested Rs. 10 lakh in Ambidant only four months ago and another Rs. 5 lakh in Ajmera, a firm located in the Jayanagar Fourth Block. He has received no 'dividends'.

Director on the Run

For Azim, 35, an IT professional with Hewlett Packard, the record

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People were taken in by the attractive 'dividends' doled out by the predator firms in pursuit of widening their trap for their prey.

Ltd based in Horamavu Main Road eight months ago. He says the Society remitted Rs. 50,000 towards the first instalment of dividend. But since then there is no response from the Society. An advertisement from the Society in a leading Urdu daily from Bengaluru had promised upto 24% of annual profits.

No Clue

Zubair Ahmed, a civil engineer from HSR Layout, had invested Rs. 7 lakh in Ambidant in February 2018. The company paid him 'dividend' to the tune of Rs. 1.65 lakh in March. But that was all that he heard from them. Three of his family members had invested another Rs. 16 lakh in a firm known as 'Ajmera' in February 2018. The firm has shut shop and Mr. Ahmed has no clue about the company.

Devious Ways

Ambidant had done some marvelous social media marketing through YouTube, Facebook and Instagram and even floated a fans' club to spread its tentacles. Significantly, social media has emerged as a handy tool for fraudsters to widen their net for preying upon gullible clients. The print media, first being an expensive medium, and, secondly, applying filters to keep out dubious and spurious firms, used to be a credible medium for genuine companies. But social media, being a free-for-all medium, has allowed all sorts of characters to deceive the people. Its reach being wide, ponzi firms can reap the harvest in quick time. It is what happened with the Bengaluru fraudsters who by just doling out the first and second



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as "highly motivated people with special powers" and that services had been established to aid them, providing them with ease and comfort and avoiding complications even during peak times. Ahmed Al-Burqati, who is tasked with helping people at the Presidency said there were designated entrances to ease



access to prayer areas. Other provisions include a pen that

serves as a Qur'an reader, and help for holding and carrying Qur'ans for people unable to hold them. Copies of the Qur'an in Braille along with other religious booklets are available, as are on-site specialists to help pilgrims during prayer times and guide them through the mosque sites, he added. Other special services

at the holy mosques include: Wheelchairs transported in golf carts to prayer areas; designated entrances; sign language interpreters for those with hearing or speech impairments; canes for the blind and visually impaired; and electric wheelchairs to perform key religious rites such as Tawaf. ■

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Reserve Bank of India

Modi Govt Accessing Reserve Funds

Modi Government wants to access the reserved funds to provide more loans to the very same borrowers who were responsible for huge bad debts.

Shaktikanta Das is the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, which regulates the monetary policies of India. He has been appointed by the Narendra Modi Government in the seat vacated by Mr. Urjit Patel who resigned his job following differences with the Government. Das was very vocal during the demonetization days. He had said that the government would install CCTVs in the banks and would catch those who were found exchanging huge amounts of black money. He is an MA in History from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and had followed it up with an advanced Financial Management course from IIM-Bangalore.

The RBI is an autonomous body which need not follow the Government's directives. But there is a Section 7 under which the Government could advise it on certain measures.

The Reserve Bank of India is called 'Reserve' as it has certain amount of money which always lies in reserved category. Even during the most critical periods like wars with Pakistan and China, these reserves were not taken out. Even during

the prime ministership of Mr. Chandra Shekhar, this money was not touched even though the Government had to mortgage its gold reserves with the IMF. Now



New RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das;
Former Governor, Urjit Patel

the Government wants to use this money to pass it on to the banks to be extended as loans to industrialists who have defaulted on payment of their old debts. A deputy governor of RBI indicated this and warned against tampering with the reserves.

Already huge money has gone into bad debts and into building Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of the scheduled banks. Most of this money was given to the industrialists as loans and is not likely to come back. It has not been written off. The game now is to give further loans to the very same debtors who have proved defaulters. What it means in economic terms is that good

money is being deployed to change the bad money.

The NPAs of the nationalized banks stood at Rs. 3,23,464 crore. These were extended as loans to companies owned by Ambanis, Adanis, Ruia Brothers etc. The rationale being trotted out is that

in order to retrieve the bad debts, more loans are being given. It was at this point that the former Governor Urjit Patel and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley fell afoul of each other and Patel resigned and left.

Govt wants to apply section 7 of

the RBI rules in this regard. The NPAs now have gone up to Rs. 10,35,00,528 crore as on March 31 this year. The reserved funds with the RBI was Rs. 9,060 lakh crores. The Government wants the RBI to use about Rs. 3,600 crore to industrialists to prop up these defaulters. We need to think if the Government is on right track in doing this?

(source: Transcribed from Jan Gan Man ki Baat thewire.urdu)



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UAE Declares 2019 as Year of Tolerance

United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan recently declared 2019 as the Year of Tolerance. The leader said 2019 would highlight the UAE as a global capital for tolerance, instilling the values of co-existence and peace in local, regional and international communities. Sheikh Khalifa said that the Year of Tolerance will focus on five main pillars. The first will be to deepen the values of

tolerance and co-existence among cultures and peoples by concentrating on teaching the youth on the values of tolerance while the second seeks to solidify the UAE as the global capital for tolerance. The third factor will see the UAE enacting multiple cultural programmes and contributions to build tolerant communities



UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai.

while the fourth pillar will focus on legislative and policy-oriented objectives that contribute to mandating cultural and religious tolerance. The fifth pillar will focus on promoting tolerance and co-existence via targeted media initiatives and projects. Sheikh Khalifa added: "We look forward to further contributing towards building societies that believe

in the values of tolerance, cohesion and dialogue, and establishing concrete models improving tolerance and co-existence both regionally and internationally." Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, said: "We want government policies that further consolidate tolerance and a deep sense of community, and to spread these values among our youth and future generations. ■



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Saudi Female Employment in Private Sector Rises by 8.8 Percent

The number of Saudi female employees in the private sector covered by social security increased by 8.8% during this year. According to Saudi newspaper Aleqtissadiya's analysis, based on data from the General Statistics Authority in Saudi Arabia, the number of Saudi women in the



work force at the end of the second quarter of this year, increased to 593.4 thousand employees, accounting for 6.3% of employment in the private sector, with a work force of both sexes at 9.37 million. The number of female employees

increased by 48,000 to reach 593,400 at the end of the second quarter of 2018 compared to 545,400 employees, for the same quarter of last year, the report said. The Saudi Ministry of Labor has launched a series

of initiatives within the National Transition Program to address the high unemployment rate among Saudis. It also aims to reduce the unemployment rate from 12.3 per cent at the start of the program to 9 per cent by 2020 and to increase the proportion of Saudi women from the total Saudi workforce from 22 percent to 28 percent by 2020. ■



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Assembly Elections in Five States

Muslim Representation Goes Up

Rajasthan: The Muslim representation went up from two members to eight in the 200-member Rajasthan Assembly in the just concluded Assembly election. The previous house had two Muslim MLAs, both from the BJP. Of the eight, seven belong to the Congress, while the remaining one has won from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). Elections were held for 199 seats. The seven Muslim Congress MLAs are: Rafeek Khan from Adarshnagar, Hakam Ali Khan from Fatehpur, Kaman from Zahida Khan, Amin Kagzi from Kishan Pole, Shale Mohammad from Shale, Danish Abrar from Sawai Madhopur and Ameen Khan from Sheo. The lone BSP member Wajib Ali represents Nagar.

The BJP had fielded Yoonus Khan, a former minister in the state, against Sachin Pilot from Tonk. Pilot won by a margin of 54,179 votes.

It was for the first time that Pilot contested the Assembly elections in the state from where he had been an MP in the Lok Sabha. Of the 199 seats, the Congress won 99 seats. Of the 14 Muslims from the Congress in the fray, seven could make it to the winning post. Significantly, India's first Cow Welfare Minister from Rajasthan Otaram Devasi lost election to the Rajasthan Assembly from Sirohi. He was defeated by a margin of over ten thousand votes by independent candidate Sanyam Lodha.

Telangana: In Telangana, the

Muslim representation remained the same, i.e., eight, in the 119-member Assembly. Of these, seven belong to the Majlis-e Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) while Shakil Aamir Mohammed won on the ticket of Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS). The MIM had fielded eight candidates in what is considered a friendly contest with TRS. The seven winning MLAs are Md. Moazam Khan from Bahadurpura, Akbaruddin Owaisi from Chandrayangutta, Mumtaz Ahmed Khan from Charminar, Kausar Mohiuddin from Karwan, Ahmed bin Abdullah Balala from

A total of nineteen Muslim MLAs have been elected in four states, namely Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh. Elections were also held for Mizoram, a state where the Muslim population is almost nil. Of the 19, eight MLAs were elected for the Rajasthan and Telangana Assemblies each. In Madhya Pradesh, the number of Muslims elected has gone up from previous one to two this time. Here is a state-wise situation report:



Madhya Pradesh: Two Muslim MLAs were elected for the 230-member Madhya Pradesh

Assembly in the just-concluded election. It is after 33 years that the house has two Muslims in the state Assembly. Muslims constitute around 5% of the population in the state. The MLAs who won this time are Arif Aqueel from Bhopal North and Arif Masood from Bhopal Central,

both on Congress tickets. Since 1998, Arif Aqueel was the lone

Muslim face in the house.

In the 2018 Assembly elections, Aqueel defeated BJP's Fatima Rasool with a margin of 35,000 votes, while Masood won from Bhopal Madhya constituency by defeating BJP's Surendranath Singh with a margin of 15,000 votes.

There were a total of four Muslim candidates in the fray from the BJP and the Congress, two men and two women. Congress had given ticket to three Muslim leaders, including a woman, Masarrat Shahid, from Sironj seat who failed to win, while the BJP fielded only a single Muslim,

Fatima Rasool.

The Congress, having won 114 seats in the 230-member house, has formed the Government with support from Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Samajwadi Party (SP) who have won two and one seats respectively. The BJP which, ruled the state for three terms, could win 109 seats.

Chhattisgarh: The only Muslim who could reach the Chhattisgarh Assembly is Mohammed Akbar from Kawardha seat in Kabirdham district, who trounced his BJP rival Ashok Sahu of the BJP with a margin of over 59,000 votes, the largest in the state. Akbar received 136,320 votes. The Congress had fielded just two candidates, while BJP had none.

In the 90-member house, the Congress has captured 68 seats, while the BJP, which had ruled the state for three terms, could retain only 15 seats. The Janata Congress, the new party floated by Ajit Jogi, who split off Congress some time ago, bagged five seats. ■

One Muslim Minister each in Three States

Mohammed Akbar, the lone Muslim MLA in the newly elected Chhattisgarh Assembly has been appointed as a Minister in the Government headed by Mr. Bhupesh Baghel. Akbar won the election from Kanwardha seat registering the largest margin of victory in the State in the just concluded elections. In Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Arif Aqueel has been taken into the ministry by Chief Minister Kamalnath. He

is one among the two Muslims elected for the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly in the recently concluded elections. In Rajasthan, of the 15 ministers in the cabinet, only one, Mohammed Saleh has been taken into the ministry. Eight Muslim MLAs were elected for the 200-member Assembly. (Elections were held for 199 seats. In one of the seats, election was postponed due to the death

of a candidate), this time against two members in the previous Assembly. Saleh represents Pokharan Assembly seat.

Muslims constitute about 11% of the population in Rajasthan but their representation has always hovered around 10 or 11. The Muslim representation could have been more this time if Muslim votes would not have split between multiple Muslim

► Page 11

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UAE Federal National Council

Women to have 50% Representation

Abu Dhabi: As per the directives of President Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Emirati women's representation in the Federal National Council, FNC, will be increased to 50 per cent in the coming parliamentary term. The step reflects the country's future approach aimed at achieving empowerment of Emirati women and emphasises



their pioneering and effective role in all vital sectors of the UAE. The

directives of the President include doubling the current percentage of women's representation in the Federal National Council from 22.5 per cent to 50 per cent in the coming parliamentary term, and aims to rank the UAE in the top positions worldwide in terms of representation of women in parliament.

(Extracted from gulfnews.com)

Kosovo Women as Spiritual Teachers in Mosques

Pristina: (Kosovo): There's a widespread tradition among many Muslims that it's better for women to pray at home than in the mosque. But in Kosovo, an old Ottoman-era tradition is bucking that trend, with religious authorities seeking to establish the training of women as spiritual teachers in mosques. Each day, scores of women gather around Agime Sogojeva, a spiritual teacher known as a mualime, in the Haxhi Veseli mosque in Kosovo's northern town of Mitrovica. They discuss



the Quran, their rights as women and daily practices, in a scene unthinkable as little as a decade ago. Sogojeva is one of some 100 female theologians aiming to revive Muslim traditions in Europe's newest country. They teach at three Muslim high

schools, at Muslim centers, or they work voluntarily. In Kosovo, there has been a significant increase in the number of women attending mosques in the past 20 years, said Besa Ismaili, a 43-year-old professor of English at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Pristina. "The women were not only denied access, but their contribution was not recognized sufficiently," she said. "We try to break up those stereotypes, those misconceptions."

(Extracted from startribune.com)

Pope Francis to make Landmark Visit to UAE

Pope Francis will visit the UAE for the first time in what will be a landmark moment for interfaith relations and Catholics in the Gulf. The Vatican announced the visit to the country on February 3-5, 2019. The news follows an official invitation from the UAE that was delivered in person by Sheikh Abdullah

bin Zayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in June, and a visit to the Vatican in 2016 by Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. It is estimated, there are about one million Christians in the UAE or roughly 10 per cent

of the country's population. Many are Catholics from the Philippines, India and African nations though there are many Christian churches and religious denominations in the emirates. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, said the visit would "strengthen our ties and understanding of each other".

Germany Considering 'Mosque Tax' for Muslims

Berlin: The Germany government is considering to introduce "mosque tax" for German Muslims, in the lines of church taxes that German Christians pay. According to Die Welt daily, Thorsten Frei, a member of Chancellor

Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) said that a mosque tax was "an important step" that would allow "Islam in Germany to emancipate itself from foreign states." Practising Catholics and Protestants also pay church

taxes in Germany in order to fund church activities. The taxes collected by the state are then transferred to religious authorities. As per the official estimate, there are between 4.4 and 4.7 million Muslims living in Germany.

BJP is down, but still formidable; Congress victory not emphatic; Non-Hindi states opting for Regional Parties

Assembly Elections

The outcome of the Assembly elections for the five states has made it abundantly clear that the electorate is pining for a change. Though the BJP's appeal is on the decline, the Congress is not yet capable of filling the void. The BJP is certainly down, but very much a virile contender for power and fully competent of giving the Congress a run for its money. Here we present the scenario post-Assembly elections in the five states:

Telangana

Total seats 119

Telangana Rashtriya Samithi (TRS)	88
Indian National Congress (INC)	19
Majlis e Ittihadul Muslimeen (MIM)	07
BJP	01
Telugu Desam Party (TDP)	01
Others	02

Madhya Pradesh

Total seats: 230

Party Won in 2018 Won in 2013

Congress:	114	58
BJP:	109	165
BSP:	2	4
Others:	4	3

Rajasthan

Total Seats; 200

Elections held: 199

Party Won in 2018 Won in 2013

Congress:	99	21
BJP:	73	163
BSP:	6	3
Others:	20	13

Chhattisgarh

Total Seats; 90

Party Won in 2018 Won in 2013

Congress:	68	39
BJP:	15	49
BSP:	7	1
Others:	0	1

Mizoram

Total Seats: 40

Party Won in 2018 Won in 2013

MNF:	26	5
Congress:	5	34
BJP:	1	0
Others:	8	1

MNF = Mizo National Front

BJP's shrinking vote-share in Hindi Belt

State 2018 2013 Vote swing against BJP

Madhya Pradesh 41% 44.88% -3.88%

Chhattisgarh 33% 41% -8%

Rajasthan 38.8% 45.2% -6.40%

Declining Victory Margins

37 seats in three states of the Hindi heartland saw victory margin of less than 2,000 votes. In Madhya Pradesh 17 candidates won with a margin of less than 2,000 votes, in Rajasthan there

were 16 such narrow victories, while in Chhattisgarh, four candidates just about made it to the winning line.

Gwalior South Assembly seat recorded the narrowest victory margin in the Hindi belt states, where Congress candidate Praveen Pathak defeated incumbent Narayan Singh Kushwah of the BJP by just 121 votes.

In Mizoram, MNF candidate in Tuivawl won by only three votes. Nine candidates won by a margin of less than 500 votes.

Women MLAs Decline

There are just 62 women among

2014 performance cannot be taken for granted. In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP had garnered 62 of the 65 LS seats from the three Hindi states. It is

secured 5% votes) in Madhya Pradesh, the two parties together would have secured 143 seats in 230-member house.

In Telangana, the Congress-TDP alliance did not yield any dividends. Rather, the Congress bore the brunt of allying with a party which was opposed to the creation of the state.

In Mizoram, the Congress has lost out badly against its regional rival while the BJP does not seem to be in the reckoning at all in this northeastern state.

Significant Features: In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP received 47,817 more votes than the total votes polled by the Congress although the latter was able to win more

seats.

In Rajasthan, 27 members have won from parties other than Congress or the BJP. These include two from the Communist Party of India (CPI); the newly formed Rashtriya Lok Tantrik Party (RLTP) won three; and the BSP six. They together polled 18% votes.

Important losses:

Madhya Pradesh: 13 cabinet ministers lost; Rajasthan: 13 of the 19 ministers of the outgoing Vasundhara Raje govt lost; Chhattisgarh: six ministers of the outgoing Raman Singh govt lost;

NOTA-using voters:

Madhya Pradesh 5.42 lakh;

Crorepati MLAs

158 or 79% MLAs in Rajasthan are crorepatis. Jump from 73% in 2013.

106 or 89% MLAs in Telangana are crorepatis. Jump from 70% in 2013.

36 or 90% MLAs in Mizoram are crorepatis. Jump from 75% in 2013.

(Source: Association of Democratic Rights)

Day after A look at the final results tally and key developments in the five States

Rajasthan Seats: 199 ^a	Madhya Pradesh Seats: 230	Chhattisgarh Seats: 90																																													
<table> <tr><th>Party</th><th>Total</th><th>Vote%</th></tr> <tr><td>INC</td><td>99</td><td>39.3</td></tr> <tr><td>BJP</td><td>73</td><td>38.8</td></tr> <tr><td>BSP</td><td>6</td><td>4.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Others</td><td>21</td><td>17.9</td></tr> </table> <p>Congress Legislature Party passes a resolution authorising Rahul Gandhi to decide the Chief Minister</p>	Party	Total	Vote%	INC	99	39.3	BJP	73	38.8	BSP	6	4.0	Others	21	17.9	<table> <tr><th>Party</th><th>Total</th><th>Vote%</th></tr> <tr><td>INC</td><td>114</td><td>40.9</td></tr> <tr><td>BJP</td><td>109</td><td>41.0</td></tr> <tr><td>BSP</td><td>2</td><td>5.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Others</td><td>5</td><td>13.1</td></tr> </table> <p>Congress leaders meet the Governor to stake claim; leave it to high command to pick CM; The BSP pledges support</p>	Party	Total	Vote%	INC	114	40.9	BJP	109	41.0	BSP	2	5.0	Others	5	13.1	<table> <tr><th>Party</th><th>Total</th><th>Vote%</th></tr> <tr><td>INC</td><td>68</td><td>43.0</td></tr> <tr><td>BJP</td><td>15</td><td>33.0</td></tr> <tr><td>BSP</td><td>2</td><td>7.6</td></tr> <tr><td>Others</td><td>5</td><td>16.4</td></tr> </table> <p>Congress holds its legislature party meeting. The central leadership will take the final call</p>	Party	Total	Vote%	INC	68	43.0	BJP	15	33.0	BSP	2	7.6	Others	5	16.4
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^a Poll in one constituency, Ramgarh, has been adjourned

the 678 members of legislative assembly elected in the 2018 state elections, according to data compiled by the Association for Democratic Reforms and the Election Commission of India. They thus make up only 9% of the elected MLAs. In 2013, 77 women, 11% of the total MLAs elected in these states, were women.

Only in one state, Chhattisgarh, has there been an increase in the proportion of female MLAs, even though more female candidates contested elections across all five states than the last time.

Mizoram will continue to have zero female representation in its state Assembly. Women comprise 49% of the State's population of one million-plus people.

Key Takeaways

The first major pointer emerging out of the Assembly polls in the five states is that the BJP's hold on the Hindi states has been weakened and repetition of the

now on unsure ground.

In the two major states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the Congress has fallen short of majority. The BJP remains a major player in both key states of the Hindi belt. The defeat for the BJP, particularly in Rajasthan, has not been as bad as it was being projected. In terms of votes, the BJP has 0.1% more votes than the total secured by the Congress. The Congress has shown only signs of recovery. Its victory margin in narrow, and unless it sheds its arrogance in spurning alliances with smaller parties such as BSP, it may not achieve a comfortable victory in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

In Chhattisgarh, it has been a runaway victory for the Congress, where it has garnered two-thirds majority, despite there being an alliance between BSP and Ajit Jogi's Janata Congress, which together secured 11% votes.

Had there been an alliance of Congress with BSP (which

Page 9

One Muslim Minister ...

candidates in at least three constituencies. For instance, in Makrana, BJP's Roopa Ram won the seat against Congress' Jakir Hussain Gaiswal who despite garnering 85,713 votes was defeated by a slender margin of 1,488 votes by Roopa Ram. Two other Muslim candidates, namely Abdul Aziz of BSP and independent candidate Munawar Ali together polled over 2,200 votes. Similarly in Churu, the margin of defeat of Congress' Rafeeq Mandelia was only 1,850 against the BJP candidate. Rafeeq secured 85,383 votes. But

two other Muslim candidates, Asghar Khan and Saleem Gujar split the Muslim votes and took away more votes than Rafeeq's margin of defeat.

In Tijara, BSP's Sandeep Kumar won the seat against Aimamuddin Ahmad of the Congress who was defeated by over 4,000 votes. Another Muslim candidate, Fazal Hussain of the Samajwadi Party, took away over 22,000 votes. Tijara is part of the Muslim dominated Mewat region which straddles states of Haryana and Rajasthan. ■

Leprosy Patients in Kashmir

No End to Stigma for Descendants

By Auqib Javeed

In conflict-torn regions, people are often so busy protecting themselves that there is often no one to speak for the voiceless. It is no secret that leper patients have long been shunned by the society for no fault of theirs, but it isn't just the patients that have been pushed into isolation, their future generations too have had to bear the stigma associated with the disease.

patients have found acceptance in the society and continue to be shunned on a daily basis. "The biggest problem is that we are living in this colony which has been separated from the society since decades. Our grandparents were the patients and the government rehabilitated them here, they couldn't do anything for their children...the third generation still lives here in this colony along with them," says Shahid, a class 12 student

In the 1890s, due to the unavailability of permanent treatment, leprosy patients from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir were taken away from their family and friends and housed in a former Mughal fort in Bahrar area of Srinagar on the banks of Nigeen Lake by the British missionaries. Since then, it has come to be known commonly as the lepers' colony.

in an environment where people have been kept isolated and

interactions with people," Umair says.

Umair's school is situated in Lal Chowk in the heart of the city. Apart from his studies, he has started his own business online and is delivering his handmade products via courier to people. He says the government should start a special rehabilitation policy for the children of the leprosy patients.

According to Nasir Ahmad, an inhabitant, the colony houses 62 single-storied cemented white houses called residential quarters, 4 barracks-like mud structure designated as male and female wards, a double-storied hospital, a graveyard and a mosque.

Like Umair and Shahid, there are many young people who can't imagine making friends outside the colony. "We can't even think marrying outside this colony-which parent will be ready to send their daughters here or accept our daughter?" Umair questions. According

they visit mine. What would I have shown them?" she says.

A leper patient inside her house in the Colony (Photo: Abid Bhat) Shazia did her bachelors from Women's College, Srinagar followed by Masters in Commerce through distance education. She says life in the leper colony for a girl is the worst thing that can ever happen. When she was in college, she didn't reveal her identity to other girls fearing isolation and mockery. "I don't know how they would have reacted. Maybe they would have been accepting, but I wasn't brave enough to put that to test. We have had to always stay aloof," says Shazia. She is always worried about her future. "Even if I do get a good job, it would be very unlikely that I will ever find a suitable groom who will agree to take a leper family's daughter as his wife."

"A girl from our community got engaged outside the colony although they too were living outside the colony for quite a while as they were financially very sound. But even then, they couldn't get rid of the leper tag. When the parents of the boy came to know this, they called off the engagement," Shazia says adding that the girls of the colony live with this fear every day. "I don't know what will happen to us".

She too is of the view that the



A leper feeds his son in their room at the Leper colony in Srinagar. (Pics by Abid Bhat)



A leprosy patient stands in front of his room at the leprosy Colony in Srinagar

Shahid, 21 (name changed) feels that he and his neighbours are facing punishment for a 'crime' that they never committed. "Discrimination and isolation are synonyms to our miserable lives. The society refuses to acknowledge us just because we are the grandchildren of leprosy patients", Shahid says.

In the 1890s, due to the unavailability of permanent treatment, leprosy patients from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir were taken away from their family and friends and housed in a former Mughal fort in Bahrar area of Srinagar on the banks of Nigeen Lake by the British missionaries. Since then, it has come to be known commonly as the lepers' colony.

The Younger Generations

The colony, which in the beginning housed only people affected with leprosy – is now home to the children and grandchildren of the patients as well. Due to the stigma still associated with the disease, the younger generations have not found acceptance among the larger society.

Although the disease is now fully curable and has been proven to be non-contagious, leprosy is still considered as a curse and the myth that whoever touches a leper will catch the disease continues to find acceptance. This is probably why none of the future generations of the affected

“Shazia, a 24-year-old woman is preparing for an examination to get a job in a local bank. Like Umair and Shahid, she has a similar story to narrate. “When I was in college, I didn't make friends. I also never told them where I lived. I never went to their house because I feared that if I went, they would insist that they visit mine. What would I have shown them?” she says.”

at a Government school in the Srinagar city.

He says that the state government couldn't do enough for them to remove the "social stigma". He also blames the heads of society and religious scholars for not spreading enough awareness regarding the disease among the general masses. "We rarely make friends out of this colony, because we fear that if they come to know about our background, their first reaction would be to sever all ties with us", Shahid says. "Even if they will accept us despite our background, their parents who might not be as aware, might force them to cut us out of our lives. It has happened to me more than once that when I visited a friend's house, they kept a separate cup for me in the fear that anything I touch or sip from might be contaminated."

Spend Time Alone

Shahid prefers not to be social; he likes to keep to himself not because he is a child of a leper family, but because he has grown



The children of a leprosy patient look outside a window at the leprosy Colony



A couple having tea in their room at the Leper's Colony

have had no acceptance in the society. His friend, Umair (name changed) from the same colony says he too likes to stay away from the society and spend time alone.

"You can observe a similar behaviour in almost all the kids of the colony. They like to spend time alone because we have grown in that environment from childhood. I was also like them but ever since I started school, I have become more open in my

to them, this stigma will not leave people's mind unless the Government rehabilitates them somewhere else.

Shazia, a 24-year-old woman is preparing for an examination to get a job in a local bank. Like Umair and Shahid, she has a similar story to narrate. "When I was in college, I didn't make friends. I also never told them where I lived. I never went to their house because I feared that if I went, they would insist that

state government should shift them to other locations and they should take the necessary steps so that they too will be able to mingle with the society. Shazia says the disease here has reached near elimination stage. It is no longer a threat. "Why should the third generation of lepers be kept in an isolated colony and purposely made to bear the stigma associated with it?" questions Shazia.

(twocircles.net)

Islamic World Squandering its Assets

By Dr. M. S. Riyazulla

Stephen Hawking, the English theoretical physicist, cosmologist and author who passed away in March 2018, could be compared with geniuses like Galileo and Newton. A few years ago he had prophesied that within fifty years, man should start vacating the earth. What did he mean by it and what prompted him to presage such an unusual thing? Since then, it has impelled the advanced countries to ponder over and start acting upon it. But the prevailing conditions indicate that the Islamic countries have not fully comprehended the profundity of his prognosis.

Stephen Hawking wanted to underscore the point that whatever natural resources like fossil fuels and minerals were available on the earth and were sustaining life would deplete in another fifty years, making life untenable. His prediction has also been corroborated by many leading geoscientists.

Fossil Fuels

According to Stephen Hawking's research, the whole universe dates back to about ten billion years and the Milky Way galaxy, in which the planet Earth is located, came into existence about five billion years ago. King Hubert and other geoscientists opine that the fossil

fuels found in the bowels of the Earth formed about 100 to 500 million years ago. Man has been making use of these resources only for a few centuries. However, their use increased as civilization advanced, especially during the past 200 years.

According to a study, the world

is consuming about 11 billion barrels of oil a year. If oil is continued to be consumed at this

“ **The earth's resources are not infinite. Fossil fuels will run out in the next 60 years.** ”

rate, there is a strong possibility that all the oil wells will exhaust soon. Statistics predict that the available oil wells will exhaust in 53 years, gas within 54 years and coal mines in another 110 years. Another scientific analysis has even revealed that oil will exhaust by 2050, gas by 2060 and coal by 2088. These revelations have

The Islamic countries are engaged in internecine feuds and sectarian wars, instead of addressing urgent needs of additional resources.

compelled many world powers to start hunting for new deposits of these resources. But even then, new deposits may not suffice

mines of gold, silver, diamond, iron, copper and other metals are predicted to deplete in another fifty years.

human wants if we consider the growing industrialization and population.

Moon and Mercury

In this scenario, one can argue that there are also other sources of renewable energy that could be tapped from the sun and wind etc. But it would be too late by the time the means to exploit their full potential are accomplished. Apart from fossil fuels, there is another looming threat: available

After the depletion of these resources, life would not be sustainable. Hence, instead of relying on the depleting resources of the earth, most of the major countries have started to venture into other celestial bodies, like the Moon and Mercury, as a sustainable alternative for the Earth. The scientists have positively predicted that many valuable minerals are available in the crust of the Moon and hence efforts are on to source these metals from there, apart from finding out the possibility of settling man there.

In view of the above, it is a matter of distress that the rulers of Islamic countries have either not fully comprehended Stephen Hawking's warning or are trying to ignore it. As it appears, they are fully engrossed in bloodshed for land and supremacy of their petty interests and have been squandering all their material wealth in procuring the armaments worth billions of dollars. If wealthy countries

like the US, Russia and China are thinking of colonizing the Moon, they are likely to be the prime beneficiaries of whatever it has to offer. No wonder if they establish their monopoly over these resources. It is high time that Muslim countries and other nations saddled with huge populations and deficient resources direct their attention and energies towards space science and exploring at least the Moon, if not the distant Mars or Jupiter. There are many notable space scientists in Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Malaysia and some of them are working in space centres of America and Russia. They would need to shed their mutual fratricidal hostilities and petty sectarian wars. Islamic countries should jointly establish and fund a space centre in some advanced Islamic country and at least in next ten years they should be able to send an astronaut to the Moon. Apart from the Moon, they should also venture into other cosmic bodies and start searching for their future beyond the frontiers of space.

Anyway, it is a fact that if not in fifty years, in another hundred years all the available natural resources may vanish from the earth. The end of the 'Golden Oil Age' on the earth has commenced. Poet-philosopher Dr. Mohammed Iqbal had prophetically told Muslims: 'Sitaraon sey agay jahan aur bhi hain' ('There are worlds beyond the constellation of stars'). Let the Islamic countries ponder seriously about this and think of securing the future of the future generations.

(The author is a retired geologist and holds a doctorate in Geology. He can be contacted on cell: 90666-85460. Email: syedaafakh10@gmail.com)

« Page 4 Ponzi Firms ...

has been mixed. He invested Rs. one lakh in Ambidant in October 2017 and recovered Rs. 72,000 through 'dividends'. Similarly, his investment of Rs. 10 lakh in Aala Ventures, returned him Rs. 6 lakh in the first three months. But Morgenall Cooperative Society has all but disappeared with Rs. 3 lakh that he invested in September 2017. Police is on the lookout of Director-couple Irfan Pasha and Makhdoom Fathima, who are alleged to have fled to Qatar, a Gulf nation which currently offers visa on arrival.

Sharifa Suleman (named changed) invested Rs. one lakh in Ambidant in January 2018, but has not heard anything from the firm thereafter. Similar is the plight of Raheema Khanum, 45 (named changed) who invested Rs. 12 lakh for herself and in the name of her two children in November 2017. She has been visiting the firm only to find the shutters down. However, her investment of Rs. 4 lakh in Ajmera yielded her a return of Rs. 1.45 lakh in the first two months.

All that she came to know later is that the company directors had been arrested.

Mounting Arrears

Morgenall even started a school, namely Arafah School, hiring the premises of Rifaa Home for Girl Child in Hennur Road. The school has not been paying rent for the premises for the last several months. Rifaa's hony secretary Sofiya Begum has been running from pillar to post to get the arrears cleared which have surpassed the advance from the school management. The school is into its third year.

It is indeed sad that Bengaluru has emerged as the fraudsters' capital in recent years. Most of such firms, societies and banks were run by Muslims. Years ago Bangalore Mercantile Cooperative Bank disappeared with money of shareholders and depositors. Thereafter, Amanath Cooperative Bank suffered with sanction from the Reserve Bank of India for having

expanded its NPAs limitlessly. Transactions at the bank were placed under a moratorium. It is now only a pale shadow of its former self. Al-Ameen Islamic Financial Investment Corporation disappeared without a trace of its existence. Barkat Investment on Queen's Road cheated hundreds of its investors and depositors. The investment companies have all but vanished from the scene, having defrauded several thousands of Muslims.

It is time for serious soul-searching for the Bengaluru Muslims as to why they are recurrently bitten from the same hole. 'Halal' and 'Interest-free' have become the buzzword to cheat people of hard-earned money. The sentimental appeal of the terms deludes an average devout Muslims, who is equipped with little financial literacy to gauge the market, scrutinize promises and find out for themselves if businesses could yield what is being promised. It is time some NGOs inject some realism into the narratives that are common among Muslims. ■

Job Fair in Mumbai

The Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP) in association with the World Memon Organisation (WMO) and Mudassir Patel Foundation organised a Mega Job Fair in Mumbai on 8th Dec, 2018. The

The Job Fair was conducted at Alma Latifi Hall, Saboo Siddik College of Engineering, Byculla, Mumbai, to help unemployed youth to get placed in reputed mainstream corporates and to provide opportunities to the

the day, around 410 candidates were given on-the-spot offers by the recruiters, while 850 were shortlisted for the next round of selection. The event was a result of dedication and hard work of AMP Team Members



District Skill Development, Employment & Entrepreneurship (DSDE&E), Mumbai, which is part of Government of Maharashtra and Teamlease, a Recruitment Consultancy were the co-organisers of the Job Fair.

needly without any discrimination of caste and creed. Over 80 corporates from across various industries had participated in this Job Fair with a massive turnout of more than 2800 candidates. At the end of

under the guidance of Soheb Selia, General Secretary-AMP, Javed Sayed, Finance Secretary-AMP and Iftexhar Shaikh, Head-AMP Employment Cell, under which the Job Fair Project is run. (Taken from twocircles.net)

Asia-Pacific Leadership Summit

Kathmandu: Religious leaders and social organizations must address global current challenges,

Lokesh Muni from New Delhi said that "religious and social organisations have significant contribution in addressing the current global challenges."



About 1,500 participants from 45 countries participated in the November 30-December 3, 2018 summit. In the Indian context, Lokesh Muni said, "I would like to mention that 80

and have budget for peace initiatives, a Jain religious leader told the Asia-Pacific Leadership Summit held in Kathmandu. Ambassador of Peace, Acharya

percent of the population believe in some faith or the other. Any faith when understood in its real sense presents many solutions to human problems. Religion has

always established civilizations.' Religious organisations teach people how to live a balanced life', he added saying, "They are also open to hearing people's problems as they work for individual, family, community, national and international levels." Founder of Peace Education, Lokesh Muni insists that "Value based education should be part of our education system for peaceful society." The Asia-Pacific Leadership Summit 2018, was organised by the South Korea-based Universal Peace Federation and supported by the Nepal Government. (Extracted from mattersindia.com)

'Allow Journalists to Function Freely': Press Institute Director

Guwahati: Journalism is a service to society and the nation and only those with passion and right attributes should join it, says Sashi Nair, director of the Press Institute of India and Editor of its journals, Vidura and Grassroots. "Anyone wanting to make money should not be in the profession. Only those who have the flair, the passion and the right attributes should enter, for only such people can take on the challenges and survive in the long run," Nair asserted on November 16, 2018, while addressing the 'Meet the Press' program of Guwahati Press Club. While stressing the watchdog role of Press Council of India to ensure ethics and quality in news presentation, Nair agreed that the council's ambit could be expanded to include electronic and online or social media as well because print and digital were two parts of one whole entity. "India still remains a country of newspapers.

Most Indians continue to trust newspapers as conveyors of factual information," Nair said, pointing out that the circulation



of newspapers in India was healthy compared to downward trends in other parts of the world and that this was a good sign. He agreed that it was in rural India where the newspaper reading habit flourished and where people were often seen gathered around one newspaper and sharing information.

(Extracted from mattersindia.com)

National Bioscience Award for Md. Ashraf

Prof. Mohammad Zahid Ashraf of the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, has been honoured with National Bio-science Award 2018, as recognition of his research excellence. This award instituted by the Dept. of Biotechnology of the Government of India recognizes research and development work carried out in India during the last five years of the career. The award is given to an Indian bio-scientist of less than 45 years of age, who has made unique contributions towards the development of state of the art in basic and applied areas of biological sciences. The award carries a citation, a plaque, a cash prize of Rs. three lakh and a research support grant of Rs. 15 lakh for three years. It is considered as one of the highest Indian science awards and as equivalent to the Shanti

Swarup Bhatnagar Prize given by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research of India.

Dr. Ashraf is currently a Professor in the Department of Biotechnology at Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Jamia. Prior to this, he was Head of the Genomics Division at Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences (DIPAS), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Delhi.

Dr. Ashraf is pioneer in the field of high altitude thrombosis and has done novel work in resolving the mystery of blood clotting on exposure to hypoxia at high altitudes in Soldiers posted at extreme altitudes including Siachen Glacier. Dr. Ashraf has been elected as Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences.



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MONUMENTAL MEMORIALS

B.M. Suhara World from a Writer's Plane

"I do not mix writing with my life," novelist B.M. Suhara said at the fourth 'My Writing, My Life' programme organised by the Calicut Public Library to facilitate interaction of the public with Malayalam writers recently. "Life is enclosed by physical spaces, family and human relationships, but writing is my door to an outside world," she said.



Born in a conservative Muslim household at Thikkodi in Kozhikode district, Suhara's family was a bit too restrictive, but she read a lot and grew up adoring writers. "It was my dream to do something with my life, but when the dream took the form of words, my mother was scared," said Suhara. Marriage to literary critic, M.M. Basheer, while pursuing her graduation took her to Thiruvananthapuram and out of her rural confines, but the trepidation of stepping into the public sphere, ensured she would not take up a job. Motherhood followed, and the next years of her life was occupied in raising her children.

"My husband had a good collection of books and I read world classics and novels translated from other Indian languages," Suhara said. "When my children grew up and went pursuing their dreams, a vacuum crept in and I could no more ignore the urge to write."

Suhara began work on her first novel, Kinavu, but the process took five years. "I constantly wrote, rewrote and reworded to

give final shape to the novel." But a crisis of confidence emerged until her husband convinced her that the work could not be left unpublished. Like several writers, the transition from the first to second novel was difficult for Suhara too and she decided her store of writing ideas had run dry. Dr. Basheer stepped in again and to provoke or inspire her said, "anybody can write one novel," Vanitha had then approached her to write a serialized novel and thus Mozhi was born.

Suhara's most noted work, Aakashabhoomikalude Thakkol was her critique of polygamy in the Muslim community. The novel dealt with the lives of three Muslim women from different economic classes in society, married to the same man. Nizhal, her fourth novel was an attempt to step outside the realm of familiar surroundings. Delving into the writing effort, Suhara said, "Nowadays I feel that without writing, I cannot have a life ahead. The belief that I have more works to offer, fuels my journey ahead."

(By Jiby Kattakayam)
(Taken from www.thehindu.com)

Mariam Rauf Choosing to Shed Victimhood

Mariam Rauf urges schools to include personal safety education in syllabus.

As an impressionable child, Mariam Rauf, a 22-year-old life skills and English language educator from Kottayam, never knew what paedophilia was. It took her many more years to realise



that she herself had been one of its victims. Abused on multiple occasions between the age of 3 and 14, the ordeals surely left an imprint on her. Confused, ashamed, and lost for years on end, she eventually managed to pull herself up and is now busy training children and adults about personal safety. Driven by her own experiences of abuse as a child, Mariam has now kick-started a campaign to include personal safety education in schools. She feels this is achievable as there is a strong intent on the part of the government to clamp down on child abuse. It is unlikely to affect academics either as it may need only a couple of sessions in a year.

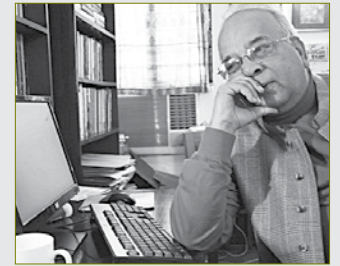
Online Petition

As part of the initiative, she has also chosen to shed her right to anonymity and launched an online petition on Change.org, which opens up on her ordeal and makes an appeal to the State government to introduce compulsory training in Personal Safety Education (PSE) for students, parents, teachers, and staff of all government schools. The petition is addressed to Education Minister C. Ravindranath and the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KESCPCR). "About 38,200 people, who have endorsed my petition thus far, believe it is possible. By realising it, I can save at least one child from undergoing what I had to face," she says. According to Mariam, personal safety education for children is about making them aware of their body and empowering them to express their discomfort in case of physical transgressions. "For most of us, personal safety of our children is limited to the 'Stranger-Danger'

OBITUARY

Mushirul Hasan

Renowned historian Mushirul Hasan, a former Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, died recently. He was 71. He was also a former Director General of the National Archives of India. He served as Pro Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia between 1992 and 1996 and headed the institution between 2004 and 2009.



equation, while the actual threat can come from even inside the family. All people can do their part by recognising the physical and emotional signs shown by a child who is being abused and the signs that an adult is abusing a child," she said.

(http://www.thehindu.com (By U. Hiran, Kottayam))

Sufyan Malik Young Kashmiri plays the rabab back into the limelight.

Srinagar: Sufyan Malik's 45-second video finds receptive new audiences for the fading soul of the region's folk music.



A 19-year-old Srinagar boy, enabled by social media platforms, is infusing new life into what

is considered the soul of Kashmir's folk music — the rabab, a long-necked lute. Sufyan Malik's 45-second video, shot on a mobile phone against the backdrop of the heavy snowfall witnessed on November 3, has stormed the internet, with over 4 lakh views and counting. "I came for a short vacation to Kashmir. As my parents left home in the morning, my friend and I decided to shoot the video with snowfall as the backdrop. Initially, I played it for my friends in Pune, to show them snow. To my surprise, the tune of a local song, 'Janaat-e-Kashmir', on the rabab, became an instant rage on Internet," Malik, a student of engineering at Pune's MIT College, told The Hindu. Malik shot the video 18 times because his hands and fingers turned cold in the cold weather. "There was no electricity to warm my hands. I had to match the speed. It was hard to play three beats down and one beat up. Finally, we did it," said Malik, a resident of Srinagar's Nowshera area.

The effort paid off as the video attracted 1.54 lakh views on Twitter in just a couple of days,

with more views on Facebook and Instagram in the weeks that followed. "Snow and the rabab probably reflect our identity. People felt an immediate connection. I have pledged to play the rabab all my life. I will do my Masters in composition to enable the survival of the rabab," said Malik, son of a doctor mother and a hotelier, Wahid Malik, who support their son's efforts. Seen in many variants across central Asia, the rabab arrived in Kashmir from Afghanistan many centuries ago. "Compared to the seven strings of the Afghan rabab, the Kashmiri version has 22 strings, with two strings crafted out of goat gut through an elaborate process. It's these two strings that create its mesmerising echo," Malik said.

Extracted from http://www.thehindu.com (By Peerzada Ashiq, Srinagar)

Zahida Khan The Meo-Muslim Woman, who bagged the maximum votes.

By Shabina Akhtar

Zahida Khan, Congress MLA from Kaman

Jaipur: Zahida Khan, a Meo-Muslim looks all set to create a record, if she manages to bag a ministerial post in the



Ashok Gehlot led Congress government of Rajasthan.

In 2008, when she contested the first time assembly polls from Kaman

constituency, she won to become the first woman MLA from the Meo-Muslim community. Zahida was elevated to the position of Chief Parliament Secretary. She also happens to be the first woman from the community to be appointed as the General Secretary of All India Mahila Congress. Given the popularity that Zahida enjoys in the area, it was but obvious that she would be

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Alina Anisimova

Muslim Student in BBC's 100 Women



Alina Anisimova, the 19-year-old Muslim student, is included on the list of 100 most influential and inspiring females of the world. And, the reason behind her inclusion in the coveted list is her dream project to train and send young girls from Kyrgyzstan to space. Alina Anisimova is a student programmer. Alina leads the Kyrgyz Girls' Space School, which aims to send the country's first satellite into space, BBC wrote about Alina.

Alina is one of over two dozen Muslims from equal number of Muslim and non-Muslim states who figured in "100 Women" published by BBC every year. "BBC 100 Women names 100 influential and inspirational women around the world every year and shares their stories", it said. Ranging in age from 15 to 94, and from more than 60 countries, the BBC 100 Women

2018 list includes leaders, trailblazers and everyday heroes. Alina of Kyrgyzstan is one of them. Women make up less than 10 percent of Kyrgyzstan's science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), and construction and manufacturing graduates, according to the U.N. Development Programme. "Some girls don't have courage to pursue such studies because it's not very common in our country, and the majority of parents discourage their daughters from pursuing this," Alina Anisimova, who is leading the Kyrgyzstan's satellite project, said.

(www.ummid.com)

Page 15 **People & Tidbits ...**

winning with a huge margin. And she did, defeat her BJP opponent by a huge margin of 39,621 votes. Interestingly, Zahida, popularly dubbed as the daughter of Mewat, has secured the maximum number of votes – 1,10,789, which is way higher than the total votes that what seasoned politicians like Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot have got.

A law graduate from Delhi University, Zahida while speaking to eNewsroom, said, “We have always believed that education can bring about a big change in the community. Hence, my focus, like my earlier stint will be on the promotion of women’s education.” On being asked about what kind of work she and her daughter, Shahnaz Khan, who is

also the sarpanch of their village do for the welfare of women, she reiterated, “We have always maintained that educating women is the only way to empower them. Through education only, they will be able to exercise their right. Hence, we will be focusing on education of the girl child.” She then added, “Water remains to be a major issue in this part of the state. We still don’t have access to soft water. Around 200 villages in this area still have to survive on hard water. Given our proximity to river Chambal, I will be focusing on the renewal of the Chambal Pariyojna or the Chambal Project, so that the water of the river reaches the villages.”

Mehtab Hussain Bareilly’s ‘Bolt’ sprints past odds, but official apathy still a hurdle.

Bareilly (UP): Deaf and mute by birth, Mehtab Hussain, in his 30s, is an athlete of international repute and has won a number of national and international tournaments, including Asia Pacific Deaf Games. Mehtab Hussain, a daily wageer at a meat factory in Bareilly, is locally famous as ‘Bolt’— the last name of Jamaican sprinter and nine-time Olympic gold medallist

Usain Bolt – for his athletic prowess.

However, his sporting talent and achievements have failed to fetch him a job and the fame he deserves, thanks to official apathy. Despite overcoming his physical disability, financial constraints have forced him to work at a local meat factory to support his family in Chak Mehmood area of Bareilly.

Gritty to the core, Hussain still wakes up at 4am and runs at least 10km a day to keep himself fit as he never knows when his financial condition permits him to participate in sporting events. Hussain’s mother Ashraf Jahan says, “As my daughter was already suffering from hearing and speech impairment, we did not take long to understand that Hussain was also suffering from the same problem. He was only three then.” “His behaviour was very much like his sister. He hardly responded to any sound,” she recalls. Hussain is the youngest among three brothers and a sister. Soon after Hussain’s birth, his father Latafat Hussain, a teacher at a primary school, passed away.

However, Ashraf Jahan didn’t lose hope and got Hussain admitted to a school for differently-abled students in Bareilly where he showed much interest in athletics. “During his school days, he

never hired a rickshaw or public transport to reach his school which was 7 kms away. He always preferred to go by foot. Once he bought me a present from the money I gave him for conveyance,” she recalls. After winning innumerable interschool athletic championships, he participated in state-level championship in Faizabad and stood first. “I couldn’t believe that I had overpowered all the other athletes there,” says Hussain, using sign language. Winning the championship fetched him entry to the national-level championship and he became a member of the All-India Sports Council for Deaf (AISCD), the apex body for sports for the deaf. “I participated in national level athletic meet in West Bengal in 1995 and won the 400-metre relay. I was on cloud nine. This was what I wanted,” says Hussain. The period from 1995-2000 proved to be the golden one for Hussain as during this time, he participated in about 22 State and 19 national athletic meets. In 2000, he was informed by AISCD that he has been selected in the 6th Asia Pacific for Deaf, to be held in Taiwan.

“I had to sell a piece of land for Rs 50,000 to bear the expenses. Representatives of the council assured us that the money we spent would be reimbursed, but

they did not keep their word,” Ashraf Jahan says.

Hussain, who was the only player from the state to participate in the event, bagged third position in the 5000-metre race. Later, Hussain received several calls from the council informing him about his entry in several international championships but his financial condition did not permit him. Showing letters from the council, Hussain says he got calls from Australia, Italy, Kuwait, Canada and Turkey, but could not go there for want of money. In the hope of playing for his state and country again, Hussain still continues to practice daily before leaving for his 12-hour shift in the meat factory.

(source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com>)

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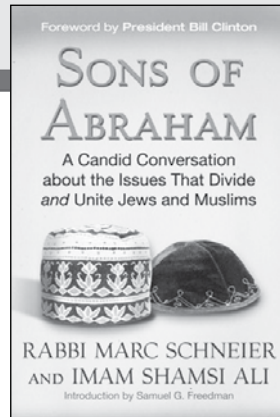
Overcoming Mutual Mistrust

Sons of Abraham: A Candid Conversation about the Issues That Divide and Unite Jews and Muslims

By Rabbi Marc Schneier and Imam Shamsi Ali

Beacon Press, Boston

220 Pages



This book is a collaborative venture between two friends, both based in New York, a Jewish rabbi and a Muslim imam. The duo are deeply engaged in together trying to promote understanding, reconciliation, peace and solidarity between Jews and Muslims.

Rabbi Marc Schneier served with the World Jewish Congress and is founder and president of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding. Brought up in Indonesia, Imam Shamsi is the spiritual leader of the Jamaica Muslim Center, New York City's largest Islamic centre. Both men grew up with deep prejudices about each other's community. In this fascinating book we learn how they overcame their mutual mistrust and, developing a close personal friendship, began to work to jointly promote Jewish-Muslim dialogue, friendship, cooperation and solidarity.

The rabbi and the imam reflect on a wide range of issues pertinent to contemporary Jewish-Muslim relations. We learn about the numerous similarities between Judaism and

Islam (thus justifying the title of the book—Muslims and Jews, along with Christians, having a common spiritual ancestor in Abraham, a prophet of ethical monotheism). These similarities include belief in the one God and



love and care for God's creatures going beyond boundaries of community and religion. The common or overlapping spiritual heritage of Jews and Muslims

can thus serve as a firm basis for cooperation between Muslims and Jews. So, too, can the legacy of certain Jewish and Muslim figures down the centuries who exemplified Jewish-Muslim collaboration, some of whom the book highlights.

While the authors recognise some of the things their faiths have in common, they also refer to aspects in their respective religious traditions that radicals have misused to foment violent conflict between their communities, these being at the root of the Israel-Palestine issue today. The authors reflect on alternative ways of interpreting their traditions so that they

Reviewed
By
A Staff Writer

can be understood instead as a means for promoting inter-community harmony, including between Jews and Muslims. Given that the way communities perceive the 'other' is a core issue in inter-community relations, the efforts of the two friends in seeking to promote more accepting, respectful and inclusive understandings of each other's faiths and their adherents from within their own religious tradition is a major contribution that they make.

Along with this, the rabbi and the imam share their views of

The authors reflect on alternative ways of interpreting their traditions so that they can be understood as a means for promoting inter-community harmony, including between Jews and Muslims.

how Palestinians and Israelis can peacefully coexist and thus

the imam do not agree on every subject. Yet, the two friends do have much common ground, not least being their commitment to promoting understanding and peace between Muslims and Jews. As they share their stories, narrate their views about relations between their communities and refer to some of the work they have been engaged in to promote Jewish-Muslim cooperation these two men beautifully illustrate the importance of interfaith personal friendships. Their life-stories brilliantly illustrate how such friendships can help overcome

“ The rabbi and the imam share their views of how Palestinians and Israelis can peacefully coexist and thus resolve the decades'-old issue of the political status of a land that is considered religiously significant by millions of people. ”

resolve the decades'-old issue of the political status of a land that is considered religiously significant by millions of people.

Religious Differences

As can be expected, the rabbi and

deeply-rooted prejudices between members of different religious communities and enable them to work together for the common good, each inspired by faith in and commitment to the one God of us all. ■

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Oral Presentation Award for Dr. Shahab Ahmad, Assistant Professor at Centre for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, Jamia Millia Islamia has been awarded



with the 'Oral Presentation Award' at the International Winter School 2018 on Frontiers in Materials Science held during December 3-7, 2018 at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore-India. The International Winter School was organised by Prof. C. N. R. Rao (Bharat Ratna) and Prof. A. K. Cheetam (University

of California, U.S). More than 120 researchers from all over the world had participated in the International Winter School, out of which only two researchers were awarded prize for the oral presentations.

Dr. Shahab Ahmad received the award from Bharat Ratna Prof. C. N. R. Rao. Dr. Shahab holds PhD in Physics from IIT Delhi. Before joining JMI in 2017, he had worked as a Post-Doctorate Research Associate (Scientist) at the University of Cambridge, UK for three years.

Nihal Ahmed is new SIO President in Karnataka:

Nihal Ahmed Kudiur from Udupi district has been elected the President of the Students Islamic Organisation, Karnataka zone. Nihal possesses a BE degree from Manipal Institute of Technology and a PG degree

from SDM College, Mysuru. He has also acquired an MBA degree in Marketing operations. He will hold office for two years (2018-2020). Dr. Naseem Ahmed is the new general secretary while Zeeshan Aqueel Siddiqui from Manavi, Raichur district is campus secretary.

Raheem Khan is the new Minister in Karnataka

Raheem Khan, Congress MLA from Bidar is the new Muslim minister in the Karnataka cabinet. He was sworn in on December 22, 2018, along with seven other new ministers. Khan is the third time MLA from Bidar and has been running a few professional educational institutions in the northernmost



town of the State. Aged around 49, Khan became the choice as there was no one representing the Muslim community from northern Karnataka. The expansion of the Kumaraswami-led Congress-Janata Dal Secular coalition came after protracted negotiations between the two

allies tied in an uncomfortable relationship in the State for the last seven months. The signs of stress have been evident in the coalition which came into existence only to keep away the BJP which had emerged the largest party in the 224-member Assembly in elections held in May last. ■

OBITUARY

Maulana Asrarul Haq Qasimi

Kishenganj (Bihar): Maulana Asrarul Haq Qasimi, Member of Lok Sabha from Kishenganj and leading educational activist, died after a cardiac arrest on December 7. He was 76.

He was twice elected MP from Kishenganj in eastern Bihar on the ticket of the Indian National Congress. He was one of the two Islamic scholars elected to the Lok Sabha, the other being Maulana Badruddin Ajmal from Assam. Maulana Asrarul Haq put a consistent struggle to set up the Aligarh Muslim University centre in Kishenganj, an educationally backward region in Bihar. He held the post of general secretary of the Jamiatul Ulema Hind. He was also executive member of the Darul Uloom Deoband. He has left behind three sons and two daughters.

By Mesha

The other day, I was waiting to get a vehicle to go to 'my' place of worship when an autorickshaw came my way. The driver wore a telltale Muslim-style cap.

I told the driver the name of the locality where I wanted to go. He asked for more details and I mentioned the name of 'my' place of worship. At this he cheerfully responded, "Then I just cannot say no to you!"—or something to that effect.

I was pleasantly surprised. The man's enthusiastic response touched me. I was moved by his respect for a faith tradition other than his. Such things aren't very common in a world that's increasingly polarised in the name of religion.

An Inexplicable Bonding

I climbed into the autorickshaw and we headed off. In just a short while we were chatting like long-lost friends! You know how it is with some people: you've never met them before but almost immediately you feel an inexplicable bonding with them. That was how I felt with Aslam Khan. His respect for 'my' religious tradition and place of worship had worked a miracle! Soon, I had learnt many details of his life, including about his childhood, several things about his family and also something of what seemed to be his impressive knowledge of different religions

and his desire for harmonious inter-community coexistence. He insisted he wasn't much educated, but clearly he was wise. The way he spoke indicated a positive attitude towards life's challenges. What made him even more endearing were his good manners and the cheerfulness and warmth that he exuded.

In the course of our conversation, Aslam Khan mentioned to me about his daughter who he said was studying to become, if I remember correctly, a software engineer. He had dreams for this

Kindness

The Way to Harmony

Aslam Khan's act of kindness in enthusiastically agreeing to take me in his autorickshaw made me respond by doing another good deed.

important lessons. But I'll confine myself here only to some of the things that I can learn from this experience with regard to the ethics of interfaith or inter-community relations, which is an issue of global importance today.

◆ If you relate to someone from a different faith tradition with respect for him and his

“ If you relate to someone from a different faith tradition with respect for him and his faith, you are very likely to earn his appreciation. This is precisely what endeared me to Aslam Khan. ”

child which he was working hard to fulfil.

I thought of my friend Venku, one of whose major passions in life is to help people in need, including through things like scholarships for students. Perhaps he could help out here? I called him up and told him about Aslam Khan and his daughter. I got Aslam Khan to speak to him too. When I later met Venku, he told me that he might be able to do something to help Aslam Khan's daughter with her studies.

When we reached 'my' place of worship I was glad to give Aslam Khan a sizeable tip as we departed. He really deserved it! If I reflect on this brief incident I guess I could draw many

faith, you are very likely to earn his appreciation. This is precisely what endeared me to Aslam Khan.

Genuine Respect and Love

From this it follows that genuine respect and love—understood here as concern and care for another—is the only way to win hearts and melt barriers, including between people who follow, or claim to follow, different religious traditions.

◆ Interfaith harmony comes from interfaith kindness. That means that no amount of theological discussion and preachy sermonising—which is often what happens in often heavily-funded

interfaith meetings—can take the place of simple random acts of kindness between people from different faith backgrounds in helping them overcome



deeply-rooted prejudices, recognise their common humanity and bond together despite their religious differences.

◆ Sometimes, one can learn much more about the ethics of interfaith living from a single spontaneous act of kindness of someone like a simple 'semi-educated'

autorickshaw driver than from an academic religious discourse by a learned theologian or a professor of religion.

◆ A single act of kindness can have a multiplier effect and can become the basis for friendships and solidarity across and beyond faith boundaries, a sure means for building inter-community harmony.

Aslam Khan's act of kindness in enthusiastically agreeing to take me in his autorickshaw made me respond by doing another good deed—contacting Venku to help with Aslam Khan's daughter's education. Hopefully, Venku will do what he can in this regard—which would make it three good deeds, all little acts of 'interfaith kindness'!

Our respective acts of kindness have brought three people from three different community backgrounds together based on a common concern to go beyond ourselves and be of service to others despite our diverse religious beliefs. One can hardly think of a better way for one's own spiritual growth as well as for building interfaith and inter-community harmony! ■

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By Joshua Jasvir

Many of us accumulate things in our homes that we don't need or no longer use or want to keep. And so, every now and then,



we set about disposing of them off—donating them to a home-help, a 'beggar' or a charitable

organisation. We give away a faded T-shirt or a pair of trousers that we no longer like, an artifact that we got for our birthday that we think is ugly, a TV set that we decide is now 'just too outdated', a table or chair we think is occupying too much space in our sitting room or books that we won't ever read, and in doing so, we feel very happy that

But how difficult it is to engage in genuine charity—sharing with others things that we might be attached to, including our money, and, perhaps most of all, our time, giving to others of ourselves, rather than our unwanted possessions!

we've been very 'charitable'.

I might have done this myself, many times. But is this really 'charity'? While it certainly isn't good to

Giving 'poor' people only things that we no longer want or need isn't real charity, then. It can actually be more about helping ourselves and our needs than others!

hoard things, including stuff we no longer want, and while in some cases those whom we give such things to might find them useful, I don't know if such giving can be called 'charity' in the true

by our own needs—such as the need to clear out our overloaded cupboards and remove what we consider unwanted 'rubbish' that's littering our drawing rooms and kitchens, plus the need to occasionally feel good about ourselves by being 'charitable' to the 'needy'.

Brand New Clothes

Giving 'poor' people only things that we no longer want or need isn't real charity, then. It can actually be more about helping ourselves and our needs than others! Judging by this criterion, if I've given away, for instance, old clothes that I no longer want or like to 'poor' people, thinking I was being very

kind for doing so, my action may not count as charity at all. Had I been truly concerned about their needs and welfare, I ought to have bought and given them a set of brand new clothes that I would have liked to wear myself.

Unwanted Pots and Pans

Genuine charity is when we give to somebody who is in need something that we ourselves cherish and value and that addresses their need—not things that we don't like and want to dispose off by passing them on to someone else. It's easy to donate things like unwanted pots and pans or shoes that no longer fit us, unburdening ourselves of things we don't like or want anymore. But how difficult it is to engage in genuine charity—sharing with others things that we might be attached to, including our money, and, perhaps most of all, our time, giving to others of ourselves, rather than our unwanted possessions! ■



By Arthur Richards

Faith takes work. Faith is a process, a path that one journeys upon. It isn't solely a set of beliefs that one has to affirm. Rather, those beliefs are stepping stones to manifesting true faith in one's actions. Take, for example, the basic belief that there is a God. The affirming of this belief causes one to act in a beautiful way and to work towards meeting this Lord who sustains His creation. When you establish this core belief, you can begin to piece together the beautiful tapestry of God's divine plan. You cease to see the creation of angels and jinn, of the sending of Prophets and other fundamental beliefs as mere stories, but instead as metaphysical realities that impact you directly in your life.

A Solid Foundation

What I'm trying to shape for you is that in order to truly have faith in the Divine, your beliefs need to be built upon a solid foundation—else a small breeze will seem like a hurricane. Consider these three approaches to belief and faith:

Belief Is A Branch Of Faith

Scholars like Imam Al-Akhdari

How to Press the Reset Button on Faith

began his famous text of Islamic law reminding believers that the first thing they need to have is proper belief in God. For example, on the path of faith, one should attempt to remove doubt. Scholars throughout history utilized various methods of doing so, such as the study of logic in an effort to help the non-scholar identify fallacious beliefs. These misinformed beliefs may subsequently destroy a person's faith. What if someone believed, for example, that God created the Earth and humanity and left it to work on its own? The reality is that we believe God is necessary, and that nothing operates without His decree. Every breath you take is created by God, and He creates for every man, woman, child and animal. The rays of sunlight that grace the soil after the rain and allow trees to grow tall and to bear fruit only do by His command. This changes everything, does it not? Doesn't it cause you to look at the world differently, to realize that God is an active participant in your life?

Hit The Reset Button

I originally had learned about Islam bereft of its internal, spiritual dimension. I kept to subjects and interpretations that sounded authentic and authoritative, but after years they left me and many others in my circle feeling empty. It was then that I began to delve deeper into the tradition. It was then that I

Do you worship for the feeling or do you worship because the One who gave you life calls you to do so? This is where having the proper affirmations transform your worship. This is why I sought out guides to show me this path of truly cultivating my belief in the Divine.

began to beg God to give me the opportunity to study the various sciences that preserved the light of the Divine.

One of the first pieces of advice I received while on this path was that one's mental affirmations have an effect on how they perceive the Divine, and so clarifying one's beliefs will benefit their faith. So, I began to study theology again—from scratch. Who was God? Why is His existence necessary? Who were the prophets? Did God have to send them, or was it a mercy from God that He did? Answering these questions caused major changes in my life, the first being my prayer.

As I spent days studying theology, I came across more and more realizations. When demanding situations presented, and I was told to be patient, I ceased thinking of it as useless advice but a realization that God had work to do and my impatience would disallow me from seeing it. I had hit the reset button, and now my perspective was changing.

She Didn't Know Why

I remember a young lady who had been fairly close to me growing up. She was Palestinian, Muslim

and amazingly intelligent. We shared a love for Lupe Fiasco and Drake in his initial days of coming into the rap scene. In those days I was wearing an Allah chain and attempting to learn more about a faith I had little knowledge about except via short documentaries and a few books. I remember once feeling the resolve to ask her about prayer and why I had never seen her prostrating to her Lord. She replied to me, "Because I don't feel anything when doing it."

At the time, I agreed with her. Why do something that doesn't spiritually sustain you? However, now I would ask the question, "Do you worship for the feeling or do you worship because the One who gave you life calls you to do so? This is where having the proper affirmations transform your worship. This is why I sought out guides to show me this path of truly cultivating my belief in the Divine.

I began to understand why so many around me could find no benefit in fasting, or waking up in the early hours to pray, or to wear certain types of clothing that hid the beauty that God fashioned them in: None of it made sense,

and all of the rituals in the world would seem superficial if the person's understanding of God was superficial.

I call you to better your relationship with God by knowing Him. The understanding of who your Lord is will have a direct impact on your worship, but that knowledge takes work. It takes finding a teacher and sitting at their feet. It takes conquering the ego and instructing it to understand that it is God who sustains it, not itself. And, it takes realizing when you may need to start back again from zero so that you can finally see God through the lens you were meant to see him through.

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may God be pleased with him), who said that the Prophet (Pbuh) said:

God the Almighty said:

I am as My servant thinks I am (1). I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself; and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a cubit, and if he draws near to Me a cubit, I draw near to him a fathom. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.

(Arthur Richards is a father, writer, and student of Islamic Sciences. Currently living in Cairo, Egypt, he studies at Al-Azhar University)

Calendar in Islam

The present confusion rampant in the Muslim countries in the world today could be removed by adopting the lunar calendar prescribed in the Quran for the civil use of Saudi Arabia and the Muslims, using it in the day to day life, along with the conventional calendar. Dates of Ummul Qura must be followed by all Muslims.



By Ali Manikfan

A practical calendar must be based upon certain principles. The dates must be fixed and not liable to any change at any time in history. The day for any date, past or future must be calculable. The calculated number of days from one date to the other must be the exact combination of the week days. The purpose of a calendar is to know the time of an event, not of the weather condition of that time. The holy Quran gives such a perpetual calendar.

The Ummul Qura calendar of Saudi Arabia from 1300H to 1429H provided such a calendar. It was based on the manazil (elongation) of the moon as directed in the Quran and Sunnah. It is presumed that the Saudi Government would have published it after thorough study and investigation of the past history and dates observed in the two holy Harams of Makkah and Madinah. The name of the author was not given in the book.

Solar and Lunar Eclipse

The past and present dates of Haramaen match exactly with astronomical calculations. The months began next day after conjunction. For example first Muharram of the first year of the Hijra calendar was Thursday the 15th of August 622AD. The sun was eclipsed on the previous day (Wednesday) which was the day of conjunction, the last day of the previous month. Later science adopted this method to define the synodic lunar month. Islamic scholars like Albiruni, Qaradawi and others agree with it. Solar eclipse marked the end and lunar eclipse the middle of the lunar month. We can examine some more events of that time. Prophet Muhammad was born on Monday the 12th of Rabiul Awwal according to the Arabic calendar. It was Monday which came in the middle of Rabiul Awwal, the full moon day. Moon was eclipsed at night. He passed away on 8th

of June 632AD Monday, which came in the middle of Rabiul Awwal. It was the 12th of Rabiul Awwal in the Arabic calendar. It was the full moon day.

On Friday the 25th of Zulqadha, the Prophet announced his departure for Hajj on the next day, Saturday to the thousands gathered there to perform hajj with him. This shows Zulqadha had begun on Tuesday. It is reported that Zulqadha of that year had 29 days. All this prove that the dates they followed, matched with the manazil of the moon and with the astronomical data. The Arabic calendar was an artificial lunar calendar beginning after sighting the hilaal, like the Hebrew calendar. Therefore, it ran two or three days behind the manazil of the moon. Their fixed lunar calendar has 354 days in a year. They used leap year to adjust with the moon. It was done by giving 30 days to the last month, which ended in 29 in other years. Later this calendar was known as the Hijra calendar. This was in vogue in all Muslim countries and it was believed to be the Islamic calendar. This is why countries other than Saudi Arabia are two days behind the actual lunar date.

The Prophet (Pbuh) talked to his companions (Sahaba) when fasting was prescribed in the second Sha'ban after his arrival in Madinah. They had fixed number of days 30, 29 alternating in a regular order in their Arabic calendar. He said Sha'ban is not 29 always and Ramadan not 30 as it was in their calendar. Since they were illiterate, he ordered the Sahaba to see the moon and begin fasting and not to perform the Eid and rituals without seeing it.

According to the Quran, time depended on the angle of the sun with the horizon. This is different everywhere. Date depended on the manazil of the moon. This is same everywhere except where the week days begin on earth.

They did not know the calculations of the sun or moon. So they decided time by seeing the sun, and date by seeing the moon. Their dates were correct and matched with the manazil of the moon, which Allah had fixed on the day of creation.

At the same time the dates of other parts of the world were two or three days behind. They followed the Arabic calendar thinking that it was the Islamic calendar. But some of their important dates matched with the manazil of the

moon. For example India got freedom on Friday the 15th of August 1947 AD. It was 28th of Ramadan 1366H. Pakistan emerged one day before on Thursday the 27th of Ramadan. In those days, all Muslims in the world observed unity as far as possible in Ramadan and

the moon sighting of today they would have never been correct and united in fasting and Eids.

The First Crescent Hilaal

Belief that hilaal indicated the beginning of the lunar month for performing the religious rites got established in the minds of



Eids. Under the British rule too, Muslims were united in Ramadan and Eids. Telegraphic communication enabled this unification. Ramadan of 1366H began on Saturday and ended in 29 days on Saturday. The Eid was on Sunday, the first of Shawwal 1366H. All these matched with

the people in course of time. In fact, the first crescent Hilaal is seen low on the horizon in some parts of the world on the first day of the month. It sets by magrib time. The second one is seen high on the horizon after sunset and remains till Isha. The companions of the Prophet were

“ Dr N. M. Fadhl, the Director General of the astronomy department of Saudi Arabia was the author of the original Ummul Qura calendar. He was the only Muslim astronomer holding a Ph. D in astronomy. ”

the astronomical calculations. Zulhijja 1439H began on Sunday. Hilal could not have been seen on 29th of Zulqad on Saturday anywhere in the world. Hilaal, the first crescent is never seen on the last day of the month. Hilaal is seen in some places on earth on the first day of the month. The rituals were performed on correct days by observing the moon in the proper way. They observed the waning crescents in the last days of the month. This enabled them to find out the correct beginning of the months. Even today, the Bedouins of Saudi Arabia living on hill tops practice this Quranic method. This was known to some Alims in the last century. It was gradually forgotten in course of time because people used the Christian calendar for their day to day life instead of the Hijra calendar. Had they practised

familiar with this phenomenon. This Hilaal is seen often and Muslims in other countries began fasting and celebrated Eid after seeing it. They believed that the lunar months began after the Hilaal was seen. But Hilaal always becomes visible only on the first day. It cannot be seen on the last day 29/30, which is the day of conjunction, on which both the sun and the moon are in one manazil and the moon over takes the sun. Rising or setting of the moon cannot be seen from anywhere on earth on this day. So the practice of beginning the month after seeing the hilaal was not the way of the Prophet and his companions. A wrong way contracting Quran would not have been practiced by them. But somehow the wrong method of beginning the month after seeing the Hilaal continued in

other countries except Arabia and that is why the dates of those countries are one or two days behind the dates of Arabia. Now modern education has confused Saudi Arabia also. It is high time that the wrong practice of celebrating one Eid for three days in the world is stopped.

First of Shawwal is the date fixed by the Prophet for Eidul Fitr and it is silly to make it two or three days in a year.

During the Ottoman empire, the news of Ramadan and Eid was communicated far and wide by telegram and the Muslims all over the world celebrated Eid on the same day. When they missed the first days of Ramadan, it was compensated by fasting after Eid. This practice was in vogue during the Khilafat of Islam. But this correct Sunnah is not practised now because of the invention of the “Ikhtilaful Mathalia” and people believed that the decision taken in their land was applicable only to them.

After freedom from the British rule, Khazis in different parts of the world declared fasting of Ramadan and Eids independently based on the local visibility of hilaal without consulting others. Most often these reports of hilaal were fake. They thought that unity in fasting and Eids was not necessary. They used the Christian calendar for their day to day life and Hijra calendar was neglected. Celebrating Eid on different days had become a common practice in India by 1960AD.

The Ulema convened a meeting in Lucknow in 1967AD to find a solution to this wrong practice of Eid falling on many days. They decided that the Indian subcontinent should celebrate Eid in one day. Moulana Shihabuddin Nadwi quoted this in his article in the Islamic Voice of 2000.

Saudi Arabia used the Ummul Qura calendar for civil purposes. The religious events like fasting and Eid were observed under the jurisdiction of the concerned authorities. Most often their decisions matched with the Scientific Ummul Qura calendar.

Groping in the Dark

The Quran says: “waqaddarahu manaazila li tha'lamoo adadas sineena wal hisaab”. He has fixed manazil for the moon so that you may learn the count of ages and the calculations. The astronomers studied the moon, it's phases, stages and ages and

Sheima Salam Sumer, earned her Master's degree in Counselor Education from the University of South Carolina. She has worked as a professional counselor in a variety of settings—school, home, and office, counseling individuals of all ages as well as families and groups. Here she throws light with answers on family issues, kids and parents from a spiritual angle.

Make Religious Teachings Clear and Simple

Q: How do you think parents could help their children develop concern for fellow creatures? Please reflect on this based on your own example.

A: First, I teach my children that God loves for us to help others. Sometimes if we see a needy person outside, my kids hand that person a small donation. I also tell my kids stories about needy people, in order to open their hearts. Doing volunteer work together as a family is a great way to develop concern for others.

Q: Sometimes parents compare their children, labelling one as smart, another as dull, etc. Even when the kids grow up, parents think that the child who is earning more money is a “successful” person, while the one earning less is a failure. How do you look at this?

A: This can be very hurtful to children. Every person is a unique creation of God. Real success is not about having a lot of money. Success is gaining God's approval in the next world.

Q: Could you please share some positive aspects of the way your parents parented you when you were a child, that you appreciate and may be grateful for?

A: I grew up with my mother, and I appreciate so many things

about her. My mother discussed God and the Quran with us. I remember sitting with her as she talked about the wisdom of different verses in the Quran. She made sure that we went to a religious school on the weekend. She paid for tutors to teach us how to read the Quran in Arabic. She welcomed my questions. I remember asking her why we could not have boyfriends in Islam, and she calmly answered that it would not be fair to babies if they were born with unmarried parents. She taught us the wisdom of our faith, and not just to blindly follow rules. She sincerely loved us and took us on vacations and fun outings. She was not too strict. She was very kind, generous, and honest.

Q: In our present-day closely-interconnected world, where people from different faith and ideological backgrounds engage in close interaction, what do you think parents should do to help their children learn to get along well with people from other religious, ethnic and class backgrounds?

A: It's important to teach kids that it's ok to be different. Differences are the reality of life. The key is to treat everyone with respect. Also, God intended for

there to be different religions. So there's a wisdom in this. My kids have friends from different religions. I teach them about different religions and we talk about why we choose to be Muslims.

Q: The Internet and ‘social



media' have now become pervasive, and are having a major impact on people's ways of thinking. In many cases, it is having a very negative impact on children. What advice do you have for parents in this regard?

A: It's important to pay attention to your children's behaviour. It's crucial to talk to kids about social

media and how it often gives a false view of reality. Discussions about the differences between the values of social media and the values of true faith are necessary. We must encourage critical thinking in our kids. We should also make religious teachings clear and simple. We must be parents who our kids feel comfortable talking to. We must spend more time with our kids so that they don't need to turn to social media for support.

Q: One primary duty of parents is—or should be—to nurture their children in such a way that they grow up to be able to function well in the world as mature adults. Today, educational institutions focus mainly on the intellectual training of their students—their studying different academic subjects (and even here, the focus is on cramming up mountains of information to regurgitate during examinations rather than understanding a particular subject). Relatively little attention is given in these schools to character-building of the child, including on helping the child learn how to handle real-world challenges and to relate well with others. (With regard to the latter, in fact these institutions instil

fierce individualism and competition). Children may learn things like calculus and the name of the capital of some remote country but are not taught simple first-aid or how to be charitable to the poor.

Given this sort of ‘education’, children who are compelled to study in such schools may receive little input on character-building or relating harmoniously with others—two basic things for a well-functioning mature adult.

Could you please reflect on this? What suggestions might you have for parents in this regard, based on your own experience?

A: I totally agree with you. Most of what such schools teach is useless for life. The priorities are to teach character and religion/spirituality. Even though I attended schools as you mention as a child, I went to an Islamic school on the weekend. I am currently blessed to be able to homeschool my children and to teach them about human relations and religion. My children currently take Skype religious classes. If your children are attending what are generally considered conventional schools, it's necessary to supplement their education with positive religious and social experiences.

(Sheima Salam Sumer can be reached at Howtobeahappymuslim@outlook.com)

« Page 20 Calendar in Islam

learnt calculations. The Muslim authorities must learn it instead of groping in the dark. We calculate times of prayer shown by the angles of the sun. We perform all worship based on calculation without seeing the sun. The same rule must apply to moon also because the Quran says “sun and moon are with precise calculation”. The angular distance between the moon and the sun marks the date, which would never change. So the date shown by it also cannot change. Wrong Interpretations of Quran Without knowledge in astronomy, the Islamic scholars of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other places complained that the dates

of the Ummul Qura calendar were two days ahead, where as their dates were two days behind. The wrong interpretations of Quran and Hadees created confusion in their method of seeing the hilaal and fixing the lunar months. Since they used the Christian calendar for day to day needs, instead of Hijra calendar they had not learnt rukes of the Islamic calendar. Their Ulema used the published dates of the Arabic calendar in their literary works. So they felt that the dates of Saudi Arabia were two days ahead. As a result now, they believe that celebrating Eid on different days is the Islamic way. Original Ummul Qura Calendar

Dr N. M. Fadhl, the Director General of the astronomy department of Saudi Arabia was the author of the original Ummul Qura calendar. He was the only Muslim astronomer holding a Ph. D in astronomy. He had published a calendar book containing civil Hijri calendars from Hijra 1 to 2000 as a continuation of his earlier work before he passed away in 2006. We request Saudi authorities to recognise this work and use it as the civil calendar for Saudi Arabia and the Muslim world. The Arabic calendar which was not approved by the Prophet should be given up. It is a great pity that the calendar prescribed in the Quran has not been put into

practice in the world even after 1440 years have passed since the revelation of the Quran, while the erroneous Gregorian calendar has been accepted by the world. Even in Saudi Arabia the true Hijri calendar is not being practised. The present confusion rampant in the Muslim countries in the world today could be removed by adopting the lunar calendar prescribed in the Quran for the civil use of Saudi Arabia and the Muslims, using it in the day to day life, along with the conventional calendar. Dates of Ummul Qura must be followed by all Muslims. (M Ali Manikfan was born to Musa Manikfan and Fatima Manika in Minicoy Island of Lakshadweep on 16

March 1938. His father Musa sent him to Kannur for formal education. As he was not interested in formal education, he left his studies and returned to his home land. According to him, formal education is artificial and pointless and best way to acquire knowledge is getting wisdom by observing our environment. Manikfan Is a marine researcher, ecologist, shipbuilder. He has designed a lunar calendar based on the new moon times published by Fred Espenak, who calculated the new moontimes based on Astronomical Algorithms of Jean Meeus. He recommended Muslims all over the world to follow his lunar calendar)

Rich Rewards

Al-Bara ibn Azib reports that the Prophet said: "Whoever lends another something to use, or guides another down a lane - or he said a path - will have a reward similar to that of freeing a slave". [Bukhari]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) encourages kindness to others in every way. He shows us that such kindness is always richly rewarded by God. Whatever we do in this life, affects our standing on that Day. Hence, we should always seek and do what improves our position and refrain

from what is likely to have a negative effect.

Al-Bara ibn Azib reports that the Prophet said: "Whoever lends another something to use, or guides another down a lane - or he said a path - will have a reward similar to that of freeing a slave". [Bukhari]

Sometimes the Prophet tells us that God promises a very rich reward for an action that does not appear, in our estimation, to deserve such treatment. This is not for us to question, because God rewards a good action with at least ten times its value. He may increase that reward up to 700 times as much, and even more, if He so wishes. Besides, when the action is likely to cement social relations within the Muslim community, then God rewards it very richly. Hence we need not be surprised at the reward promised in this hadith.

The rich reward promised is for lending something to be returned after use, but the hadith

phraseology refers mostly to a she-camel, a sheep, etc. or to a useful article. Such animals used

Hence, it is so richly rewarded. On the other hand, a person who shows the way to someone in

Sometimes the Prophet tells us that God promises a very rich reward for an action that does not appear, in our estimation, to deserve such treatment. This is not for us to question, because God rewards a good action with at least ten times its value.

to be given to a family to use for a while, making use of their milk, or for riding in the case of a camel or a horse, and for them to return after a while. Thus the benefit given by such an offer is stretched over a period of time.

unfamiliar surroundings gives badly needed assistance. Hence, it deserves a rich reward.

(Compiled From: "Al-Adab al-Mufrad with Full Commentary: A Perfect Code of Manners and Morality" - Adil Salahi)

LIVING ISLAM

By Abdul Malik Mujahid

For the Prophet, peace was not a strategy he employed, it was the goal of his peace movement. He preached peace and justice

Madinah where even animals cannot be harmed, hunting unless for food, was forbidden and trees cannot be cut.

When preaching, he would ask individuals and tribes for just

The Prophet was described by his wife Aisha as a walking Quran, a person who embodied the Message of God, the One who brings peace to hearts and nations. He was known for reconciling people at war and individuals in conflict.

leading to the establishment of a peace sanctuary in the city of

two things: believe in One God and work with him to

The Peace Maker

Now it is our duty, as believers in God, to create a common agenda for the peace movement for our times, so that the prophetic mission of encouraging people to establish justice continues in the future.

establish peace and prosperity in the land.

A commitment to peace was a way of life for the Prophet. The Prophet was described by his wife Aisha as a walking Quran, a person who embodied the Message of God, the One who brings peace to hearts

and nations. He was known for reconciling people at war and individuals in conflict. Even when he established the peace sanctuary of Madinah, he developed a written document which is called the Charter of Madinah. It gave full religious rights and internal autonomy

to its Jews and Christians. He declared in that written constitution that Muslims, Jews and other signatories of that document constitute one nation in the modern sense of the word. Now it is our duty, as believers in God, to create a common agenda for the peace movement for our times, so that the prophetic mission of encouraging people to establish justice continues in the future.

(Compiled From: "The Prophet, The Peace Maker" - Abdul Malik Mujahid)

READERS SPACE

By Sayeeda Begum

Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) was an original thinker, a prolific writer, a pathfinder and educational reformer. The canvas of his work was wide, which included writing and teaching on new lines. In brief, he was an institution by himself. Although he was not an English-educated person, he appreciated the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, worked with him for a period and departed from him to create his own institutions elsewhere in the United Province. He appreciated Western methods of advanced research and writing and encouraged his students and others with the same. His main objective was to bring the Indian mind closer to modern education, science and research.

Realise the Spirit of Islam

Shibli was an erudite scholar and was among the first Indian writers to study the Urdu language using critical methods while approaching the Islamic past, which was otherwise eulogization. He concentrated on



the spread of education, learning and publication of several academic works. This was an

Shibli Nomani believed that obtaining modern education, acquiring scientific knowledge and making one's presence felt in every walk of life, be in social, economic, cultural and political, was important.

inestimable service rendered to the Urdu-knowing world of his day. The critical attitude of Shibli towards acquisition

and understand how science and learning had advanced in other countries. He was in favour of translation into Urdu of classics

Shibli was an erudite scholar and was among the first Indian writers to study the Urdu language using critical methods while approaching the Islamic past, which was otherwise eulogization.

of knowledge led him to the conviction that Muslims had to become modern in their thinking process by opening their minds

of European thought so that modern knowledge should be made available to Indians, particularly Muslims. He wanted

the community to realise the spirit of Islam and not be satisfied by mere fulfilling the ritual aspects of the religion.

Shibli advocated a change of attitude from reclusiveness to active involvement to appropriately face the contemporary context. He believed that obtaining modern education, acquiring scientific knowledge and making one's presence felt in every walk of life, be in social, economic, cultural and political, was important. The name 'National College' he gave to the institution he set up at Azamgarh speaks volumes for itself.

(Sayeeda Begum is a research scholar from Al Ameen K M Fareed Research Center, affiliated to Tumkur University, Tumkur)

Exposure of the Heart

Holy Quran

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent

'And whether ye hide your word or make it known, He certainly has full knowledge of the secrets of all hearts'.

(Al-Mulk: The Sovereignty)

67:13

There is nothing in this universe except that it is known to Allah, even thoughts and ideas. Whatever crosses one's mind is known to Him; one may keep 'secrets' from other people, but one can never keep anything hidden from Allah. Allah knows all that takes place in the universe at once, for He is Omniscient. This attribute is part and parcel

of the Islamic creed. The awareness of this attribute, that we are constantly exposed to Him, should have a positive impact on our behaviour. One should be embarrassed to harbour ill thoughts or ill feelings in one's heart or to contemplate wrongdoing, being fully aware that Allah continuously watches one. Moving from being watched

to the Watchful, Allah, one should check the action that one contemplates, if it is for His sake, then it should be carried out, but if it is for the sake of Satan, one should refrain immediately from it. And when an action is done for Allah's sake, it should be perfected, taking into consideration all the proper

We should be embarrassed to harbour ill thoughts or ill feelings in one's heart or to contemplate wrongdoing, being fully aware that Allah continuously watches us!

of one's behaviour, hastening to do what is right in the sight of Allah,

“Being conscious of the exposure of the heart leads to the modification of one's behaviour, hastening to do what is right in the sight of Allah, and shunning what He has prohibited.”

proprieties associated with it.

Being conscious of the exposure of the heart leads to the modification

and shunning what He

has prohibited. The heart will then be tranquil, and the limbs will be

the witnesses to this state of the heart, by partaking in its tranquillity. As Allah knows one's best-kept secrets, including sinful deeds that are only known to him, one should ask for forgiveness, protection against ill intentions as well as against being exposed in public.

One usually makes one's appearances good for others to see, because they can be seen, and only when one's appearances are seen by them. The same logic applies to the heart. It is seen by Allah all the time. Therefore, one should make one's heart good for Him, by cleansing it from all impurities and adorning it with His traits.

(Compiled From: "A Treasury of Ghazali" - Mustafa Abu Sway)

YOUTH VOICE

Computer App 'Islam 360'

Zahid was a pushcart banana seller who is now an IT consultant in Karachi with Microsoft.

Computer app 'Islam 360' developed by startup Zahid Hussain Chhipa is a new app which enables the browsers to access the Holy Quran and the

and decided to do something that would benefit a large chunk of humanity.

The app which can be downloaded from the Google Playstore enables



Prophet's traditions from several authentic Hadith collections at the click of the button. Interestingly, Zahid was a pushcart banana seller who is now an IT consultant in Karachi with Microsoft. Zahid did his MBA from Karachi University

the browsers to download and access the Quran, its intonation (tilawat), various translations (tarajim) and commentaries (tafaseer), and dictionary of the Quranic and Hadith terms. It has stored 78,000 narrations of the

Holy Prophet from authentic collections of Hadith from leading compilers of Hadith. Zahid says he rose from a very humble origin and used to sell bananas on the streets of Karachi.

out all the references of particular terms in the Quranic verses or hadith. The term or word can be typed in English, Urdu, Hindi or Urdu in Roman script. For instance, if one is looking for

In an interview with a TV channel, Zahid said one can download any chapter of the Quran, listen to its audio rendition, and find out all the references of particular terms in the Quranic verses or hadith.

He acquired an MA and MBA degree with great struggle.

In an interview with a TV channel, Zahid said one can download any chapter of the Quran, listen to its audio rendition, and find

'lying' or 'jhoot', or 'backbiting' or 'gheebat', it needs to be typed on the search bar and all references would appear on the screen within a jiffy. It can be used even by those who

are disabled and cannot use their hands. They can give it an oral command. For instance, if one says, "Rabbana La tuzigh quloobana", the relevant verse will appear on the screen. If one misspells some verse, it will point out in red colour that the word or verse is being read wrongly. A user can even find out the root words of all terms in the dictionary stored in the app. For example, if one says, "La yatakhabbatu", it will take him to the root words to provide the meaning in English, Urdu, Hindi or Romanized Urdu.

Zahid says he is currently into making a search engine for Quran in 104 languages spoken around the world.

The app can be downloaded free of cost from the Google Playstore. ■

WANTED GROOM

Seeking alliance for a Sunni Muslim girl from a well respected and reputed family. Age: 30, Height 5.8, Complexion wheatish. Qualification MBA, Occupation Manager in MNC. The boy must be a graduate and well employed. Age between 30 to 35 years. Contact: +17806072745 Shuks_leo@yahoo.com

Sunni Muslim Parents seeking alliance for our daughter age-24 yrs, height-5.3, education diploma in architect. Looking for early, educated groom families - NRI's / Bangaloreans / Overseas. Call: 9980536802 E-mail: shagufta.arch@gmail.com

Bangalore Sunni Muslims seeking alliance for their daughter 23 years, 5'6", MBA, currently pursuing SAP course. Looking for an Engineer/Post graduate from a decent, educated and a small family. Bangalore based families only. NRI'S/Bangaloreans/Overseas call: 9886316958/8867840653

SM parents seek alliance for their daughter B.E., 32 yrs 5.7" good looking belonging to a respectable and educated family, working as Technology Leader at INFOSYS holding H1-B Visa. Groom should be professionally qualified person hailing from a decent educated family background working in India or abroad. Mail biodata to prof.wayez@gmail.com contact 9632878387

Sunni Muslim parents from Bangalore seek alliance for their daughter, 26 years, 5'3", beautiful, fair, convent school educated, BBM done in Bangalore and done 2 yrs. Post-Graduation in Canada, presently working in Royal Bank of Canada in Toronto, Ontario, moderately religious from a respectable educated family. Looking for well settled groom from an affluent background, origin from Bangalore/Karnataka/Tamilnadu, with healthy habits, moderately religious Call and WhatsApp: +918660980755 / 9886055712 Email: hycraft7@gmail.com

SM parents invite alliance for their good looking daughter, age-25 yrs, ht-5'3", B.E. looking for good looking groom, well-settled & professionally qualified from a respectable family. Contact: 9845887864/9448139417 Email: msagencie@hotmail.com

Sunni (Labbai - Ambur) family settled in Bangalore seeks alliance for their daughter. (B.com + Diploma in Fashion Designing), height 5'2", 33 years religious, never married, fair good looking. Looking for well settled professional / business man. contact: 973-951-8841 / 988-042-6655

Alliance invited for Sunni Muslim, Good looking girl, Reputed family - age - 31 yrs, height-5.1, educated (Doctor). Looking for early, religious and respectable educated family, Groom should be well-settled, NRI's / Overseas / India, Contact for whats app: 0091-8951716869 / E-mail: shah4noora@yahoo.com

Sunni Muslim, Bangalore based Syed family looking alliance for daughter age 26, fair, religious, Qualification-Bsc Biochemistry and own house. Looking for Bangalore based family age between 27 to 31, qualification BE or MBA, working in Bangalore or Gulf, religious and own house. Contact: +919108564965.

BANGALORE: Sunni Muslim divorcee age 34 beautiful, diploma, has 6 year old daughter from well to do family. Looking an alliance from a decent educated well settle Sunni Muslim. Contact 8217586128. Email: editor@islamicvoice.com

WANTED

DTP OPERATOR (Part Time for 10 Days in a Mont) Who is experienced in Coral Draw, Photoshop and Indesign. Contact: 9845322481

WANTED BRIDE

Sunni Muslim Parents invite alliance for their only son 26 years, 5'8", fair, BE(CS) working as manager for a reputed MNC (Del Emc2), Own house, **Physically challenged** (drawing a handsome salary plus rental income). Looking for a good looking qualified girl, Non-working / working if willing preferably from Bangalore, age 22-23 years for a well-educated family. Contact: 9886142658 e-mail: asharief.fish2@gmail.com

Bengaluru Based Syed Family seeks Alliance for their son age 33 years, height 5.5. Fair handsome completed B.E in E&C working in M.N.C, preferably with professional qualified decent family back ground. Contact : 9448030576/9916029916

Bangalore: Sunni Muslim parents invite alliance for their Son, Age 34 yrs, 5'2", B.E. (E&C), Working for a reputed MNC, Fair, Looking for a good looking, B.E / MBA / MCA age 26-30 yrs, 5'0 to 5'2" from a well-educated family Mobile: 9845237312 E-mail: zulfiqar.nadeem@gmail.com

Chennai fifty five yrs old religious, good looking widower (14yrs), railway employed for average life partner need. Contact: 9677054780 E-mail: rafi.grahmed@gmail.com

Syed/Sunni Muslim Parents invite alliance for their son, age 32yrs. Height-5'10" (B.E) (E&C) fair, good looking Islamic, private business construction company looking for a good looking doctor/engineer or any other graduate age between 24 to 27 religious from north Karnataka. contact no. 9108155557, e-mail, sabeerali298@gmail.com

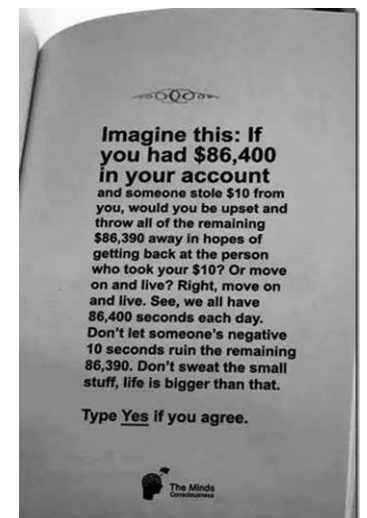
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SM parents, Chennai based, invite alliance for their son, 27 years, ht 5.7" pious, fair and handsome, Mechanical Engineer, residing in and working for an MNC in Bangalore. Bride should be pious, educated, hijab observing and practicing muslim, fair and good looking from a Bangalore based family with ISLAMIC values. Dargah visitors please excuse... khairobarakah@gmail.com Mobile-no: 09840804450

SM Sheik parents seek alliance for their son, BE, 26 years, 5'5", s/w engineer working for a reputed company. Looking for a working girl preferably lecturer/engineer, 23/24 years, 5'2"/5'3", good

looking, from educated family. Contact: 9449940860/9741013522/080-23646675

Syed Sunni Muslim educated family seeks alliance for their son 29 years, 5'10", B.E, working in a reputed software company. Girl should be religious well-educated and working. Contact: 9886102493 E-mail: syedsanulla0408@gmail.com



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Terms Related with Traffic

ٹریفک سے متعلق اصطلاحات

Flyover: A bridge carrying a railway line or road underneath.
(پل جس کے نیچے سے دوسری سڑک یا)



Median strip: The area between opposing lanes of traffic, either paved or planted with bushes.

(سڑک کا رفتار شکن ابھار، حفاظتی اقدام)
(جگہ جہاں عموماً جھاڑیاں لگادی جاتی ہیں)

Milestone, mile markers: One of a series of numbered markers placed along a road or boundary at intervals of one mile or kilometre.

(سنگ میل، مسافت نما)

Pedestrian crossing or crosswalk: A designated place for pedestrians to cross a road.

(پیادہ افراد کے لئے مخصوص علاقہ)

Ring road, beltway, circumferential highway, or orbital: A highway or series of highways that encircle a city or town.

(شہر کے گرد گھومنے والی سڑک)

Speed bump, speed hump: A vertical deflection in the road

or street to slow motor vehicle traffic in order to improve safety condition.

(سڑک پر واپس پلٹنے کا نشان)

Toll road, turnpike, or tollway: A road for which a fee (or toll) is assessed for passage.

(کرایہ والے روڈ)

U-turn: A 180° rotation to reverse the direction of travel so called because the maneuver looks like the letter U.

(سڑک پر واپس پلٹنے کا نشان)

Vienna Convention on Road Traffic: An international treaty designed to facilitate international road traffic and to increase road safety by establishing standard traffic rules among the contracting parties.

(سڑکوں پر حفاظتی خدمات کے لئے کیا گیا ویانا سمجھوتہ)

Spaghetti Junction: A nickname sometimes given to a complicated or massively intertwined road traffic interchange that resembles a plate of spaghetti. The term was originally used to refer to



the Gravelly Hill Interchange on the M6 in Birmingham.

(ایک دوسرے کو پھلانگی ہوئی کئی شاہراہوں کا کئی منزلہ اتصال جو نوڈل سے بھری پلیٹ جیسا لگے، شش رہا)

Zebra-Cross: Pedestrian crossing point on a road.

(پیادہ افراد کو سڑک پار کرنے کے لئے سفید اور کالی پٹیوں سے نمایاں مقام)

Box junction: A road traffic control measure designed to prevent congestion and gridlock at junctions. The surface of the junction is typically marked with a criss-cross grid of diagonal painted lines (or only two lines crossing each other in the box), and vehicles may not enter the area so marked unless their exit from the junction is clear.

(آڑی ترچھی لکیروں سے نشان زدہ علاقہ)
(جہاں سے ٹرافک بغیر ٹرافک لائٹ کے آگے نہ جا سکے)

Bypass: An auxiliary route that relieves congestion along the mainline by routing traffic around a city or congested area.

(متبادل راستہ یا شاہراہ)



Grade separator: The method of aligning a junction of two or more road axes at different heights (grades) so that they will not disrupt the traffic flow on other transit routes when they cross each other.

(کئی سڑکوں کے ملنے کو مختلف درجوں سے گزارنے والا پل)

Interchange: A road junction that typically uses grade separation, and one or more ramps, to permit traffic on at least one highway to pass through the junction without directly crossing any other traffic stream.

(سڑکوں کے وہ جٹکشن جہاں دوسری جانب سے آنے والی ٹرافک کو متاثر کئے بغیر سمت بدلی جاسکتی ہے)

Cul-de-sac, dead end: A street with only one entry ending blindly.

(اندھی گلی)

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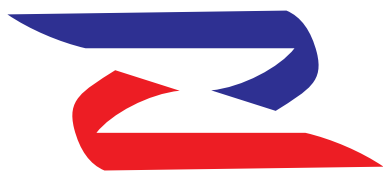
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UK Royal Air Force gets first Muslim, Sikh Chaplains

London: For the first time in the history of the British Air Force, a Sikh and a Muslim

Ali Omar becomes the first Muslim chaplain while Flight Lieutenant Mandeep Kaur, who grew up in Punjab was chosen to be the first Sikh chaplain.

Both Ali Omar and Kaur completed their reservist officer training and graduated at Royal Air Force (RAF) College Cranwell to be part of the British forces. Kaur was selected as a chaplain while studying for her engineering doctorate in the UK. Whereas Omar

cleric have joined the Royal Air Force Chaplain's Branch. Kenya-born Flight Lieutenant,

completed a masters degree at Portsmouth University in translation studies. ■

Book on Saudi Arabia's First Woman Yoga Instructor Slated For Release in 2019

The life of Saudi Arabia's first certified woman yoga instructor, Nouf Marwaai is the subject of a new book, expected to hit the stands in 2019. Tentatively titled "Nouf: Yogi Who Made Saudi Arabia Fall in Love with an Ancient Indian Science", the biography published by Westland, will be written by well-known film historian and writer Gautam Chintamani. Marwaai, who played an instrumental role in making yoga



legal in Saudi Arabia, was also awarded the Padma Shri by the Indian government. The book will cover her life, her battles with diseases, and narrate how yoga helped her survive against all the odds. "The journey of Nouf Marwaai highlights the importance of making peace with and healing one's inner self. It is an inspiration for women across cultures to take a stand on what they believe in," said Debasri Rakshit, Managing Editor, Westland. ■

Saudi Film Director Wins Award for Cultural Leadership

Saudi film director Haifaa Al-Mansour has been named as one of the recipients of the 25th Annual Crystal Award, which celebrates the achievements of leading artists and cultural figures. Conductor Marin Alsop and broadcaster and naturalist, Sir David Attenborough were the other recipients, the World Economic Forum announced. The winners will be honoured in the opening session of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2019 in Davos-Klosters,



Switzerland, on January 21. Al-Mansour has been honoured for her leadership in cultural transformation in the Arab world, the Forum said in a statement.

She is the first female filmmaker in Saudi Arabia and 'Wadja', her feature debut, was the first feature film shot entirely in Saudi Arabia and the first by a female director. She was recently appointed to the board of the General Authority for Culture to advise on the development of the cultural and arts sectors in Saudi Arabia. ■

Interfaith Awards for 'Unsung Heroes'

A formerly homeless man who co-founded an interfaith group creating bonds between Jews and Muslims is among London's "unsung heroes" for

in 2012, was homeless himself before setting up a charity to feed those in the capital like him. He later co-founded Community of Jews and Muslims. His is one of



a Faith & Belief Community Award. Lewisham resident, Mfa Zaman, 30, who was a London Ambassador at the Olympics

the 40 projects up for an award at the ceremony being held at the Royal Society of Medicine, with each winner bagging £500.

85,000 Yemeni Children Dead from Malnutrition, says Charity Report

An estimated 85,000 children under the age of five may have died from acute malnutrition in three years of war in Yemen, a leading charity has said. They suffered immensely as their vital organ functions slowed down and eventually stopped. Their immune systems were so weak they were more prone to infections with some, too frail to even cry, Save the Children's Yemen Director,



Tamer Kirolos said. "For every child killed by bombs and bullets, dozens are starving to death and it's entirely preventable. Parents witness their children waste away,

unable to do anything," the BBC quoted Kirolos as saying. He warned that an estimated 150,000 children's lives were endangered in Hedaydah with "a dramatic increase" in air strikes over the city. Save the Children said, it based its figures on mortality rates for untreated cases of Severe Acute Malnutrition in under-fives from data compiled by the UN. According to conservative estimates, it calculated that around 84,700 children may have died between April 2015 and October 2018, the BBC reported. ■

Jordan Celebrates Christian-Muslim Solidarity

Jordan's King Abdullah, accompanied by crown prince Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II recently attended a celebration



an opportunity to promote the importance of living in harmony. They reiterated that Jordan, under the leadership of its king, will remain steadfast in defending Jerusalem and its holy sites, stressing the importance of the Hashemite Custodianship of Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem as a continuation of the Pact of Omar. They stressed that there

is no alternative to the two-state solution to achieve peace, in which East Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine. They expressed appreciation for the king's donation of a large part of the Templeton Prize, received by him recently, for the restoration of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The speakers also commended the King's efforts that resulted in a set of UNESCO resolutions supporting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to Al Aqsa Mosque and Jerusalem. ■

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"The Judge"

A new film follows the first female sharia judge in the Middle East. Through the story of Kholoud al-Faqih, Erika Cohn's documentary provides insight into women's rights in Palestine.

From its first sunlit moments, "The Judge" is a warmly intimate documentary. Women sit on plastic chairs under pomegranate trees while Kholoud al-Faqih, the film's subject, drinks juice and answers shy questions about the law and the breakup of marriages. What happens when a man leaves, or when a woman does? What if there's been violence? What



should become of the children? The women live in the village of Beit Rima, on Palestinian-controlled territory in the West Bank, where most family matters for Muslims are decided by courts governed by sharia (Islamic law). Judge Faqih is the first female judge in these courts, a woman steeped in the study of Muslim scriptures. While sharia is often associated in the West with draconian punishments and

extremism, the documentary shows a system open to many interpretations. As the sun sets in the village, Judge Faqih forcefully lays out her understanding of a woman's rights under Islam. A violent husband will go to jail; a woman leaving an erring spouse should be awarded full support. "The problem is," she declares, "we're not educated about our rights. People are unaware." Elsewhere in the film, she opines on divorce being easier for men to obtain than women.

The film begins when Judge Faqih has already been on the bench for several years (she was appointed in 2009), and it shows her meting out justice in the courtroom, stern and authoritative. She started her career as a lawyer, and says that when she wanted to sit the exams to become a judge, she had to persuade her male superiors to let her do so. Tayseer al-Tamimi,

the chief Islamic judge, was supportive, but says they faced opposition—opposition driven less by scripture than by culture. "In our society, traditions are so strong that they override the actual sharia," Sheikh Tamimi says with remarkable frankness. Husam al-Deen Afanah, another Islamic judge, believes unequivocally that the scriptures do not permit a woman to hold

the office. "She opened the way," says her husband, who is also a lawyer. "Hey world, my mum's a judge!" hollers one of their small children. Such heartfelt moments of pride recur throughout the documentary. Erika Cohn, the director, met Judge Faqih when she was working in the region teaching film and undertaking postgraduate research in Islamic feminism.

She says that she was "beyond captivated" by the judge, whom she met at an Islamic reform meeting in Ramallah. "It was like this magnetism that I just kept experiencing."

As well as providing "a greater insight into sharia law and strong imagery of powerful Muslim women" with her film, Ms Cohn sought to create "an immersive Palestinian experience". The animating spirit of Judge Faqih, and of this engaging film, is the possibility of reforming that society from within.

(Taken from economist.com)

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Getting Out of the Box in Ramanagaram!

The Discover Yourself Workshop was held in Ramanagaram district on 1,2 and 3 December 2018 for Madrasa students. It was organised by Mahmoodiya Education and Research Centre (MERC), Agalakote, Magadi, Ramnagaram Dist in Karnataka.

Over 40 students from various madrasas participated in the Workshop.

- ◆ These three days were the best days of my life.
- ◆ My life changed because I had a lot of bad habits and now, I left them. I will not be selfish, and I will teach this to others and my family.
- ◆ if we live according to it. My life has changed.
- ◆ This workshop is useful for changing the society.
- ◆ Before the workshop, I was not able to distinguish
- ◆ My life before the workshop was in darkness and after the workshop, I am feeling light and good. This workshop is useful for those who want to change their life.
- ◆ Inshallah I will live my life



- ◆ Before the workshop, I had so much anger and now I can control myself. I cannot believe that this workshop changed my lives and my ideas, my conceptions and my thoughts. Thank you so much.
- ◆ This workshop should be held in all the big madrasas. Before the workshop, I was sleeping and in negligence but now, this workshop has brought within me realization and awakened my consciousness. This workshop is very beneficial for inner (batin) transformation.
- ◆ I have spent 9 years in a madrasa, but for the first time, I realized only getting knowledge is not enough, but we must be good human beings.
- ◆ This kind of workshop should be hosted in madrasas because they think they know everything. The workshop opened the light of my mind, till now, I was in darkness despite my studies.
- ◆ Before the workshop, my life was like a trap, but after the workshop, I feel I am free and very happy. The workshop is very good for making us good human beings. The best benefit I got is, I feel peace within and contentment in my life, before that, I was looking worried and panic.
- ◆ I was not feeling fine, but after coming to this workshop, my behavior changed. This workshop can change our life,
- ◆ between the heart and mind, but now I am able to distinguish it clearly. I cannot explain the benefits I got in this short space of time.
- ◆ My life was full of sadness, I was always thinking of the past or the future, but now, I am totally free. I shall treat everyone mercifully.
- ◆ It was beneficial for me and I thank the coach for giving us useful information.
- ◆ This workshop was the best turning point in my life.
- ◆ I was wrong in many ways and now I feel relieved. This is very useful for all humanity. May Allah bring success in your work and spread the light.
- ◆ This workshop is very useful for my life. I felt something was missing in my life and had many questions arising in my mind but now everything is clear, and I am feeling good.
- ◆ This workshop is useful for all human beings. Alhamdulillah, I felt some changes in my thinking and actions. I started thinking positive and gave up making other people wrong.
- ◆ Before the workshop, I was thinking from my mind and after the workshop, I started to think and act everything from my heart. Due to this workshop, I feel some changes in myself.
- ◆ This workshop is good and very useful for my life.
- ◆ according to this workshop. Keep up this task and never give up, one day you be successful, and Allah will bless you in both the lives.
- ◆ Alhamdulillah! This workshop was very good. I learnt many things and I was able to remove the ego from inside me. I will practise and share this knowledge with others.
- ◆ This workshop is useful and excellent because now I can live peacefully. Through this workshop, many changes will come in people's life. If you continue this workshop, it will help bring changes in people and I pray to Allah for taking the workshop to bigger heights.
- ◆ In this workshop, I got the ability to distinguish between Haqq and Batil. I learnt to forgive people and see and treat everyone as human beings.
- ◆ This workshop is excellent, I want to attend this again and again. I will try to act up it, Inshallah.
- ◆ It is very beneficial for this present time, I knew everything that was said, but was not clear how to implement it.
- ◆ I was stuck in the past or the future with many problems, but now, I am feeling free after attending this workshop.
- ◆ *Before I was not having peace but now, Alhamdulillah,

I am having peace. This kind of workshop should be held in different places.

- ◆ This workshop has awakened and reminded me of the sayings of our great scholars who said knowledge is one thing and action is another. Both are necessary. Action without knowledge will lead to ignorance and knowledge with no actions is lame. This is what I got from this workshop.
- ◆ I have changed myself. This workshop in future can bring in a revolution in the society.

◆ Before the workshop my life was in the box. I was feeling that I am in search of something in my life and I was experiencing that it may not be possible to achieve anything even after hard work. But after the workshop, I could see that it is possible to achieve what I want in my life.

◆ I learned many new things in this workshop and this workshop should be held in every city. In this present time, this workshop is a necessity. This is the first time I had an opportunity to attend such a workshop and I benefitted a lot. In the workshop, I got the answers to many questions that were lingering in my mind for years.

◆ In this workshop I learned many things. Before the workshop, I judged and saw others with different perspectives and now I see them equally with one perspective as human beings.

May Allah grant success to you and we are thankful and grateful to you.

- ◆ This workshop is very useful, I got control over my anger and it changed my perspective. Everyone must attend this workshop as it changes the perspective of life.

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Our Childhood Hobbies Can Mould How We Turn Out To Be!

By Mesha Oh!

I don't know how it is with children these days, but when I was a child (which was several decades ago!), we were

Limited Interaction with Others

When I look back from the vantage point of many years I can discern that my childhood personality shaped

There's good news, though. Even at my age perhaps I can still develop the hobbies that I think I missed out on in my younger days—if I really want to. It really isn't too late!

accumulating objects—and this may have led me towards a tendency to be more comfortable in handling things than in dealing with

that a child's hobbies has on its character, if I had children (which I don't), I think I might have helped them develop a very different set of hobbies from some that I had—hobbies that would have enabled them to become more spiritual and

creative. I would have loved to see them passionate about doing things like story-writing, cooking, knitting, gardening, painting, serving others (animals, birds, plants, and fellow humans in need, and of course the natural environment), devotional music and chatting with God.

There's good news, though. Even at my age perhaps I can still develop the hobbies that I think I missed out on in my younger days—if I really want to. It really isn't too late! ■



encouraged to have a 'hobby', an activity that we were meant to love doing.

my hobbies, and that my hobbies, in turn, shaped my personality. Unable to face tough boys, I withdrew into myself, drawn to hobbies that involved limited interaction with others. This might

relationships. While I took good care of my stamps and coins, for instance, I didn't always do the same with people and had poor interpersonal skills.

Stamps and Coins

A childhood hobby that is about collecting things—like stamps and coins—can lead a child to think that value and purpose in life lies in hoarding material objects: today it is stamps and coins; tomorrow it could be stocks and shares. Such hobbies can become, inadvertently or otherwise, a means for children to imbibe the commercial logic, based on hoarding and maximizing personal material gain, at a young age. Luckily for me though, I lost my collection of stamps and coins when my parents shifted to another city. This was all for the good, because it helped me loosen my attachment to them. Another thing about most of my hobbies was that they entailed limited creativity on my part. To a large extent, I was a passive accumulator of objects (stamps, coins etc.) and a passive consumer of other people's words (written words, from storybooks, and spoken words, from the radio stations that I loved listening to). Now with the benefit of age and experience when I am able to recognise the crucial impact

Wonders of God's Earth

How did Earth get its name?

All of the planets, except for Earth, were named after Greek and Roman gods and goddesses. The name Earth is an English/German name which simply means the ground. It comes from the Old English words 'eor(th)e' and 'ertha'. In German it is 'erde'. The name Earth is at least 1000 years old.



when a huge cloud of gas and dust started to collapse under its own gravity. As the cloud collapsed, it started to spin. Some of the material within this cloud gathered into swirling eddies and eventually formed into planets. As the planets formed, they kept this spinning motion. This is similar

to what you see when skaters pull in their arms and spin faster. As material gathered in more closely to form a planet, like Earth, the material spun faster. The Earth keeps on spinning because there are no forces acting to stop it. ■

To a large extent, I was a passive accumulator of objects (stamps, coins etc.) and a passive consumer of other people's words (written words, from storybooks, and spoken word from the radio stations that I loved listening to).

Over the years, I developed several hobbies, including reading storybooks, listening to the radio and collecting things—postage stamps, coins, matchbox labels, toy animals, picture postcards, publicity brochures for different brands of car, and so on.

When I reflect on the nature of my hobbies I realise that one common feature was that they entailed little or no interaction with others.

I was a very lonely child and was frightened of boys physically stronger than myself. I had almost no friends. I preferred to be by myself, spending time doing things alone, such as being busy with my various hobbies.

have been an innocent refuge from a challenging predicament, but it also meant that my social skills, including my ability to handle difficult situations, remained undeveloped. This was something that I had to contend with through many years, even deep into adulthood. My hobbies enabled me to learn to be happy with my own company and to enjoy my solitude—which I regard as a great blessing—but at the same time, being largely solitary activities that entailed little interaction with others, they had the potential of making me self-centred and limited in being able to confidently relate socially. Many of my hobbies entailed

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By Binkles

Dolcy and Chinku lived in Tedi Town, a big city with tall buildings, huge mega-markets and many, many buses, cars and trains. Tedi Town had lots of people and heavy traffic. Dolcy and Chinku often had to wait for quite some time before crossing the road as there were many vehicles zipping up and down. But the little kids would take God's Name and ask God to help them to cross. One year, during the winter

Two Kids in Lola Land! With Pola the Pony and Cola the Camel

The children were to spend a week in Lola Land—to have a fun time and also to learn how the Lolafolks, as they were called, lived.

sweet little kitten on the fence!' exclaimed Chinku.

The kids were taken to a big dormitory, where they were to stay. Through the windows, they could see the hills and smoke billowing from kitchen chimneys from the cottages that were scattered about. Apple, orange and cherry trees grew in



kind Uncle Roma and his wife, Auntie Bloo.

Uncle Roma and Auntie Bloo took the children to the main market place, where they spotted people crowding around a string of bells. The bells were all shaped like animals—camels, donkeys, horses, ponies and so on—and were tied to long ropes. 'Goodness gracious, What are these, Uncle?' asked Dolcy.

Uncle Roma explained that in Lola Land if people had to travel a long distance, they did not use taxis, autos or buses because it would pollute the environment. Instead, they had lots of animals that drew carts in which they could ride.

'Come kids, let me show you this,' said Uncle Roma, taking Dolcy and Chinku by the hand. 'Let's go to see Windy Woo Castle up on the hill today.' He told Dolcy and Chinku that they could choose any bell they wanted to and ring it up down.

The children chose the pony bell. And lo and behold, soon a white pony wearing a blue ribbon around its neck trotted up to them, nodded its head in greeting. 'Hey kids, this is Pola the Pony,' said Uncle Roma. 'Give him a jaggery cookie and pat him a bit

and he will take us to the castle.' 'How cute!' squealed Dolcy and Chinku as they climbed into Pola Pony's cart and set off to Windy Woo Castle with Uncle Roma. Dolcy and Chinku had a wonderful time exploring the castle. The folks they met there were very kind and gave them candies and cakes as a treat. As the sun began setting over the hills and it was time to return, Dolcy and Chinku asked Uncle Roma if they want to ride back in a camel cart. They had never seen a camel before! At the exit of the

castle there were bells for animal carts, and there they rang a bell shaped in the form of a camel. In a short while a pretty brown camel gently walked towards them, a big smile across its face. 'This is Cola, the Camel,' said Uncle Roma.

The kids gave Cola a handful of date muffins and a big, warm hug and excitedly climbed into her cart along with Uncle Roma. Dolcy and Chinku spent their vacation doing many fun things, like exploring book shops and toy shops and bakeries and the fields and forests around, with Pola the Pony, Cola the Camel, Dino the Donkey and Mola the Mule as their guides and travelling companions. What great fun they all had! ■



holidays, Dolcy and Chinku's school took them for a holiday to Lola Land, which was a quiet little village. As soon as Dolcy and Chinku reached Lola Land they were very excited! 'Wuppy, it's so pretty—the hills and the cute cottages, goodness gracious! Look at all the lovely plants around! And see that

to sip water.

The children were to spend a week in Lola Land—to have a fun time and also to learn how the Lolafolks, as they were called, lived.

The next morning Dolcy Chinku and all the other kids had a hearty breakfast of oats and fruits and set off to explore Lola Land with

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