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Superstitions and Bad Omen

Syed Tahsin Ahmed

Page
14



Why Muslims Need Fair Media

Moin Qazi

Page
02



Ramadan Special
Articles

Page
16-21

Vol 35-03 No 424

March 2023 Bengaluru Pages 24 Rs. 40

Shaban / Ramadan - 1444 H

Muzaffar Assadi is the
acting VC of UoM



Dean of the Faculty of Arts,
Department of Studies in
Political Science, University of
Mysore, Muzaffar H. Assadi,
was appointed as the acting
Vice-Chancellor of the
university.

Prof. Assadi will be taking over
as acting Vice-Chancellor of the
University of Mysore from H.
Rajashekar, Dean of Faculty of
Commerce, Department of
Studies in Commerce,
University of Mysore. ■

3-day Jamiat (M)'s 34th General Session Concludes Jamiat terms spreading hatred a national crime, Arshad Madani's Remarks Spark Controversy



Abdul Bari
Masoud

New Delhi: Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind
(M) issued a message to the
country at the conclusion of its
three-day 34th General Session.
The message stated that "Jamiat
Ulama-i-Hind perceives religious
hatred and sectarianism as the
biggest threat to the integrity of

the country. And any scheme to
sever the brotherly and friendly
relationships amongst many
religions ought to be viewed as a
national crime.

However, the speech of Maulana
Syed Arshad Madani, the
president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind
(Arshad faction) distracted from
the event and said that "*Om and
Allah are the same*" and explained

everything about the existence of
mankind did not go down well
with some other faith religious
leaders.

In an effort to refute the RSS claim
that all Indians are sprung from
Hindus, Maulana Arshad Madani
reportedly said, "I asked dharma
gurus when there was no one,
neither Shri Ram, nor Brahma,
then whom did they worship?"

Some people told me that they
used to worship *Om*. Then I told
them that this means that there is
only one Om or Allah, and both
are the same, and it is the only
thing Manu (Maano) used to
worship. There was no Shiv, no
Brahma, but only one Om and
Allah that was worshipped Om is
called Allah by us, Ishwar by you
(Hindus), Khuda by Persian -
speaking people (Persian) and
God by English-speaking
people."

In a subtle allusion to RSS leaders'
repeated claims of having Hindu
lineage, Arshad Madani claimed
Adam was the first messenger of
Allah to land on Indian soil. And he
added that "Hindus and Muslims
have been living in the country like
brothers for around 1400 years, and
we have never forcibly converted
anyone into Islam."

"It is only under the BJP
government that we heard that 20

» Page 10

IV Correspondent

Board submits Affidavit:

'No Prohibition On Muslim Women Entering Mosques And Offering Namaz'

New Delhi: On February 8, the All-
India Muslim Personal Law Board
(AIMPLB) submitted its Affidavit
to the Supreme Court in the second
Petition seeking direction for
Muslim women's entry into
Mosques for offering Namaz. This
Affidavit is broadly in line with the
first Affidavit filed by the Board in
a similar Petition earlier filed



before the Supreme Court stating
that there is no prohibition on
Muslim women entering Mosques
and offering namaz or
congregational prayers".

The board submitted its affidavit in
response to a petition filed by a
Pune-based advocate Farha Anwar
Hussain Shaikh seeking that the

apex court declare the prohibition
on the entry of Muslim women into
mosques illegal.

Ms. Shaikh argued that the practice
infringed on Muslim women's
constitutional rights, particularly
their right to a life of dignity.

According to the petition, the
Quran does not foresee such a
prohibition. Shaikh also provided
examples of Makkah and Madinah,
where she said that female pilgrims

» Page 21



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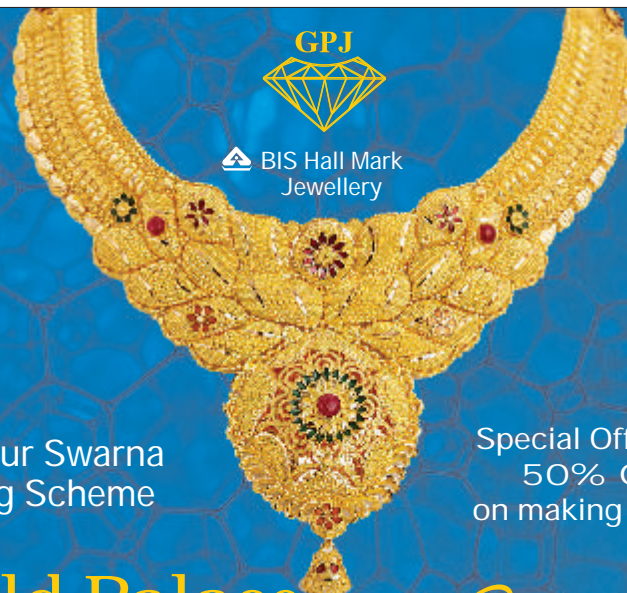
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Moin Qazi

A lot of ink, an infinite number of film reels, and a frantic churn of news stories bristling with harsh tones against Islam have fixated Muslims as a monolith. A cottage industry of authors keeps burning the midnight to ensure that the flashlights on bad Muslims keep glowing. A well-oiled Islamophobia machine churns these out, constantly manipulating the already flawed image of what a Muslim is, of what Islam is. They are attacking the identity of Muslims, which is so diverse that it cannot fit into a box. The press once seemed to have a conscience, thanks to history's painful social conflicts and the sensitive conscience that was always awakened by questions of war and peace. Let us not forget that there was a generation of journalists in whose hands a mystic transference took place, with each clack of the typewriter embedding a journalistic legacy on the next generation. Stamped indelibly on our formative minds during our training in journalism was the line: *"every time a grand editor puts a finger to a typewriter, he sits back to hear the crash of falling governments."*

In an ideal world, journalism is a profession of incredible integrity, and journalists are among the most dexterous and skilled people in the world. We have all benefited from the work of persistent journalists who put life, limb, family, and even sanity on the line in their pursuit of truth. The world, however, has changed, and often what's masquerading in the name of journalism is business — with an open display of bigotry and hate against certain social groups. The world, however, has changed, and many of us may be in a time warp of old values. Like all institutions, the media has also suffered in terms of its reputation. The media shows remarkable consistency in employing an arsenal of semantic games and incendiary phrases to link most of the violence around the world with some form of Islamic ideology or some Islamic group. It is much easier for the media to limit the complex debate on various issues confronting Muslims to a series of clichés, slogans, and sound bites rather than examining root causes. It is easier still to champion the most extreme and prejudiced critics of Islam while ignoring the voices of mainstream Muslim scholars, academics, and activists. There is a strong voice of moderates from within the Muslim ranks that could be appropriately channelized by the media to give a



rounded assessment of Islamic issues. *You can't blanket the damnation of the entire community.*

By reinforcing them wittingly and unwittingly, the media further deepens their impact. The new media not only reflects the mood but is responsible for building it as well. Media oxygen is provided only to those who say something communally inflammable and in such an environment, the efforts of pacifists and even of the moderated segments suffer great damage.

Religion has been simply reduced to a social or political construct, although for millions of people, it is a daily practice and the very framework for understanding that connects their lives to a spiritual reality. Their faith is the prism through which they view the world, and their religious communities are their central environments.

Much coverage of Muslims in news outlets has a negative slant. We've seen how some papers get their news about Muslims wrong and how often they reuse the same stereotypes. True, like many others, Muslims also have a share of negative elements. But the story must be fair and reflective and shouldn't generalize about all Muslims and feed into a broader far-right narrative. The good storylines of Muslim characters are woefully few. Often, there is a consistent stream of sloppy reporting, bias, or willful sensationalism about Muslims. The way stories are deformed to fit a formula about Muslims — and the difficulties in uprooting these fictions once they've been laid out — can be seen all across the media. Corrections and retractions by the media are extremely rare.

The distorted images of Islam stem partly from a lack of understanding of Islam among non-Muslims and partly from the failure of Muslims to explain themselves. The results are predictable: hatred feeds on hatred.

Ignorance of Islam exists both among Muslims and non-Muslims. Non-Muslims, ignorant and misunderstanding Islam, fear it. They believe it threatens their most basic values. Fantasy, conjecture, and stereotypes replace fact and

reality.

Similarly, Muslims have their own misconceptions. They, reacting to the hate and fear of non-Muslims, create a kind of defensive posture within their societies and a combative environment built on militant rhetoric.

But there is still a space that allows us to express ourselves as freely as we want. This is the space available in media for coverage of positive and inspiring stories of achievers. We have an enormous pool of talented Muslims in fields as diverse as science and sports, but we have not been able to project them properly. We must consider them not just as symbols of Muslim pride but as live role models for the entire society. At the same

time, several individuals and groups are making a real difference in people's lives through pioneering work in the social and development field.

Sadly, journalism fails to perform its fundamental role by simply rehashing tired old narratives of "radical Islam" or a "fight within Islam". The truth is much more convoluted than that — and the entire world has a direct role in creating the dangerous reality that so many Muslims have to live with every day.

The media shows remarkable consistency in employing an arsenal of semantic games, key phrases, convenient omissions, and moral relativism to portray such violence as a product of Islam. Jim Morrison observes: *"Whoever controls the media controls the mind."*

Several times headlines are sensational or distorted and reporting is often deeply racist. This directly impacts the lives of Muslims. Some of the stories that are thus emerging are painful and disturbing.

It is much easier for the media to reduce the complex debate on various issues confronting modern Muslims to a series of clichés, slogans, and sound bites rather than examining root causes. Religion is often portrayed simply as a social or political construct.

However, for millions of people, religion is a daily practice and the genuine framework of understanding that connects human lives to a spiritual reality.

Their faith is the prism through which they view the world, and their religious communities are their central environments. It isn't easy to overstate the importance of faith in the lives of so many.

Most people around the world would prefer to live in peace than in conflict. Yet, often the only religious voices on the front page are those speaking messages of hatred or violence, especially in stories about conflict or social tension.

The solution is not difficult. It requires a more meaningful engagement between the media and Muslim leaders. The press has to seek out saner voices and not just pick up opinions that suit their news and views.

It is much easier for the media to limit the complex debate on various issues confronting Muslims to a series of clichés, slogans, and sound bites, rather than examining the root causes. It is more accessible still to champion the most extreme and prejudiced critics of Islam while ignoring the voices of mainstream Muslim scholars, academics, and activists. There is a strong voice of moderates from within the Muslim ranks that could be

»Page 11

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Staff Writer

Bengaluru: In order to create general health awareness, the social organization 'Solidarity Youth Movement' has launched a statewide campaign theme "Better health Better life" from February 5 to 25, 2023. Dr. Mohammad Saad Belgami, the state president of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Karnataka, officially launched the campaign by releasing the poster. Undoubtedly, health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. Good health is essential for the overall development of a person. The progress of the family, society, and the country depends on the healthy development of the people of that society and the environment there. As said in the proverb, "A healthy mind in a healthy body", this balance between the mental and physical health of a person is very important. Perfect health can only

'The Better Health Better Life' Campaign was Launched to Create General Health Awareness

come from personal, social, and moral consciousness and responsibility. A healthy lifestyle keeps a person fit, energetic, and healthy.

The National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-2020) reported stunting among children less than 5 years of age in 11 out of 17 states. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), obesity has nearly tripled worldwide since 1975. The Indian Journal of Community Medicine reveals that 135 million people are obese in India. Furthermore, the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) warns that by 2030, 27.8 percent of obesity worldwide will be seen in Indians. Heart attacks are now common in the young generation as well. Alcohol consumption, drug addiction,

poor diet, obesity, blood pressure, lack of physical activities, etc. are said to be the reasons for this. Reports say that there is one diabetic or hypertensive patient in each household.

According to the EduSports annual survey report, schoolchildren who avoid physical activity, sports, and manual labour have diminishing physical health, and there is a chance that the country's future population will have physical disabilities. The organization conducted a health and physical fitness study of 77,669 pupils from 176 schools in 68 cities and 17 states in the country, ranging in age from 7 to 17. Although there is a greater emphasis on physical activity, school kids' physical health has not improved. According to the survey data, the

students' physical density index is very low.

A person is ultimately responsible for keeping his or her own health in check. Our lifestyle choices diet, for example have an impact on both our physical and mental health. God gives us health as a gift. Without ignoring it, we must be aware of the cost of healthcare. Once exhausted, the body must put in a lot of effort to recover. Like microscopic termites eating large books, small diseases are sufficient to harm our lives.

A person should become physically and mentally strong as a strong mind resides in a strong body.

In this prevailing situation, Solidarity Youth Movement has decided to run a state-wide campaign theme "Better Health Better life" from February 5 to 25, 2023. As a part of this campaign, health awareness meetings, Jumma khutba, lectures, street plays, sports, marathons, street drama, athletics and award programs have been held for youth who have achieved in health and sports. Efforts were also made to establish Physical Training Centers (Sports and Wellness Centers).

Quraish Community in Karnataka Launches App



Staff Writer

Bangalore: "The Quraish community is doing everything in its power to address its issues. We won't be successful unless the community stands united. We must be united to meet our demands from the administration and government". These views were made by Qasim Shoaib-ur-Rehman, president of the All India Jamiatul-Quraish of Karnataka. He was speaking at the Jamiatul-Quraish conference held at Dev Raj

Urs Bhawan on January 13. Jamiatul-Quraish, according to him, is for the entire Quraish community and the organization is in charge of resolving their issues. An App called All India Jamiatul-Quraish has been developed with this goal in mind for the first time in Karnataka. This app is for the entire state and through this App we will connect all the community members and thus the census of the Quraishi community will also be done.

He said that the Quraish

community is less educated, they are unaware of global events, and they spend their days working hard before going to bed. We are unable to benefit from things like a scholarship, an Aadhaar card, an elderly pension, reservations, etc. Qasim gave a report on the previous year, noting how many issues came up, how many were resolved, and how many politicians and authorities we spoke with to address the problems.

He claimed that transporting meat and animals has also turned into a challenge, one that we are working to resolve.

The conference was also addressed by Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad, Janata Dal(S) state president C M Ibrahim, State wakf Board chairman Maulana Shafe Saadi, Prof Ravi Verma JD(S) Vice President Syed Shafiullah and they also launched the App.

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Abdul Bari Masoud

Lucknow: The All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) met here (Feb 5, Sunday) and deliberated upon a range of issues including the Gyanvapi mosque, uniform civil code, growing hatred, and education. The executive committee of the Board passed as many as 10 resolutions including one on women's rights. In the wake of the present regime's raking up of UCC apparently for the coming Parliamentary election, the Board categorically said it opposes any such move. It underlined that fundamental rights provide freedom of religion to all citizens and bringing the uniform civil code would deprive citizens of the privileges given to them by the constitution. "Such a code is neither relevant nor beneficial for a multi-religious, multicultural, and multilingual country like India," the Board said in a release. The AIMPLB also appealed to all to preserve religious freedom and personal laws. In a resolution passed on the UCC issue stated: "The fundamental rights comprise in giving full freedom to all citizens. Implementing a Uniform Civil Code will deprive citizens of the privileges provided to them by Personal Laws and that is against the spirit of the Constitution. Such a Code is neither relevant nor beneficial for a multi-religious, multicultural, and multilingual country like India. If taking advantage of its majority in Parliament, the ruling government passes and puts into effect the Uniform Civil Code, it will affect the unity and harmony that bind the nation. It will hinder the country's progress and will not bear any fruitful results either. This meeting of the Board, which represents Muslims and their various schools of thought, appeals to the government not to pursue this agenda. Instead, they should focus on the live and present issues the country is facing".

In the wake of raking up the so-

UCC will Violate Fundamental Rights: Muslim Board Urges Muslims to do Justice to Women and Establish Schools



called *mandir* issue, the Board said that the Places of Worship Act 1992 should be adhered to in word and spirit in the national interest. It also urged the courts to take note of atrocities on minorities and weaker sections since the judiciary is the last hope of all citizens.

The Board further objected to the practice of putting down houses and implicating the accused even before the law is allowed to take its course.

The protection of Waqf and how it can be used for the education of the poor and Muslims, bettering the lives of women, and increasing their participation in social life was also discussed.

It also passed a resolution to exhort Muslims to establish schools.

"In view of the circumstances prevailing, AIMPLB appeals to Muslims to establish more and more educational institutions to ensure that their religious and cultural values are preserved and thrive".

It urges Muslims to do justice with the womenfolk.

"---Justice should be meted out to the women of the community, best care given to elders and there should be abstinence from ostentatious expenses at weddings. Muslims should resolve their issues by turning first to religious heads for advice. Intoxication, adultery, interest in homosexuality, and continuing to live with divorced spouses are practices that do not fit a true Muslim, nor are enforced by the country's law."

Muslim Board asks the community to use *Nikahnaama* authorized by it.

"*Nikahnaama* authorized by the AIMPLB must be used to seal a

matrimonial alliance. In the Board's *nikahnama*, the rights and duties of husband and wife are enumerated with clarity and thus they cut out the incidence of dispute or divorce. Thus, disputes can be resolved with minimum time, effort, and money".

On the issue of spreading hatred for political purposes allegedly by the ruling party members and its affiliates, the Board says the authorities must take stern action against such elements.

"An appeal to the highest authorities to put in place stringent measures to control hatred that was being spread across the country before irreparable damage was

done to the fabric of our nation's harmony. Members reiterated that for centuries India has thrived on the strength of integrity among its population which comprises innumerable religions, castes, and factions, upholding thus the values vested in our Constitution. Discord being created is opposed to the path of unity and inclusiveness that was followed by our freedom fighters and makers of the Constitution, the members deliberated", the resolution stated.

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board was presided over by Maulana Rabey Hasan Nadwi at Darul Uloom Nadwatul

Ulama. The meeting discussed issues and cases related to Muslim Personal Laws which saw the participation of prominent members, including MI. Syed Mohd. Rabey Hasni Nadwi, MI. Arshad Madni, MI. Fakhruddin Ashraf, Prof. Syed Ali Naqvi, MI. Khalid Saif Ullah Rahmani, Gen. Secretary, MI. Asghar Ali Imam Mehdi, MI. Fazlur Raheem Mujadadi, MI. Mahmood Madni, MI. Sajjad Nomani, MI. Mustafa Rifai Jeelani, Asad Uddin Owaisi, MI. Khalid Rasheed Farangi Mahli, MI. Wali Faisal Rahmani, Qasim Rasool Ilyas, Kamal Farooqui, Yusuf Hatim Machala Advocate, MI. Syed Bilal Hasni Nadwi, MI. Ateeq Ahmad Bastavi, Shamshad Ahmad Advocate, Tahir Hakeem Advocate, Dr. Monisa Bushra. ■

Set Up a Nationwide Network of Schools to Preserve the Identity: Maulana Rahmani



Staff Writer

Bangalore: Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, General Secretary of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, advised the Muslim community not to be demoralized by the circumstances that were being created for them in the country. Instead, maintain your resolve with patience and perseverance.

Maulana Rahmani spoke at the *Dastarbandi Jalsa* of Jamia Nadwatul Abrar held on February 19 in the city. He stated that over the past few years, the radical Hindutva forces in the country had started a deliberate campaign against Muslims. These anti-social forces purposefully assault the Quran, Islam, and the honour of the Prophet in an effort to upset Muslims so that they may retaliate. We must comprehend the strategy used by these forces

because if Muslims react to these incendiary words, they will be apprehended by the police in huge numbers, placing the entire community in a precarious position.

Maulana Rahmani added that unlike the Hindu society, which has assimilated all peoples including Jains, Sikhs, and other peoples into its fold, the Muslim community has staunchly maintained its faith and culture. Hindutva forces are unable to handle the Muslim community's tenacity, which is why they are attacking Muslims' identities in many ways. He criticized the BJP-led government's new national education policy, saying that if it is allowed to remain in place, Muslims may find it impossible to maintain their religious identity after the next 20 years. He urged them to be vigilant about

preserving their identity and that of future generations.

He said that mob lynching is not a new issue for Muslims by making reference to previous occurrences. Through their tenacity and bravery, the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) defended Islam, and Muslims are now required to do so in light of their present-day hardships. According to him, 94 percent of students who attend school are turning away from Islam due to the influence of Western culture and civilization, compared to 3 or 4% of youngsters who study in religious madrasahs. Parents and guardians should be concerned about this and try to introduce Islam to these kids. He argued that morality and religion should be taught in schools as a must. For this, the community should set up a nationwide network of schools where Islamic and contemporary disciplines are taught side by side. He claimed that Indian Muslims are currently in a precarious situation similar to the one they were in before the 1857 uprising and that it requires wisdom and an open mind to overcome. ■



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IV Correspondent

Bidar: Former Union Minister for Minority Affairs K Rahman Khan deplored the lack of concern and sensitivity among Muslims for the protection of waqf properties, saying that if rent were to be collected at market rates, waqf holdings could generate an annual income of 10,000 crores and Muslims would no longer need to appeal to the government for assistance. He exhorted the community to make the safeguarding of waqf assets a goal and a movement.

The two-day national conference on "Waqf and Zakat," which was held here on January 20-30, featured an opening address by the former minister and former deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha Rehman Khan.

Khan added that Muslims share equal blame for the destruction of Waqf holdings located all over the country. The fact that they were so

Two-Day National Conference on Waqf and Zakat in Bidar Waqf can generate 10,000 crores annual income if manage properly: Rehman Khan



susceptible to emotional problems and missed important and urgent problems is a curse on the community. And both the religiously educated and the highly educated segments of the population share equal blame for this.

He claimed that despite

understanding that waqf property belongs to Allah and that they were appointed as its custodians, members of the community do not step forward to defend it when it is being encroached upon.

He added that the lack of attention shown by the government and administration in protecting waqf

properties had led to encroachment on the properties.

He recalled how the Indian Parliament had expressed a strong interest in waqf affairs, formed a joint parliamentary committee to investigate the issue in-depth, produced a thorough report, and passed an act to safeguard awqaf.

Are Muslims using the Waqf Act to protect the waqf properties enough? He queried.

"Every Muslim has a religious obligation to preserve and develop waqf properties, and if they ignore or remain silent about ongoing encroachment, they are committing a crime".

He emphasized that the Waqf Act makes intrusion a crime and that Act's article 52A gives the perpetrator of such an offense a two-year prison sentence.

He underlined that the Waqf Act was perfect and that all that was required now was for the community to sincerely work to maintain and promote the waqf holdings that may provide them a windfall of cash.

Waqf land can be cleared of unauthorized encroachment, and the Act has granted state bodies the power to do so. It's not apparent, though, whether the waqf board is truly making the necessary arrangements.

He also exhorted Ulema and Imams to adopt a new mindset and urge the community to protect the waqf holdings.

The conference was designed to highlight the issues with waqf and zakat and provide solutions, according to Dr. Abdul Qadeer, chairman of the Shaheen Group of Institutions.

We invited eminent academics, activists, and attorneys from throughout the country to the

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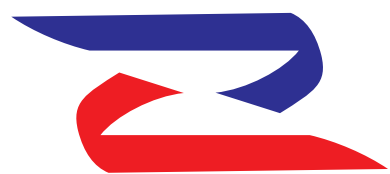
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IV Correspondent

Nanded (Maharashtra): Every challenging endeavour becomes simple if a person has a strong will, dedication, work ethic, and enthusiasm for progress. This was demonstrated by Nanded resident Saima Nikhat, who passed the Judicial Magistrate First Class Exam on her first attempt. Four Muslim candidates recently passed the exam administered by the Maharashtra Public Service Commission.

Saima Nikhat also disproved the idea that receiving an education in Urdu medium leaves no one behind. She was given the

position of Judge today. Four Muslim candidates, two boys, and two girls, were found to have passed the exam, according to the results that were made public.

Saima Nikhat is the only Muslim woman from Marathwada who will be appointed as a judge. She is the daughter of Sheikh Abdul Sattar who is serving as a bailiff in Beloli Sessions Court, Nanded. Sattar has four daughters and one son. Despite his menial job, Sheikh Abdul Sattar gave his children high education. The elder



Urdu Medium Student Saima Cracks Maharashtra Judicial Magistrate First Class Exam

daughter did her D.Ed; Saima is the third girl who got her law degree. The fourth girl is also studying law.

Saima's father mentioned that she was highly brilliant and excellent in school even as a little girl. Saima matriculated from Nanded's Yusufiya High School in the Urdu medium. She received 85% on her matriculation exams, after which she enrolled at Government Polytechnic with a diploma in medical electronics. She then finished her education and, with 83% of the possible

points, earned her engineering degree in electronics.

Despite the poor financial conditions of the house, his father continued to educate his children. After graduating with an engineering degree, Saima enrolled at the city's Narayan Rao Law College; where she went on to get a law degree with a 95% average before completing her post-graduate work, or LLM. She applied for the Judicial Commission Exams in the interim and passed it the first time around. She acted as a role model for others. Her success will undoubtedly serve as an example for others, especially those who receive their education in Urdu.

«Page 5

Two-Day National Conference on Waqf and Zakat in Bidar Waqf can generate 10,000 crores annual income if manage properly: Rehman Khan

conference who offered solutions to these issues. He believed that waqf and zakat may help the community's issues with poverty, illiteracy, and economic and educational backwardness. He claimed that the distinctive feature of the Islamic way of life is that Zakat is addressed following the most significant acts of worship, such as Namaz. By properly using Waqf income and Zakat funds, he continued, we may build schools, colleges, hospitals, and other community welfare institutions. Syed Akmal Rizvi, a lawyer of the Karnataka High Court, claimed in

his address that waqf has been reduced to a religious subject and that those with knowledge of waqf issues are not included in committees and boards that are relevant to waqf. In addition, Maulana Rasheed Firangi Mehli discussed the need of protecting waqf properties, adding that it is our Islamic obligation to do so.

According to Syed Ahmad Zia, the zakat funds must be distributed in a proper and organized manner. He asserted that if we adhere to the Zakat procedures in their entirety, we will be able to eradicate poverty in the community.

Dr. Aslam Parvez, a former vice chancellor of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University, stated in his presentation that zakat is a very effective economic tool that may do wonders for programmes aimed at reducing poverty. In light of the Quran, he emphasized the significance of Zakat.

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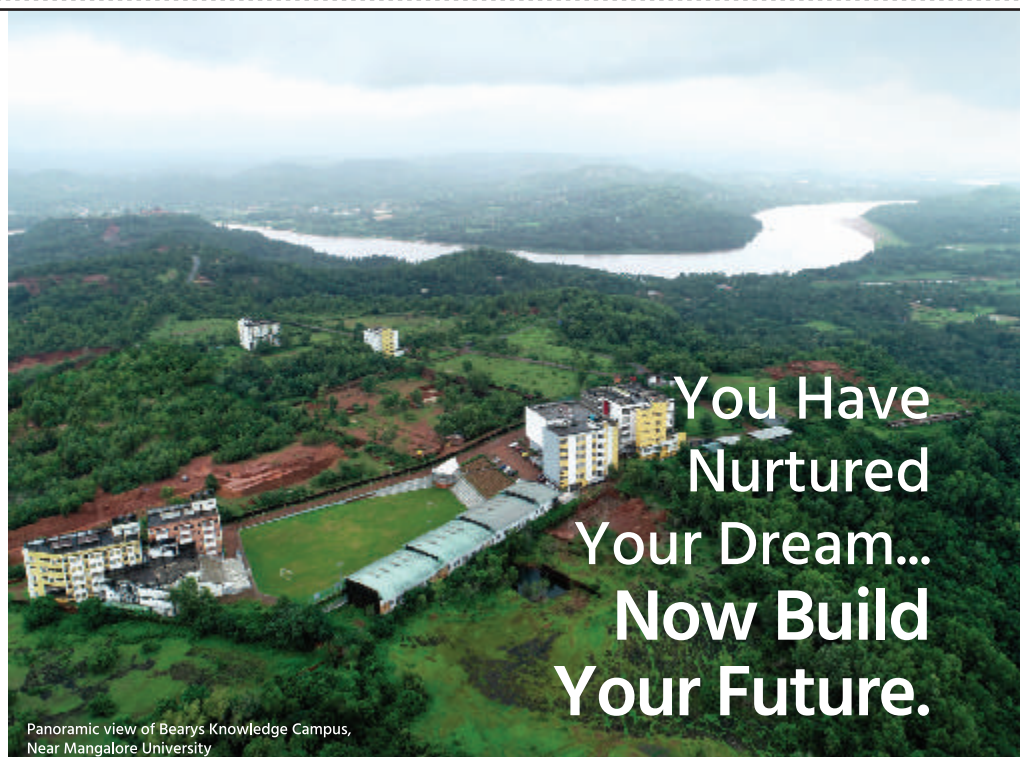
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NNA - The Secretary-General of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), Professor Koutoub Moustapha Sano, affirmed that the Islamic Ummah everywhere is waiting for effective solutions from scholars to the accumulated problems and challenges of contemporary life as well as satisfactory answers to the developments and current issues (nawazil) that have been emerging in their societies.

This came during his speech at the opening ceremony of the twenty-fifth session of the IIFA Council, held on Monday (February 20, 2023), in Jeddah, under the auspices of Prince Khalid Al Faisal, Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Governor of Makkah Al-Mukarramah Region, represented by Prince Saud bin Abdullah bin Jalawi, Governor of Jeddah.

"The current session comes after four years, during which humanity suffered unprecedented calamities and pains and experienced different forms of challenges and changes, especially with the emergence of new issues and problems that the world has never been familiar with," Sano said.

He expressed the Academy's

Islamic Ummah Expects Effective Solutions From Scholars to Contemporary Life Problems, IIFA SG



gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, for the permanent care of the Academy and the support given to this session through the Saudi Permanent Mission to the OIC.

For his part, the IIFA President, Sheikh Dr Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid, stressed that the current session is diverse in terms of participation, topics, and the volume of research presented to it, indicating that the participants in the session represent the Ummah's best scholars and thinkers.

He explained that the current session investigates fifteen topics that cover critical, contemporary issues concerning worship, the challenges to the family institution, sociology, education, and developments in finance and business.

"The hope is that you, the scholars and experts, undertake the obligation enjoined upon you by Allah to clarify (shariah rulings on contemporary issues) based on the Nobel Quran that Allah has sent as an explanation of everything, guidance and mercy; and following the guidance of the best of mankind and adhering to the approach of moderation, followed by the righteous predecessors (al-salaf al-ʿali?) of the honourable Companions," Sheikh Saleh bin Humaid said.

The Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Hissein Brahim Taha, explained that the themes of the current session are among the matters that impose themselves on the Islamic Ummah and its intellectual and religious think tanks, especially the IIFA.

He stressed that contemporary challenges invite scholars and

thinkers to deal with them and work to educate societies in a way that preserves their religion and contributes to enhancing security and stability in their countries and the world.

"The OIC General Secretariat affirms support for the IIFA's activities and calls on all Member States to support it. The General Secretariat also stresses the importance of supporting the IIFA Endowment Fund to achieve its noble goals and various initiatives," Taha said.

The OIC Secretary-General emphasized that the teachings of the true Islamic religion encourage the education of girls and ensure the right to education for both females and males, pointing out that this issue, unfortunately, has returned to the discussion table again due to the misconception adopted by some groups in this era.

At the end of the ceremony, Prince Saud bin Jalawi, Governor of Jeddah, honoured the session's sponsors.

The first day of the session witnessed the convening of 3 panel discussions. The first dealt with "clarifying the shariah ruling

on compulsory education (religious and worldly) for both males and females in Islam". While the second was dedicated to studying "The impact of Corona pandemic on the Shariah rulings on worship, family and crime" and "The impact of Corona pandemic on the legal rulings on contracts, transactions, and financial liabilities".

The third-panel discussion investigated the ruling on performing prayer (Salah) in a language other than Arabic with or without excuse and the ruling on following a prayer by listening to the mobile phone or the radio.

It is expected that the IIFA will issue resolutions dealing with these emerging issues within the framework of the authentic collective jurisprudential reasoning (ijtihad) of the scholars of the Islamic world in the current era.

The current session witnesses the participation of 200 scholars from the OIC member states with expertise and specialization in Sharia disciplines, economics, medicine, and sociology to discuss 160 research papers on the issues and topics of the session.

(S O U R C E : [HTTPS://WWW.NNA](https://www.nna)) ■

Indian Blind Boy received the Einstein World Record for reciting the Holy Quran verses for more than One hour



Dubai: A blind boy from Tamil Nadu, India who now resides in Dubai has received a world record certificate for Reciting Quran for long hours like a well-known international Quran Reciter. The function held in Dubai at Ramada Hotel, organized by Einstein World Achievement.

An individual with a disability, Mohamed Essa Abdul Hadi, took part in the activity. His ability to recite the Holy Quran fluently, like many well-known imams around the world, as a child astounded everyone.

Muhammad Essa Abdul Hadi's talent was tested by the special guests and he grabbed all the attention and enthralled the audience.

Various guests who spoke in praise of the child were moved with emotion and made everyone happy. In such a moving moment, he was awarded the world record award for Reciting Quran for long hours with disabilities. This award is managed by Einstein World Record Institute. Founder

Chairman of the Einstein World Record Karthik and Managing Director Monika presented it and everyone prayed that the almighty would make the child's life better.

Sri Lankan famous book writer Jinnah Sarbudin, Tamil Nadu Congress State Vice President SM Hidayatullah Kovai, Abdul Aziz Bhagavi, Kilakkarai Muhammad Maroof, Dubai Tamil Entrepreneur and Professional Association President Dr. Paul Prabhakar Journalist, Muduvai Hidayath were present at the event.

Additionally, he received permission from Saudi officials in Makkah to recite the Qur'an in front of the sacred mosque, and both the authorities and the crowd praised him.

He is currently unable to walk, see, or explain his regular bowel and pee movements.

Mohamed Essa Abdul Hadi, who is currently residing in Dubai at Abu Hail, has taken part in numerous Quran competitions hosted in Dubai and won prizes. ■

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Staff Writer

A Pune Imam sets up a School for Special needs Children

Mumbai: With a few notable exceptions, most imams in India are too poor to create their own institutions. They are given a pittance by the trustees of the mosques, suffer in silence, and typically don't hunt for other employment. In light of this, Mufti Raees Khan, an imam in Pune, is deservedly garnering attention for opening a school and a madrasa for youngsters who are deaf, hard of hearing, and unable to speak.

The Times of India reported that the Vision School started in 2013 in the Kondhwa area of Pune has just one student in the beginning. Now the school boasts a strength of 160 children with disabilities who are pursuing modern education along with classes in religious texts.

Khan has already begun giving inspirational speeches at mosques, encouraging people to

search their community for youngsters with special needs. *"I appeal to people to give me such children. We will empower them with education and training,"* he said.

Some of the kids were recently taken to Mumbai's famous Juma Mosque, which is close to Crawford Bazaar. Moreover, Islamic books are taught to kids, some of whom have gone on to become hafiz (those who have memorized the entire Quran).

"I saw many in the audience sobbing and crying as a visually-impaired student recited some verses from the Quran. One student recited the holy verses in the sign language which Mufti Raees Khan explained," said Shoeb Khatib, president, of Juma Masjid of Bombay Trust which manages both the Juma Masjid



and the Bada Qabristan at Marine Lines. Khatib also said that if someone wanted to organize specific classes for these disadvantaged kids, they might do so at the Juma Mosque.

Asif Farooqui, Bandra resident and court member, Jamia Millia Islamia University, said "Mosques in metropolitan cities must start classes for these children with special needs. This is not the job of one individual. A collective effort is needed."

Narrating the story behind the Vision school, Mufti Raees Khan

said "I worked as an imam for nine years before establishing *Anwar-e-Hidayat Trust* which runs the school and the madrasa. One day, while coming out of the mosque, I saw two visually impaired children begging outside the mosque. I began thinking and decided to do something about it."

He then hired a room and started searching for such kids.

Seven months of scouting later, I had one child and started a school with him. Currently, we have 160 students from 15 Indian states, including both boys and girls, he stated.

20-year-old Abdur Rahman Amaan Mukadam has had vision problems since birth whose dream has come true. Mukadam stated that although he attended a small school in Raigad, it didn't meet all of his needs. He then enrolled at

Khan's Vision School, where he started his formal education in both secular and Quranic courses. He is currently a hafiz studying BA (third year).

"I don't think I would have been trained the way I had stayed back in my village. Now I want to do a government job after graduating. I will sit for competitive exams," said Mukadam who learned Arabic in Braille and got the Quran by heart.

According to the paper, ten students from the school recently participated in a computer education programme sponsored by the University of Pune. "These young people are incredibly intelligent and pick things up quickly. All they require is the proper training and guidance," added Khan, who has arranged for these disadvantaged, youngsters with disabilities, to receive free tuition and housing. ■



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Hardware and Networking, Public Speaking, Spoken English, Interview Awareness sessions besides conducting workshops to improve memory. The plan is to open similar centers in other Clinic operating areas. On an average around 200 students are trained and certified annually.

6. Nagarika Seva Kendra/Citizen Service Center: As an extended activity, a Nagarika Seva Kendra (Citizen Service Center) is operating at DJ Halli providing assistance to link the eligible population to government aided schemes. Current services provided are: Aadhar card correction, Voters' ID Card, PAN Card, Govt. sponsored scholarships, Senior Citizen Cards, Ration Card, Women/ Disability Pension, E-Shram card, Learners' Driving License, and much more. The Plan is to open similar centers at two more locations immediately and at all MCT clinic operating areas in the near future.

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Jamea Tul Hidayah to launch online Hindi course for Madrasa Students

Zeena Akhtar



Jaipur: The Jamea Tul Hidayah's Chancellor, Maulana Shah Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahim Naqshbandi Mujaddadi, emphasized the significance of teaching modern sciences to madrasa students and announced the opening of an online course in Hindi language and literature for madrasa graduates.

Delivering a keynote address at the IFTA Graduation ceremony held on February 14 in the Jamea campus, Maulana Mujaddadi said the online Hindi course and Indian society will be started in collaboration with Aligarh Muslim University. He emphasized that Hindi is the official language and that mastering it will give madrasa graduates more job options as well as help in dawah efforts, fostering interfaith cooperation, and dispelling misconceptions about Islam and Muslims.

Maulana Mujaddad, who is also secretary of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, said learning Hindi and becoming conversant with Indian religions is a societal necessity and a duty of Ulama.

It should be noted that Jamea has taken a historic step and started the online one-year *Ifta* course for the graduates of madrasas on August 1, 2021.

He stated that from elementary to higher grades, the English language is taught as a subject in Jamea. For recent high school grads, a one-year online English-speaking course has already begun. This online course benefits students from outside of India as well as from India.

An influential Islamic scholar Maulana Mohammed Abdur Rahim Mujaddidi founded *Jamea tul Hidayah* as a revolutionary step in the realm of Islamic education.

He said that Jamea's curriculum has been carefully calibrated so as not to have a negative effect on either religious or secular education.

Religious studies, Quran and Hadith, Islamic law, biography and history, Arabic language and literature, as well as contemporary studies, science, geography, mathematics, English, and Hindi, are all included in the curriculum. In order to ensure that religious studies are not impacted and that the graduates are capable of supporting themselves in the real world, technical education has also been included in the curriculum.

In order for pupils to graduate from Jamea and get admission to colleges and other institutions, some courses that have been approved by the Union government are also taught there.

According to him, *Jamea tul Hidayah* is the only Islamic Madrasa whose secondary certificate has been accepted as being on par with a certificate from a secondary high school. The entrance exams for B.U.M.S. and other specific courses at Aligarh Muslim University in Aligarh, Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi, Jamia Hamdard in Delhi, Banaras Hindu University in Banaras, and Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad are open to students who have passed the exam. They are also eligible to enroll in junior colleges. Maulana Mujaddadi stressed the importance of teaching modern education, claiming that the times have undergone significant change and that change is occurring rapidly every day in all spheres of life. He cited the development of mobile technology, the internet, and medical science as having assisted people and nations in bringing about change within themselves. It has been forced; adapting to the times is no longer optional. Today, I was reminded of *Jamea tul Hidayah's* founder's prediction that while modern sciences are currently optional for madrasas to teach in their curricula, the day will come when they are obligatory.

He claimed that Maulana Shah Muhammad Abdul Rahim Naqshbandi Mujaddadi's wise and farsighted eyes had felt in this way at the time, but lamented the fact that the madrasas had disregarded his appeal. Instead, the integration of modern sciences is being discussed as a result of historical necessity.

Jamea Hidayah is providing an important service to the community, said Dr. Muhammad Ali Shafiq Nadvi, a teacher at Lucknow's *Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama* in his speech. He said *ifta* is a crucial division that offers Muslims direction on current issues in light of the Quran and Hadith.

On this occasion, the Department of *Ifta's* 43 graduating students were presented with *Ifta* certificates, and three deserving students each received cash prizes of Rs. 31,000, Rs. 21,000, and Rs. 11,000 in addition to gifts of certain books. Those who passed the civil services exam with the help of coaching from the Crescent Academy were also honored with mementos during the certificate distribution ceremony. In addition to this, numerous books were also released. The ceremony was presided over by 93-year-old Mufti Muhammad Saeed Tonki, and it was conducted by Maulana Habib-ur-Rahim Mujaddadi. ■

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3-day Jamiat (M)'s 34th General Session Concludes Jamiat terms spreading hatred a national crime, Arshad Madani's Remarks Spark Controversy

crore Muslims should be sent home. By sending them home, they meant converting them to Hindus. These people don't know anything about India's history," Arshad Madani said, who was speaking on the last day of the general session.

Acharya Jain Muni Lokesh Lokesh objected to Arshad Madani's remarks as he was delivering his speech on stage. Lokesh Muni interrupted the speaker as soon as he was done speaking to refute the claim, saying, "We only agree with living in peace, but all the mythology around Om, Allah, and Manu are all rubbish. Madani completely wrecked the mood of the session.

"The stories he told, and I can narrate even bigger stories than that. I would even request him (Madani) to come for a discussion with me, or even I can come to meet him in Saharanpur," said Muni and adding that the first Jain Tirthankar was Rishabh, and his sons were Bharata and Bahubali, on whose name this country 'Bharat' was named. "You can't erase this. We don't agree with those statements," a seemingly angry Jain said.

Jain and a few other Hindu religious leaders subsequently stormed off stage in anger. Even after the walkout, a number of religious leaders from the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Sikh faiths stayed. However, two days

later the Jain leader tendered an unconditional apology.

It's interesting to note that Maulana Mahmood Madani, president of his Jamiat faction also made similar remarks in his keynote speech. According to him, the nation is equally his as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's and RSS leader Mohan Bhagwat's.

Mahmood Madani said it is wrong to suggest that Islam came from outside while claiming that the "first Prophet of Islam Adam descended here".

He also urged the RSS to nudge its affiliates to shun "hate and enmity" and jointly work for making the country the most developed in the world.

Extending a hand of friendship to RSS and its political wing, Mahmood Madani said "We want to make it clear, that we do not have any religious or ethnic enmity with RSS and the BJP, but our difference is based on the ideology.

He welcomed the recent statements of the RSS chief.

"According to Islamic teachings, a hand extended for friendship should be held firmly and strengthened. Therefore, we warmly invite him and his followers to forget mutual hatred

and enmity and embrace each other and make our beloved motherland the most developed, ideal, coexisting, and peaceful superpower in the world".

Not sensing any plot behind dividing Muslims on the "pasmanda and ghair pasmanda" line, Mahmood faction also welcomed the Modi government's outreach programme of so-called "pasmanda" communities amongst the Indian Muslims.

The declaration said that "Islam teaches equality and racial non-discrimination, but despite this, the existence of pasmanda communities amongst Muslims is a ground reality.----- We congratulate the government of India for its recent statement to uplift the backward communities and hope that practical steps will be taken soon for the welfare and progress of the backward communities irrespective of their religious affiliations".

In the plenary session, a message also read out by Mahmood Madani cautions "Muslims that they are the direct target of the internal and external enemies of our country, every tactic is being used to psychologically frustrate, incite and mislead them, but they should not despair, nor should they give up patience. The so-called organizations, which propagate extremist and violent tendencies in the name of Jihad are not entitled to our cooperation and support in terms of the country's interest or the religion of Islam. They are using 'Jihad' in a completely falsified narrative. Sacrifice, loyalty, and patriotism to the nation are our national and religious duties, our religion and our country come first, this is our

slogan, to give our lives to the motherland and die for its honor, is what our elders have taught us". Commenting on the content of the message, a political analyst underlined that the Jamiat (M) painted Muslims and Christians with the same brush. Speaking with *Islamic Voice*, he asked which Muslim organization is propagating extremist and violent tendencies in the name of Jihad.

Harping on its pet theme of composite nationalism, the message further reads "-----, the efforts of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind and its leaders are also parts of the golden history of India's past and present. The thought and philosophy of composite nationalism and Hindu-Muslim unity is the legacy left by our elders.

Against this, the current aggressive communalism being promoted in the name of Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity does not match the soil and ethos of this country."

Taking strong exception to the message, Prof Baseer Ahmad Khan, president of All India Muslim Majlis, told *Islamic Voice* that both the factions of Jamiat lack the guts to call spade a spade, otherwise it would have not made such wild allegations against Muslim organizations. "Muslims, Christians and weaker sections of the society are the victims of the aggressive Hinduva communalism while the Jamiat is making them the aggressor."

Prof Khan, who is also a former pro-vice chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University, claimed that the statement was reckless and reeked of official capitulation.

Prof Khan also took exception to Maulana Arshad Madani's

utterances about Adam and his contention about Allah and Om saying it can open a "fitna" (corruption) and mental apostasy in the community. Maulana Arshad Madani's assertion regarding Manu also attracted Dalit ire. A top Dalit leader said "You Muslims have again proved that you will go with Hindu Upper Castes to save your skin, rather than propagating Islam's social justice message. Every Muslim ruler in the past 1,000 years has sided with and ruled India via upper castes. It was expected that Muslims would not change their attitude. But you are again at the door of upper castes. And remember, whatever you will do, they will make you dogs, as they did to us, despite doing all the services to them. Good that your Maulanas have now recognized Manu Smriti.. Good for them to keep it along with the Quran at their homes."

The Jamiat session billed as Centenary Celebration (Jamiat came into existence in 1919 but due to Covid-19 and other circumstances it could not hold the celebrations) was held on February 10 to 12 at Ramlila Maidan here. During the plenary session, a 17-point resolution was also adopted in which madrasa autonomy, Islamophobia, UCC, Auqaf, Kashmir, and other routine issues were included. It warned that any attempt to impose UCC will harm the unity and integrity of the country as India is a very diverse nation on the planet earth. Yet, the Jamiat stays silent regarding the radicalization of Hindu youngsters, their training in the use of firearms, and their open display of armaments. As mob lynching incidents and violent attacks on Muslims, Christians, Dalits, and tribal groups are not abated. If the assembly had passed a resolution, it would have been understandable that Jamiat was also concerned about the radicalization of Hindu youths. ■

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What is the Criteria for the Lunar month Calendar?

Abdul Rahim V A

Even today, the Muslim world is discussing this matter a lot, but still, it has not been able to reach a consensus so far.

But that is as much as we think in this matter, We common people also can make inquiries about whether there is conceptual confusion in this regard.

Usually, major controversies regarding dates arise during fasting, Eid, Hajj, etc. If we start a search on this topic, the first thing we hear is the prophetic word related to fasting. "If you see, fast, and if you see, break the fast, if it is hidden by a cloud, complete 30". In fact, there is no other hadith in the sayings of the Prophet that has been so misinterpreted.

Two serious mistakes have been made in the interpretation of this hadith. The first is given the word "**Ruyat**" meaning naked **eyesight**. It is completely absurd, impractical and never fits the context. Actually, man is observing the planets.

Quran 9:36-37 states that the calendar started from the beginning of the universe. Since the



beginning of the human race, man has started observing it. The result is that today man has grown to the point where he can touch the sky. And the second mistake made in the aforementioned prophetic word is very serious. Here it is said to **complete 30** once it is covered by the **cloud**. Cloud is actually a temporary phenomenon. It is also momentary. It is nothing short of superstitious to believe that a momentary object obscuring a planet can change a date itself in a cultured and educated community. Here, the word '**Gumma**' has been given the meaning of being hidden by a **cloud**. But the correct meaning of that word is **Amavasi or New Moon** if you look it up in authentic dictionaries. The Prophet explained such an important universal truth to the

people in a very simple way. means "...you complete the month in **Amavasi**"

This is actually the standard for month change. In the Muslim world, only if this criterion is accepted, whether it is by calculation or by sight (observation) There is an end to the uncertainty that exists today. This has been proven through the Qur'an, Prophethood, and science. This year's (1444) Shaban started on Tuesday. This month has 29 days. The 29th day is the new moon. On this day the moon is completely hidden from the eyesight of men on earth. Because the illuminated area of the moon is not facing the earth. It is the fourth Tuesday of this month. The very next day, Wednesday begins Ramadan. The Prophet taught us to complete the month on the day of the new moon. Then the Ramadan of this year 1444 begins on Wednesday, the Muslim world must enter fasting.

(The writer is General Secretary, Hijri committee of India, contacted @ <https://hijricalendar.in/>, Cell: 9605757190) ■

Motipur Masjid Imam created a historical Record by leading 71 years of Tarawih



Hafiz Md Salim Sb, the Pesh Imam of the Motipur Masjid, Moti market, Gandhi Chowk Rd, Motipur, Bihar, is now 90 years old and has led Tarawih Prayers from 1950 here till 2021. He led Tarawih for 71 years in Motipur Masjid. Due to age, he stopped leading the Tarawih Prayers in 2021.

The Motipur Masjid was built in the 1930s by Abdul Rahim Oosman, a Cutchi Memon businessman from Kolkata, who also founded the Motipur Sugar Factory. PO Motipur Muzaffarpur.

(Report: Abdul Rahim contact @ +91 84440 57949)

» Page 2

adequately channelized by the media to give a rounded assessment of Islamic issues. You can't have blanket damnation of the entire community.

By reinforcing them wittingly and unwittingly, the media further deepens their impact. The new media not only reflects the mood but is responsible for building it as well. Media oxygen is provided only to those who say something communally inflammable and in such an environment, pacifists and even moderated segments' efforts suffer significant damage.

Good journalism requires an understanding of reliable and rigorous academic studies, attentive listening to diverse sources, dogged examination of data and other records, and close observation of policies and institutions, mainly when their messages deal with human faith.

The distorted images of Islam stem partly from a lack of understanding of Islam among non-Muslims and partly from the failure of Muslims to explain themselves. The results are predictable: hatred feeds on hatred. Ignorance of Islam exists both among Muslims and non-

Muslims. Non-Muslims misunderstand Islam in their ignorance and turn, they fear it. This way, fantasy, conjecture, and stereotypes replace fact and reality.

Similarly, Muslims have misconceptions. They react to the hate and fear of non-Muslims by creating a defensive posture within their societies and, sometimes, a hostile environment built on aggressive rhetoric. In this heat and misunderstanding, voices of tolerance are drowned out.

Much coverage of Muslims in news outlets has a negative slant. We've seen how some papers get their news about Muslims wrong and how often they reuse the same stereotypes. True, like many others, Muslims also have a share of negative elements. But the story must be fair and reflective and shouldn't generalize about all Muslims and feed into a broader far-right narrative. The good storylines of Muslim characters are woefully few. Often, there is a consistent stream of sloppy reporting, bias, or willful sensationalism about Muslims. The way stories are deformed to fit

Why Muslims Need Fair Media

a formula about Muslims – and the difficulties in uprooting these fictions once they've been laid out – can be seen across the media. Corrections and retractions by the media are extremely rare... As CP Scott, the founder-editor of The Guardian emphasized: "**Comment is free, but facts are sacred.**"

But there is still a space that allows us to express ourselves as freely as we want. This is the space available in media for coverage of positive and inspiring stories of achievers. We have an enormous pool of talented Muslims in fields as diverse as science and sports, but we have

not been able to project them properly. We must consider them not just as symbols of Muslim pride but as live role models for the entire society. At the same time, several individuals and groups are making a real difference in people's lives through pioneering work in the social and development field. ■

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There is a strong voice of moderates from within the Muslim ranks that could be adequately channelized by the media to give a rounded assessment of Islamic issues. You can't have blanket damnation of the entire community.

US study criticizes Marginalizing Muslims in Media and Cinema



The *Los Angeles Times* published a detailed article on Muslims in the United States of America, which indicated that Muslim immigrants suffer from abuse in the media, in addition to their suffering from marginalization in the media and cinema.

The newspaper referred to a recent study launched by USC Annenberg's inclusion initiative; which indicated that Muslims make up 25 percent of the world's population, but their presence as characters in popular TV series does not exceed 1.1 percent.

The study stated that images of Muslims are often linked to terrorism or violence, as the study conducted found that "more than 30% of the 98 Muslim

personalities assessed were vulnerable to perpetrators of violence, while nearly 40% were the target of violent attacks."

The author of the article said that there is a common trope that portrays Muslims in a bad light and relates to "the feeling of the liberation of women when they take off the veil," which makes the public assume that the veil is a symbol of oppression.

They are also commonly portrayed as submissive and fearful of their male counterparts, reinforcing the idea that Muslim women are vulnerable to oppression.

The author also indicated that the focus is often placed on the faith of those Muslim personalities,

which reduces the chances of showing other aspects of their personalities, which makes the public believe that religion is the focus of every Muslim's life, and also causes Muslims to isolate instead of integrating them and turning them into productive members of American societies.

Note that the aforementioned study revealed that among the 98 Muslim personalities in the sample, almost half of them referred to their faith in some way, and 23.5 percent of them revealed that they were portrayed non-verbally on the grounds that they are Muslims.

(Source: <https://shiawaves.com/english/news/89815-us-study-criticizes-marginalizing-muslims-in-media-and-cinema/>)

Six from Qatar feature among Forbes Middle East's 100 most powerful businesswomen

As many as six women from Qatar have been featured among the Middle East's 100 most powerful businesswomen in 2023, according to Forbes Middle East magazine.

They are Dr. Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari, managing director of Hamad Medical Corporation, who has been ranked eighth; followed by Noor al-Sulaiti, chief executive officer of Ooredoo Oman, ranked 31st; Mira al-Attiyah, chief executive officer of QNB Capital, ranked 49th; Sheikha Alanoud bint Hamad al-Thani, deputy managing director and chief business officer of Qatar Financial Centre, ranked 61st; Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh al-Thani, founder and chairperson of Al Faleh Educational Holding, ranked 71st;



and Sheikha Hanadi bint Nasser al-Thani, founder and the chief executive officer of Amwal, Al Waab City Real Estate and Injaz Qatar, who is ranked 82nd.

HE Dr al-Kuwari is also Qatar's Minister of Public Health.

Controversial Hijab ban forced One lakh Girls to leave Colleges

New Delhi: CPI (M) MP John Brittas brought up the contentious ban on head covering in educational institutions in Karnataka during the budget session in the Rajya Sabha. He asserted that as a result, approximately 1 lakh Muslim women students in Karnataka discontinued their studies at government colleges.

He was taking part in a debate on a private member's resolution that

Abdul Wahab of the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) had proposed, which urged the government to heed the Sachar Committee report's recommendations.

While discussing crimes against Muslims, journalist and managing director of Kairali TV (Malayalam), Brittas, bemoaned the lack of specificity in Wahab's resolution.

He said that more than one lakh

Muslim girls left Karnataka's government colleges on their own as a result of the hijab controversy. Brittas asserts that there are much fewer Muslim female students enrolled in educational institutions than there need to be.

In a related affidavit to the Supreme Court, Brittas asserted that the Karnataka government rejected the hijab in order to uphold a secular clothing code for college students.

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Sir,

Apropos to "Islam's First Muezzin" by Moin Qazi in Islamic Voice, February 2023, the article emphasizes the birth of adhan and the first voice of adhan by Bilal ibn Rabah (Ra) is exhilarating every mind. The well-thought article mesmerizes every mind towards adhan and the following salah. The author's elaborate knowledge is appreciated, and Allah bestows his blessings on him.

**A. Kaja Nazimudeen,
Eruvadi, Tirunelveli District,
Tamil Nadu.**

Sir,

Apropos Tahsin Ahmed's article *The Fringe Events of Marriage* (IV Feb 2023). Narrating a social evil that all are aware of doesn't serve any purpose. We should make a concerted effort to build up public opinion against it, making the best use of all available platforms.

**SNH Razvi, Former Secretary,
Karnataka State Minorities
Commission, Bangalore.**

Sir,

This has reference to Tahsin Ahmed's article "The Fringe Events of Marriage" (IV Feb 2023). The author has not shown any direction as to how these problems can be overcome and countered. One thing I appreciate is the comment that merely

reminding about religious obligations and asking them to show concern for the poor will not solve this issue. Overall, the article should have suggested some points toward the solution instead of merely detailing the issues.

**Iqbal Ahmed,
Deputy Director of Sericulture
(Retd.), Bangalore.**

Sir,

In this month of February 2023 IV, an interesting article titled; 'The Fringe Events of Marriage...' by Tahsin Ahmed drew my attention. Lately, I had been to a few marriages, as this month has been termed the season of weddings. People are busy trying to carry out this obligation at the earliest as the arrival of the holy month of Ramadan is looming on the heads of Ummah. It is not that marriages are prohibited in this holy month but the fasting being Fard would put a damper on the celebrations of; fringe events; and extravagant marriages, where the opulence of wealth is on display.

The author has started the article with the beautiful Hadeeth about making the Nikah easy and its importance. He has rightly pointed out that we, in general, violate these meaningful teachings. Adding a little more to the writing of the learned author,



I would like to mention that marriage events have become the events of ego, pride, and show-off. Here both parties are to be equally blamed. The author has very clearly written about how they want to overdo it in carrying out various ceremonies, which have no significance or any kind of importance in Islam. The cultural rites and rituals that made their way into the marriages of Muslims are the direct adaptation of certain ceremonies which are not in compliance with Shariah. On the contrary, they are in direct violation of Islamic preaching.

Again writer is quite right to mention that, at every step, from the fixation of the marriage to the completion of Nikah, the boy's family tries to burden the bride's family. This is against the etiquette of Islamic marriage. Islam preaches not to overburden the girl's family. Even any kind of reception from the girl's family on the day of Nikah is

discouraged, except for those who are immediate family visiting from far away. The girl's side is pressurized by the boy's side to spend prohibitively more on ritual ceremonies and parties. To fulfill and oblige the demands for the marriage, parents are forced to go into interest-based loans. This is very common among middle-class families.

It should be the only *Valima* where generosity should be on display. The entire community, rich or poor, must be invited to the *Valima* reception. It should be made known to the entire community, family, and friends that the wedding has taken place. One should bear in mind that this happy occasion should not be done in such a way that, people may term it as a miserly event

either. At the same time, they shouldn't be so extravagant that the parents become bankrupt, and the rights of other siblings are violated.

I would also like to bring to everybody's attention that many families and businesses are attached and dependent on the so-called wedding season. We should do something within our capacity to support the well-being of the society that we live in.

The author concludes that even after the wedding many other ritualistic ceremonies are imposed upon the girl's side, relating to the birth of the first child. May Allah help us to hold His rope tightly and let go of the practices which lay us astray.

**Aameen. Qazi Minhaj Azher,
USA**



AN APPEAL

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All are requested to encourage the Management with their assistance specially during the holy month of Ramazan which is a month of Charity. It is hoped that your assistance to these deprived children will protect them from getting their lives destroyed and will, Insha Allah, make them educated responsible citizens of the Society.

SAHRI and IFTAR : Since there is no holiday in the institution during Ramazan students stay at the institution and observe fasts throughout the holy month of Ramazan. SAHRI and IFTAR arrangements are made for the students and staff at the institution. Donors are requested to contribute for this arrangement or provide food grains etc. for this purpose.

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Syed Tahsin
Ahmed

My driver brought the vehicle to a screeching halt and switched off the ignition. Jerked out of half-slumber, I asked him, "What happened?" He replied with apprehension writ large over his face that a black cat crossed the path. After a few seconds, he started the vehicle and carried on, muttering to himself that this is a bad omen. Curiously, there is colour racism even in superstitions: black cat is a bad omen. We also insist on a black hen for giving *sadaqah*! The poor crow is nobody's favourite just because he is black. Owls are also believed to bring bad luck. These are a few of the innumerable superstitions that are blindly believed even by educated people and are not restricted to one region or one religion.

That reminded me of my school days and Kaka's grocery shop near our house in Mysore which I frequented. All the bananas in the shop used to be sold out except the twin bananas, which had no takers. When I offered to buy the twin banana at the cost of a single one, the shopkeeper always seemed rather amused but pleased to dispose of a non-saleable item. The superstition is that those who eat twin bananas will get twin children. I have eaten plenty of twin bananas, but I didn't have twin children!

In Government offices, it is a common practice that a transferred official seldom hands over charge of the post held by him or takes over charge of the new post on a Tuesday. Although I was never successful in handing over the charge on a Tuesday to the new one, I was able to



persuade some officers to hand over the charge to me on Tuesday. They agreed after being told that the risk is entirely mine since I am joining the new post. "What would you do if your child was born on a Tuesday?" I would ask, but never got an answer to this.

Another superstition that never fails to astonish me is the instruction to the eldest son of the family not to stand at the doorstep when there is lightning all over the sky. I never believed that lightning would be so selective as to strike at the eldest son if he was standing at the doorstep but would alter its course if it finds his younger brother standing there instead! Then, there was my grandmother who used to warn me not to eat both fish and curds together in a meal fearing that this could afflict me with a skin disease. When she was not around, I would eat both the fish and the curds together, but it did not lead to skin problems.

In India giving cash as a gift on occasions like birthdays or marriage is a common practice. The superstition which is widely prevalent is to add a one-rupee coin to whatever amount is being

gifted. It is believed that adding one rupee is a wish that the person who receives it should continue to get wealthy and it should not signify an end. Many of the gift envelopes sold in the shops have a one-rupee coin embedded. The evil eye is of course a reality, but Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has given guidelines as to how it can be warded off. Instead, it is believed that applying a black spot with *kaajal* on the forehead or the cheeks of an infant can ward off evil.

Another superstition is that the itching of the right palm brings good fortune or even guests. The itching of the left hand is a bad omen. Throughout the world, the number 13 is considered an unlucky number. Some hotels go to the extent of not labeling the 13th floor at all since most customers will not prefer rooms on the 13th floor. Friday, the 13th is feared the most. Thankfully, the Muslim community does not appear to give much credence to this superstition. Indians don't just say "I am going", but will say: "I will go and come back", fearing that merely saying "going" may become a bad omen. But while going out of a hospital we are careful not to say "I will go and come back"! There is also the case of the broken mirror. No, it is not an Agatha Christie mystery, but a bad omen with a belief that breaking a mirror will result in seven years of bad luck and suffering. If a photo frame breaks, it is usually taken as a sign of a bad omen that something bad will happen to the person in the picture. Pregnant ladies are also

warned not to eat *rotis* which get blackened.

Superstitions have been the bane of nations throughout the ages. These involve false beliefs in things that have no real power. Superstitions will create unnecessary apprehension and fear in a person's mind and destroy his/her peace of mind. They are known to cause anxiety and guilt. There are many more superstitions and only a few are listed here. Moreover, I have only written about the social superstitions and have carefully excluded the superstitions with religious overtones, especially those relating to marriage, childbirth and death rites. An *aalim* or a *mufti* is the competent person to talk about these. However, as a general rule, superstitions can be dealt with effectively by following these guidelines:

1) Putting unwavering and full

faith and trust in Allah. Everything happens from Him and not even a leaf can fall without his command.

2) Not to get affected by doubts created because of superstitions. Do not get influenced by superstitious thoughts and do not allow them to affect your behaviour, attitude, and actions. You have to consider that such things never existed.

3) Say the *du'a's* mentioned in the *ahadees* and call upon Allah and Allah will protect you from all superstitions and bad omens and guide you on the right path.

The Qur'an and *ahadees* encourage men and women to study, reason, think rationally, and gain knowledge. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always placed emphasis on faith, determination, perseverance, patience, and hard work, rather than following superstitious beliefs.

(The author is a retired KAS officer and can be contacted at tahsin789@yahoo.com)

Superstitions will create unnecessary apprehension and fear in a person's mind and destroy his/her peace of mind. They are known to cause anxiety and guilt.

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Zoya loved football. She had been playing the sport since she was 3. Now, she was 16 years old and had a tournament coming up. She would get up early for practice and go to coaching with her friends every morning. And as Zoya and her friends were walking back to their neighborhood in the evening, "The final match is tomorrow!" Squeaked one of her friends, named Tina.

"Yes! And I'm so stressed out. We three should party at my house tonight." Suggested Zoya's other friend, Monika.

Zoya laughed and said, "Really? You want to party when the Final match is tomorrow?"

"C'mon Zoya, we all are tired from today's practice. It would be good to just dance and lose some of the stress." Said, Monika.

"I would rather be practicing for the match, I really want our team to win the Trophy." protested Zoya.

"But we still have more than 24 hours till the match, spending 1-2 hours having fun will not do any harm. We can perform better if we have less stress. Please, You have to come." Told Tina.

They agreed to go home, get ready for the party and meet at Monika's house.

Though Zoya had agreed, she wasn't willing to go to the party, after all, She didn't want to lose her friends or even want her friends to think that she was boring. But Zoya also wanted to practice before the

The Pen

Inspired by a concept of the Discover Yourself workshop, Written by Alisa Sehrish

match and win the Trophy she had been dreaming to secure since she was a kid!

Zoya goes home and explains the dilemma she is facing, to her Elder sister.

And after Zoya is done explaining, her Elder sister takes a Pen from her bag, places it on her own palm, and holds out her hand to Zoya.

"Take it," says her elder sister.

Now Zoya was even more confused than she was earlier.

"Take the pen, Zoya."

"Why?" Zoya asked.

"Just take it, I'm offering it to you."

says her sister.

Zoya does as her sister asked her to do and took the pen. Then the Elder sister asks Zoya, "Who took the pen?"

Zoya says, "I took the pen because you offered it to me."

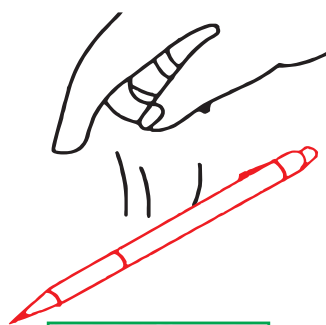
Then her sister says, "Okay. But who TOOK the pen?"

Who is responsible for taking the pen I offered?"

Zoya answers, "I took the pen you offered. So I'm the one who is responsible for taking it."

"Yes. Now tell me, Zoya, Am I responsible for you taking the pen from my hand? Or am I only responsible for offering you the pen and asking you to take it?" Wisely asked her Elder sister.

Zoya went into deep introspection of this question and realized that



her sister only OFFERED her a pen and didn't GIVE the pen forcefully to her. Zoya realized that she, herself, was responsible for the act of taking the pen.

Then her Elder sister says, "I only offered you the pen, Zoya. YOU had a choice. You could have taken the pen, hence complying with my offer. Or you could have not taken the pen. Even if I had shouted at you to take the pen or even hit you for the same, you would still have the power to choose what you want to do. Remember Zoya, you always have **The Power of Choice**."

You had the choice before taking the pen and you made one. And You, Zoya, are responsible for the choice you make and hence you will face consequences for the

same."

"Hmm... That makes a lot of sense," says Zoya. "But what about the Party my friends are calling me to? Should I go or not?" She asks.

"Well, my dear sister, I don't know." Her elder sister replies and adds, "It's your choice."

My Personal Reflection On The Above Story:-

Shaitaan only whispers to us or calls us to do some acts of sin (like offering the pen).

We have the choice to comply with his offer or not.

Sure, Shaitaan is responsible for calling us to do that thing, by tempting us, and giving us more and more reasons to do it. But!

We are responsible for DOING the act. And WE face the consequences.

Inspired by a concept of the Discover Yourself workshop, Written by Alisa Sehrish.

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Moqheeta

'If you fail to plan you plan to fail'.

We all have heard this quote in some setting or the other. It has mostly been used for worldly goals. But Muslims have a bigger goal. We have been warned that our time will be questioned. And our goal is to work for our *akhirah*. Should we not be more conscious of how we plan to use our time to the optimal use?

Ramadhan is very close. May Allah swt make us all witness the coming Ramadhan and may He give us the health and *taufeeq* to make best use of this blessed month. May this Ramadhan be the best so far.

Every Ramadhan we try to do a little more than what we did in the previous one. This Ramadhan can also be different and more productive if we prepare well in advance for it. Let us plan this Ramadhan as a family.

Allah loves us immensely and is waiting to reward us for the smallest of good deeds. The following hadith is one such example of His love for us.

In a Hadith, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "The one who intends to do a good deed and he does not do it, he will get rewarded for it as if he did it. And if he does it, his reward will



be multiplied ten times." (Muslim, 130).

Isn't this hadith a huge motivator for us to plan every minute of our Ramadhan in the best possible manner. If we can execute the plan, then double reward, but for some unseen circumstances, if the plan doesn't go as planned, then we will still be rewarded by the One, for whom we are planning all this.

Yes, Ramadhan is the month of Quran, and it is recommended that more and more Quran be recited in this month. But young children who cannot read a lot of Quran, need to see that the pleasure of Allah can be attained through so many ways. Children might need more variety to stay productive throughout the month. And it is a great opportunity to explore and practice different ways of pleasing Allah.

As a parent you must help the child devise the month's target plan. This activity needs to start well before Ramadhan and not after Ramadhan has started. Parents should also have a plan. Everyone should sit and plan as a family and show others their plans. Let children see and realize that every person has a different target to achieve and a different way to please Allah swt. Of course, one can add more in the plan, but I feel these are the basic areas for anybody to work on.

Salah and Quran - The child can plan to make small changes in his/her salah routines - pray on time, pray without reminders from parents, pray with concentration. Similarly, with the Quran, the child can decide to do some research or spend some time understanding an ayah a day. He/She can write the ayah on a poster and make a

Ramadhan ayah book.

Relation with family, relatives and neighbours - Ramadhan is a beautiful opportunity to strengthen or fix the family ties. Adults should work on it more thoughtfully and actively, but on the same hand, they should also help children maintain healthy relations. Love needs to be expressed and there are multiple ways one can express it. Ask children to make small *iftar* notes for neighbours. Or small gift notes for their grandparents. They can make handmade gifts or buy gifts with their own pocket money. Ask children to write down different approaches they will use during Ramadhan to please their friends and family.

Sadaqa - At the behest itself make this point very clear with your child, 'every good deed done for

the sake of Allah is Sadaqa'. You can ask the child to list a few good deeds and from that ask the child to write down a few that he/she finds very easy to perform and some that he/she finds very difficult to do. For example, a child might find smiling and saying *salam*s very easy, but when it comes to sharing toys or snacks, he/she struggles. Ask the child to make sure he consciously carries out a couple of easy deeds along with some difficult deeds of goodness.

Self-check - Ask your child to do a self-check on his habits, strengths, weaknesses. Ask him/her to identify 3-4 areas where improvement is needed. Maybe he is very disorganised, or is bad at time keeping, or takes offence to every small comment, or loses his/her cool at the slightest provocation. This will help the child to overcome his/her weaknesses and since it is the time of Ramadhan, the child would want to work on them purely for the sake of Allah swt.

You can extend this activity further and invite your building children and have a **Ramadhan Target Planning session** with them. Or do it for the children of your extended family.

You will gain *sawab* for every plan that a child makes regardless of him acting upon it or not. ■



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● **NOTE:** See the documentary film NAZR-E-ENAYAT on the Internet "YOUTUBE" in which there is a brief history of both orphanages

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Adil Salahi

When we think of the role the Muslim community is required to play in life's stage, we are bound to feel that constant motivation is needed to enable this community to face up to the challenges and overcome the difficulties of its task. Muslims are trustees of God's message to mankind. They fulfil their trust by presenting to the world a model society: civilized, caring, compassionate, and truthful. Such are the characteristics of any society, which implements the Islamic code of living. They complement that by conveying God's message and calling on others to accept it as a constitution. As we said earlier, Ramadan provides the perfect training for the Muslim community to discharge its duties. This should not give anyone the impression that Ramadan is a period of hard training, which we have to endure against our wishes. Indeed, the reverse is true. Ramadan is an enjoyable season of worship and blessings. Night worship after fasting a long summer day makes the hardship involved acquire a pleasing sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. It is, in a sense, akin to the feeling of a hardworking student who sits for his examination after thorough preparation. He knows his

Ramadan: Motivation for Excellence

Ramadan is an enjoyable season of worship and blessings. Night worship after fasting a long summer day makes the hardship involved acquire a pleasing sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.



answers to be correct and has no worries about the result. As the student in our example needs to follow up his excellent showing and remarkable results with continuous reading and research in his field, to add to his knowledge and benefit from his experience, Muslims are required to continue with their pure devotion to God throughout their lives. Indeed, they are expected not to lose sight of their status as

servants of God, to whom they submit themselves. As servants of God, Muslims offer their worship with the purity of intention and clarity of purpose. They seek His pleasure by implementing the code of living He revealed to them through the Prophet. They know also that the benefit accruing from such an implementation is theirs only.

Hence, they approach their task with care and diligence, as also

with a content mind and a responsive heart.

True submission to God means a happy acceptance of whatever comes from Him and a determined effort to carry out His commandments and implement His guidance. Worship plays an important role in all this. It strengthens the relationship between man and God and makes it an active relationship, which affects man's behaviour, values, and ideas. In Islam, worship does not belong to the cosmetic or idealistic side of life. It is indeed an important part of the essential and practical side. By offering five prayers a day, every day, Muslims

acquire a very real sense of God's presence with them every second of their lives. Thus, they have no chance to forget or overlook the fact that they have submitted themselves to Him. Hence, all their actions, ideas, and concepts about life, their role in it, and their destiny are conditioned by this fact. Their overriding ambition becomes simple: to win God's pleasure.

So far we have mentioned only one aspect of worship, which is prayer. But worship in Islam pervades life and imparts to it its own colouring. Every action a person does can be an act of worship if intended as a contribution to man's role as God's deputy, or if it is undertaken in pursuit of God's pleasure. In this way, Islam looks after the spiritual side of man, not in doses, which may or may not have the needed regularity, but in a steady and

» Page 18

Muslims are trustees of God's message to mankind. They fulfil their trust by presenting to the world a model society: civilized, caring, compassionate, and truthful. Such are the characteristics of any society, which implements the Islamic code of living



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NOTE: See the documentary film NAZR-E-ENAYAT on the Internet "YOUTUBE" in which there is a brief history of Girls' and Boys' orphanages

Adil Salahi

How Fasting Sets Higher Standards

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: *Fasting is a shield. Let no one who is fasting commit any obscenity or foolishness. Should anyone engage him in a fight or a slanging match, let him answer him by saying: I am fasting, I am fasting.*

It is well known that fasting in the month of Ramadan is one of the main duties Islam lays down for its followers. Some scholars consider these duties as pillars on which the structure of Islam is built. It is needless to say that fasting in Ramadan ranks on par with prayer and zakah in its importance as a main Islamic duty. Indeed, it enjoys a special status, since it can only be fulfilled through abstention, rather than through direct or positive action. For this reason, Allah is quoted by the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) as saying in a hadith qudsi, “*Everything a human being does is his, with the exception of fasting, which belongs to me and I reward it accordingly*” (Al-Bukhari). This is due to the fact that there are no apparent signs which indicate that a person is fasting.

Islam is a religion with a keen sense of moral values. This is reflected in a serious moral code which all Muslims are supposed to observe. Good manners, politeness, kindness to others, and keeping away from everything which is not conducive to good social relations are also part of the Islamic code of conduct. There are however certain aspects of morals and manners that are particularly associated with certain acts of worship. It is appropriate to consider here what sort of social values are associated with fasting. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

Fasting is a shield. Let no one who is fasting commit any obscenity or foolishness. Should anyone engage him in a fight or a slanging

match, let him answer him by saying: I am fasting, I am fasting. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) gives fasting a very apt description when he considers it as a shield, protecting the person who fasts from the fire of hell. Indeed, fasting provides protection in more ways than one. Like fasting weakens the body, it also weakens sinful desires. This makes the fasting person more able to resist any temptation to commit any sin. Since man always feels the temptation to fulfill his desires through any available means, whether legitimate or not, these desires are weakened through fasting, which proves the protective aspect of this unique act of worship.

The other protective effect of fasting is seen in the fact that Allah rewards fasting very generously. It is well known that Allah rewards any good action by at least ten times its value. He multiplies the reward even more to the extent that He rewards some good actions by 700 times their value. This figure, however, is not a ceiling for Allah's reward. He may reward good actions much more generously. We human beings are not the judges, it is Allah alone who is The Judge and will reward accordingly. Imam Malik relates the following hadith, which has been related by others in different forms:

Every action a human being does

shall be multiplied—a good action by ten times its value, up to 700 times, and even more as Allah may wish. Allah says: With the exception of fasting, which belongs to Me, and I reward it accordingly.

What is very clear here is that the exception is made in order to stress the greater value of fasting and the greater reward it earns. Allah makes the exception and attributes it to Himself. He emphasizes that fasting is offered purely to Him. He, therefore, responds by rewarding it more generously than any other action. This is confirmed by a Qur'anic verse that states [The steadfast shall be given their reward without reckoning] (Az-Zumar 39:10).

The absence of reckoning signifies the fact that the reward is limitless. Most scholars and commentators on the Qur'an interpret the term “the steadfast” in this verse as referring to those who fast. Fasting can only be offered if a person has a strong faith. What Allah wants us to understand here is that He accepts this act of worship that is dedicated to Him since it cannot be done with false intentions, and He rewards it, not on the basis of its value, but on the basis of His generosity which is without limit. Moreover, Allah rewards much more generously any good action done by the human being who is

fasting. Such rewards help shield the person who fasts against the fire of Hell. Since on the Day of Judgment, good actions are balanced against bad ones, the multiplied reward gained through fasting appears to be of much greater value. If a person's good actions fall short of what he needs to offset his sins, he will find that good actions in Ramadan will benefit him immeasurably because Allah has attached to them a great value. This is the protection fasting provides for man.

We are also required not to act in a foolish manner. The Arabic term used here refers particularly to shouting and raising one's voice in an unbecoming manner. In some versions of this hadith, the term used refers specifically to indulging in any verbal dispute and raising one's voice. The person who fasts is supposed to behave in a very decent way, even with those who try to quarrel with him.

This is re-emphasized by the rest of the hadith, which addresses

itself to the case when a person who is fasting finds himself drawn into a verbal battle or a slanging match. He is told not to respond. What he should do is make it known to the other person that he is fasting. By such a declaration, he actually tells his opponent that he refuses to be drawn into such a verbal quarrel because he has made up his mind to observe the manners required of people who are fasting. In a situation like the hadith describes, a fasting person tries to resist being drawn into a quarrel by saying “I am fasting.” He says it to the other party in clear terms if this happens in Ramadan when every Muslim is supposed to fast. This serves as a reminder to the other party, if he is Muslim, about the code of conduct in Islam that requires a person to abstain from quarrels, especially when fasting.

If the situation arises when one is fasting voluntarily or outside Ramadan, then it is preferable to make the statement “I am fasting” to oneself. This serves as a reminder to oneself that one must not be drawn into such a situation. It also prevents any possibility of boasting about one's fasting, should one make this statement aloud. Indeed, the other person may touch on this statement and accuse him of boastfulness, which may lead in turn to an even worse dispute. ■

If a person's good actions fall short of what he needs to offset his sins, he will find that good actions in Ramadan will benefit him immeasurably because Allah has attached to them a great value.

RAMADAN REFLECTIONS

Aftab H. Kola,
Khaleej Times

Certain vibrant cultural moorings that define Ramadan's traditions are slowly fading away. Yet in some places of the Muslim world, two Ramadan-specific customs have survived the technological onslaught: the firing of cannons to announce the breaking of the fast and calling up people at Suhoor by going around the streets.

For the past many centuries, the firing of cannon from an elevated place in a town was the only means to alert people that it was time to break the fast, and gave a distinct character to the holy month.



The origin of this tradition has different versions but it is widely believed that it was during the

Streets and communities come alive as traditions live on Two customs specific to the holy month have stood the test of time

reign of the Mamluk (who ruled Egypt, Syria, and Palestine from 1250 to 1517) that cannon firing to signal the breaking of the fast started in Egypt. Another account traces its roots to the Ottoman Empire. Regardless of which version is true, the tradition was widely adopted across the Muslim world.



Dawn awakeners, known as Mesaharatis, who roam the



Ramadan lantern. Image used for illustrative purposes. Getty Images

streets giving out reminders of the pre-dawn Suhoor meal, can still

be seen. The song 'Ya Ebadallah, Wahhidullah, Eshi Ya Nayem, Wahhid Al-Razzaq' (O the servants of Allah, believe in the Oneness of Allah, wake up and pray to Allah, the sustainer) was quite popular with Mesaharatis in the Arab world.

According to some sources, the first recorded Mesaharati was Otba bin Ishaq who ambled through the streets of Cairo to remind people about the time of Suhoor in the year 853 AD.

The tradition is still practiced in several Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Sudan, Morocco, Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Bangladesh, etc.

Each of these countries has its own Mesaharati traditions and songs or prayers that they chant as they trek the neighbourhood to wake the residents up. Notwithstanding the new technology having set in, the tradition of Mesaharati lives on. And rightly, so.

(Source: Khaleej Times) ■

«Page 17

Ramadan: Motivation for Excellence

conscious line of action that keeps man's soul active and full of life. Even the materialistic side of human life benefits as a result. A truly Islamic society is free of much, if not all, of the mental and psychological diseases that plague the heart and soul of materialistic societies. The nearer to Islam a society is, the freer it is to worries, depression, anxiety,

and suicide. Worship, the Islamic way, is instrumental in achieving this result.

If we go back to our earlier analogy we find that if our student continues to follow up his remarkable success with enlightened reading and research, he is bound to be successful in his working life. Similarly, after achieving the fine standard of

purity of soul in our peak season of worship, i.e. Ramadan, we need to follow it up with a more relaxed but steady form of worship, which enhances that purity and preserves it for the rest of the year. This is what we achieve through regular attention to our prayers. It is a great achievement, which stays with us for life. (arabnews.com) ■



Hiyah Zaidi

The Important dates from the Revelation to the Holy Books and the Night of Power

The ninth month in the Islamic calendar is Ramadan which holds several significant dates

The Holy Month of Ramadan is expected to begin on 23 March 2023 and is often considered to be one of the most important months in the Islamic calendar.

Taking place over 30 days, this is the month when millions of Muslims fast, not eating or drinking water from sunrise to sunset.

But within the month, there are several days carrying significance, such as Laylat-al-Qadr, and the revelation of the Torah and the Psalms.

But when exactly are they? Here's what you need to know.

The important dates of Ramadan

Throughout Ramadan, there are several important dates with significance to different sects. The main dates of importance are:

2 Ramadan: when the Torah was bestowed on Moses, according to Islam



In Islam, the Torah, also known as the Tawart, is an Islamic holy book believed to have been sent by God to the prophets and messengers amongst the Children of Israel.

They hold the belief that the Torah is the word of God given to Moses and is always mentioned with respect.

The Torah, and the prophethood of Moses, known as Musa in Islam, is one of the fundamental tenets of Islam.

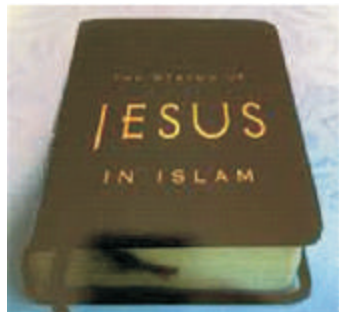
10 Ramadan: the death of Khadija bint Khuwaylid, the wife of Muhammad

Khadija was the first wife and the first follower of the Islamic Prophet, Muhammad. She is often referred to by Muslims as the Mother of Believers and is one of the most influential figures in Islam.

Khadija was a successful businesswoman in her own right and was married to Muhammad for 25 years.

It is believed that Khadija died in November 619 CE and is said to be around 65 years old at the time of her death.

12 Ramadan: the Gospel was bestowed on Jesus according to Islam



The Gospel, known as the Injil in Arabic, is described in Islam as one of the four holy books, with



the others being the Zabur (Psalms) the Tawart (Torah), and the Quran.

Jesus, known as Prophet Isa in Islam, is an important figure as he is believed to be the penultimate Prophet and messenger of God. In the Quran, Jesus is referred to over 187 times and is said to return in the second coming.

15 Ramadan: the birth of Hasan ibn Ali

Hasan ibn Ali is the firstborn son of two important figures in Islam, Ali, and Fatima.

Hasan ibn Ali is the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad and is considered one of the greatest companions of Islam. In the Shia sect, Hasan is said to have been the second Shia Imam succeeding his father, Ali.

17 Ramadan: the birth of Ibn ʿArabi

Ibn Arabi is said to be born in 1165 in Murcia, Taifa of Murcia, which is now in Spain. He was an Arab Andalusian Muslim Scholar, mystic, poet, and philosopher and is said to have been extremely influential in Islamic thought.

His cosmological teachings became the dominant worldview across the Muslim World, and he is an important figure in Sufism, a sect of Islam. It is said Ibn Arabi contributed massively to Sufi metaphysics.

In medieval Europe, Ibn Arabi was known as Dr. Maximus.

17 Ramadan: the death of Aisha bint Abu Bakr

Aisha was one of a wife of Muhammad after the death of Khadijah. She had an important part in early Islamic history and is portrayed as scholarly and inquisitive. It is believed she contributed to the spread of Islam and served the Muslim community for 44 years after his death.

Aisha is also known for the title of "Mother of the Believers."

18 Ramadan: the Psalms (Zabur) were bestowed on David (Dawood)



The Zabur, known as the Book of Psalms, is an Islamic holy book

belonging to David (Dawood). It is mentioned by name in the Quran three times. Muslims believe 18 Ramadan is when the book was revealed to David.

19 Ramadan: Ali struck on the head during prayer by an assassin with a sword

Ali ibn Ali Talib is one of the most central figures in Shia and Sunni sects of Islam. Ali was the son-in-law and cousin of Muhammad and became one of the first believers in Islam at the age of 9 or 11.

Ali ibn Ali Talib was assassinated at the age of 62 or 63 by Ibn Muljam who wanted revenge for a previous battle. It is believed that on 19 Ramadan, Ali was struck by a sword and died of his wounds a few days later - however, the timelines are disputed, and it is said that Ali died two or three days later on 21 Ramadan.

Laylat al-Qadr

Laylat al-Qadr, known in English as the Night of Power, the Night of Decree, or the Night of Destiny, is one of the holiest days in the sacred month.

This Night of Power is when Muslims believe the Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad; however, the exact date is unknown. It is observed during one of the last ten days of the month, most typically on the odd nights.

Many Muslims believe during this night; you will receive many blessings and the mercy of God in abundance.

This night is better than a thousand months, according to Muslims, which interpreted that praying throughout this night is rewarded equally with praying for a thousand months - just over 83 years, i.e., a lifetime - so many Muslims spend this night in prayer.

(Source: <https://www.nationalworld.com/culture/important-dates-ramadan-night-of-power/>)

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Qazi Minhaj Azher

Avoid Ramadan Parties



The month of Ramadan! The blessed ninth month on Islamic Lunar Calendar. This is also known as the month of the Quran and the month of Lailatul Qadr. Allah (SWT) says in Quran: Surely! We have sent down the Quran in Lailatul Qadr (*Night of Power or Decree*), and this Night is better than a thousand months. Meaning the worship of Allah (SWT) in this one Night is better than thousand months.

Ramadan is the month in which Allah (SWT) has prescribed a special obligatory Ibadah of fasting (Saum) for all able-bodied, healthy, and mentally sound believers. Fasting enfolds many virtues within itself.

First: Islam means total submission to Allah in peace. Fasting is the test of submission, as you are commanded by Allah (SWT) to get up at odd hours in the early morning, eat, and fast from dawn to dusk. While fasting, what was Halal (permitted) before would be Haram at Allah's command. After breaking the fast, the permitted Halal, which was Haram during fasting, will again be Halal throughout the Night till Sahri time.

Second: Allah (SWT) likes to be known by his two most beautiful names. Ar Rehman and Ar Raheem, meaning the most Compassionate and most Merciful. How does he show his

compassion and mercy towards believers? By being generous and providing opportunities to earn rewards many folds during the month of Ramadan to pave the way towards Jannah. Allah promises that when a believer fasts, it is between them and ME, I am the witness, and I will reward him accordingly. When it comes to giving, Allah (SWT) knows no bounds.

Third: During Ramadan, each good deed is spiritually rewarded many folds. Allah (SWT) is providing an opportunity and enticing the believers to do as many good deeds and reap the benefits to reach the ultimate goal of Jannah with HIS blessings and mercy.

Fourth: Take advantage of the

month of Ramadan and fulfill your third obligatory Ibadah of Zakah in this holy month and multiply the rewards. Be generous with your Sadaqa and other noble charities too.

Fifth: Remember fasting is just not about refraining from food and drinks. It is also about keeping your thoughts, words, and deeds clean. Being pious is about Taqwa, about staying away from the vices and upholding the virtues. It is about holding back on anger and practicing patience. It is about being nice and kind towards all living beings.

Sixth: Fasting is about feeling the pangs of hunger a sense of relating your hunger to the empty stomach of a hungry person. Allah (SWT) will bestow immense rewards

when a fasting person is fed and quenches his thirst.

Seventh: Extra Sunnah Ibadah in the month of Ramadan called Taraweeh is embedded with many rewards too. Taraweeh is done after Isha. Praying in the night hours, listening to Quran, listening to the speech of the Imam, meeting and greeting fellow *musallis*, etc. Each of these acts carries multiple rewards.

During Ramadan month do not indulge in overfeeding yourself and be lazy during the daytime with the excuse of fasting. Your day has to be as normal as it can be.

In Ramadan, fasting for a month is just not supposed to be overhauling spiritually but also Physically. People overeat in *Sahri*, saying, I have to go hungry all day long. They overeat in *Iftar*, saying, I was hungry all day long. In the name of preparing good and tasty food, almost everything is fried and greasy, resulting in gaining weight. It goes against the grain of the Ramadan spirit.

Please avoid the Ramadan parties. Yes, there are great rewards to feeding a fasting person. If you want to do it, do it in Masjid with the cooperation of management. People can break the fast and also attend the Maghreb salat in Masjid, again carrying many fold rewards both for the giver and the taker.

Ramadan parties have become more common. A display of money, power, and status by the so-called elite of society. The invitees are rich and famous, relatives and friends. Party halls are booked, and guests dressed in party attire and adorned with jewelry show off attitude than being in a spiritual mode and mood. Please avoid arranging and attending such parties or any celebrations and deprive yourself and attendees of not being in Masajids for Obligatory Sunnah Salat. Make the month of Ramadan a month for atonement. Save the enjoyment and celebration for Eid Parties. Invite all your friends and families, both Muslims and non-Muslims, show generosity all you can, give Eid bonuses to employees and workers, and dole out the food, clothes, and money in charity to poor, needy, and downtrodden, especially orphans and widows.

We don't know what tomorrow may bring. Make an intention of fasting (who are eligible) in the fast-approaching month of Ramadan. If Allah (SWT) wills, blessings may start as of today.

I wish you all a happy and healthy Ramadan, Kareem. May Allah guide us and keep us on the right and straight path. Aameen.

Anything good I said is from Allah (SWT), and if I have erred, it is from my lack of knowledge and understanding. ■

Yaaseen Masvood

Taqwa - The Objective of Ramadhan

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may acquire Taqwa.” (2:183)

We, as Muslims, believe that fasting during the month of Ramadhan is one of the pillars of Islam. Allah (SWT), in His infinite Wisdom, has legislated fasting during this month for the Ummah of our Prophet (PBUH) in order to benefit us both in this world and the Hereafter. From the above verse, it becomes clear that the Ummah of our Prophet (PBUH) was not singled out with the obligation of fasting. This verse also clearly points to the fact Quran is the word of Allah and not the work of Muhammad (PBUH), as he could have not known what were the injunctions for the previous nations, except through the revelation to him by Allah.

Although there is no need for Allah to explain the rationale behind His Commandments, He does so in this verse to make it abundantly clear that it is to gain Taqwa. Taqwa is defined as *“to put a barrier between oneself and the punishment of Allah”*. Therefore, it has to act as an internal compass for a Muslim, so that he does not slip from the commandments of Allah and if he does so, he seeks forgiveness immediately thereafter. But, due to the nature of human beings and due to the continuous onslaught of Shaitan, man is prone to evil ways and keeps slipping from executing the

commandments of Allah or falling into sin. Hence, Ramadhan is an Allah-given opportunity to refocus and remind us about this fact. Therefore, the beautiful month of Ramadhan should be utilized to act as an Eemaan-booster for all of us, so that we spend the rest of the months of the year in complete obedience to the commandments of Allah by executing His orders and staying away from His prohibitions. This is to ensure that we not only succeed in all walks of our life in this world but also ensure we taste eternal success in the Hereafter, as well.

The Quran also exhorts us to be steadfast in our obedience to Him, when it says: *“O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you Furqan and will expiate for you your sins and forgive you. And Allah is the Owner of the great bounty”*. (8:29). One of the benefits of Taqwa, as this verse makes it clear, is that the one who possesses it will be guided to differentiate between *Truth and Falsehood*. This will be a triumph, safety, and a way out for such people from the affairs of this life, all the while acquiring happiness in the Hereafter. They will also gain

forgiveness, thus having their sins erased, and pardoned, thus having their sins covered from other people, as well as, being directed to a way to gain Allah's tremendous rewards. (Tafseer Ibn Katheer).

In another instance, Allah mentions the benefits of having Taqwa when He says: *“Whoever fears Allah, He brings forth a way out for him and provides him (with what he needs) from where he does not even imagine.”* (65:2,3). Imam Ibn Katheer in his Tafseer of the above ayah says: *“Whoever has Taqwa of Allah in what He has commanded and avoids what He has forbidden, then Allah will make a way out for him from every difficulty and will provide for him from resources he never anticipated or thought about.”*

The great companion of our Prophet (PBUH), Abdullah Ibn Masud (radiyallahu anhu) said: The greatest ayah in the Quran that contains relief is this. This is because whenever anyone with Taqwa is subjected to problems and difficulties in life, he can have hope for relief through the mercy of Allah for such people.

Fasting also helps to control one's own desires, which in essence, is

the objective of piety. This is why our Prophet (PBUH) termed it, (in a hadith collected by Bukhari), a shield, as it protects the individual from sinning and indulgence in disobedience to Allah. During fasting, a person trains himself to control his hunger, thirst, and carnal desires, even though the option to fulfil his/her desires may be available in front of him. This is because he is conscious of the fact that he is always under the ever-watchful Eyes of Allah. This is what Taqwa is all about! It is to be mindful of the fact that Allah is always seeing him and so he has to

mould his life, fearing His Punishment for acts of disobedience and hoping in His Mercy while doing acts of righteousness.

In addition to the benefits that fasting provides, it also helps a fasting person to appreciate the pangs of hunger and thirst and thereby not only become empathetic to the needs of the poor and destitute but also to reach out to them at times of their distress. This also increases one's Taqwa. Specific to the fasts of Ramadhan, we find that it naturally improves one's connection with Allah through various optional forms of worship like praying the *Taraweeh*, recitation of the Quran, seeking forgiveness, being more charitable, remembering Allah often through various forms of *dhikr*, invoking

» Page 21

One of the benefits of Taqwa is that the one who possesses it will be guided to differentiate between Truth and Falsehood. This will be a triumph, safety, and a way out for such people from the affairs of this life, all the while acquiring happiness in the Hereafter.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

In the month of Ramadan, the Quran was revealed, as a guidance for mankind!



Believers, fasting is decreed for you as it was decreed for those before you, so that you may remain God-fearing! Fast a certain number of days. But whoever of you is ill, or on a journey, shall fast instead the same number of days later. Those who find fasting a strain too hard to bear may compensate for it by feeding needy persons. He who does good of his own account does himself good thereby; for too fast is to do yourself good, if you but knew it. It was in the month of Ramadan that the Quran was revealed, a guidance for mankind and as self-evident proof of that guidance, a standard to distinguish right from wrong. Hence, whoever of you is present in that month shall fast throughout it, but he who is ill or on a journey shall fast instead the same number of days later on. Allah desires that you have ease. He does not desire you to be afflicted with hardship. You are, however, required to complete the necessary number of days and to extol the greatness of Allah for having guided you and to tender your thanks (to Him). If My servants ask you about Me, I am indeed near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls to me. Let them then respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they may be wise. (Al-Baqarah: The Cow: 2: Verses: 183-6)

We must always realize that duties of worship aim primarily at the formulation of an attitude of mind which governs the behavior of the believer, which develops his conscience and helps him offer his worship in the proper manner and adopt a good standard of behavior in life. From our point of view, we must always take the religion of Islam as a whole, as Allah willed it to be, with all the duties it imposes on us, and look at it in the light of our overall duty of obedience to Allah in every respect. We must take it as a perfect, harmonious

whole, which includes situations that require strenuous effort and situations of ease and concession, trusting the wisdom of Allah who knows best. Fasting was first made an obligation in the second year after the Prophet's (Pbuh) settlement in Madinah. As a new duty, fasting was very hard for Muslims. Allah, therefore, gave a concession to those who find fasting too much of a strain and who can do it only with great difficulty. They were allowed not to fast, provided that they feed a needy person. He also made it clear to them that to feed the needy is highly commendable, whether it is done voluntarily, i.e., not in compensation for not fasting, or by doing more than the minimum required. The compensation required for making use of this concession is to feed one person for each day one does not fast, and increase it to feed two or three or more needy people for each day. This is the meaning of the statement- *"He who does good of his own account does himself good thereby"*. Allah follows this by recommending that fasting has great benefits for us. Most immediately apparent to us is the fact that it teaches self control, bearing hardships, and making a conscious preference of obeying Allah, even at the expense of one's own rest and comfort. These recommendations were made preliminary to the withdrawal of this concession from all people who are healthy and living at home. Fasting was soon to be made obligatory, without any concession. The concession continues only in the case of the elderly who find fasting much too hard to bear and

are not fasting during Ramadan, but fasting on some other days. Imam Malik, the Prophet's companion, lived until he was no longer able to fast. He used to compensate for it by feeding the hungry. It applies only to the very old, men or women, who cannot fast. They are allowed to compensate by feeding a needy person for each day of Ramadan. It is the Quran that built the Muslim nation and Muslims must always be thankful to Allah for revealing the Quran to them and they cannot express their thanks better than by fasting in Ramadan, the month in which the Quran was revealed. *"It was in the month of Ramadan that the Quran was revealed, a guidance for mankind and as a self evident proof of that guidance as a standard to distinguish right from wrong."* This is the verse which ordains the duty of fasting in Ramadan on all Muslims who are healthy and living at home, abrogating the earlier concession except in the case of the elderly people. *"Hence, whoever of you is present in that month shall fast throughout it"* - this means, anyone who lives to see the month of Ramadan. It imparts to the Muslim a special quality of kindly forbearance which helps him fulfill all his duties and obligations as well as

all his serious activities in life with an air of ease which is akin to the flow of water or to the growth of a tree. He is always reassured, confident and happy as he always feels Allah's mercy, and His desire that His servants should have ease, rather than hardship. The ill and the travellers are allowed to fast on later days so that they have a chance to fast a number of days equivalent to a full month, so that they do not lose any of the reward Allah gives for lasting: *"You are required to complete the necessary number of days and to extol the greatness of Allah for having guided you aright."* Fasting is indeed a blessing from Allah, for which He deserves to be thanked and magnified. Allah says of Himself: *"I am indeed near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls to Me."* How kind, compassionate and friendly. With such friendliness from Allah and closeness to him,

the difficulty of fasting, no matter how great, appears very trivial. Every word in this verse adds to the air of friendliness and compassion.

The fact that Allah considers the people His own, and answers them directly also adds to the air of compassion. He has not instructed His messenger to tell his people: *"I am near."* He Himself gives the answer directly to His servants as soon as the question is made. He has not said *"I hear their prayers"*, but has assured them immediately by answering their prayers. It is indeed a verse which fills the hearts of the believers with friendly reassurance and complete confidence. It makes their life happy, peaceful and secure. In this atmosphere of friendliness and compassion, Allah directs His servants to respond to Him and to believe Him. Their response and faith should lead them to be wise and to follow the right path. Thus, the final benefit from such response is theirs as well. Indeed, Allah does not need anyone. If people are wise and rightly guided, the benefit is theirs. (Translated by Adil Salahi) ■

“He who does good of his own account does himself good thereby”. Allah follows this by recommending that fasting has great benefits for us. Most immediately apparent to us is the fact that it teaches self control, bearing hardships and making a conscious preference of obeying Allah, even at the expense of one's own rest and comfort.

«Page 1

Board submits Affidavit:

‘No Prohibition On Muslim Women Entering Mosques And Offering Namaz’

participate in several rites with male pilgrims. In response, the Board said it consistently holds the view that Muslim women are free to visit mosques and participate in congregational or Namaz prayers based on the teachings of Islam. The Affidavit stated that “In terms of Islamic texts there is no prohibition on Muslim women entering Mosques and offering namaz or congregational prayers”. However, the Management Committee must, if at all feasible, segregate space inside the premises because the unfettered intermixing of genders in the same line or common area is not in accordance with the position established by Islam. The Muslim Board has also made it

clear that the Petitioner's reference to the Tawaf in Makkah around the Black Stone (Hajr-e-Aswad) in the recent Petition as an example is deceptive with regard to the offering of Namaz. Men and women are still segregated in all of the mosques in Makkah that surround the Holy Kaabah. “Even in Makkah in all the mosques around the Holy Kaabah, the practice of segregation of men and women is in place,” it has claimed. Similarly to this, the Management Committees of the existing mosques in India are allowed to designate such separate areas for women if the structure or location allows for such arrangements, depending on the facility provided. In addition to the Affidavit's stated

position, the Board also makes a general plea to the Muslim community to keep the issue of providing adequate space for women in mind whenever new mosques are built. The board has stated that it “can only give an advisory opinion, based on Islamic principles” as a group of specialists without any state authority. The board and this court, for that matter, are unable to intervene in the specific plans of a religious establishment that is entirely privately run for religious purposes. In an effort to remedy alleged abuses of the rights guaranteed by Articles 14, 15, 21, 25, and 29, it also questioned the Supreme Court's role in addressing religious practices. ■

«Page 20

Taqwa - The Objective of Ramadhan

Allah for his Pardon and Mercy, etc. All these also lead to increased levels of Taqwa. Due to the multifaceted benefits brought about by Taqwa to the believers, our Prophet (PBUH) used to often supplicate for it with these (translated) words: *“O Allah! Grant my soul the sense of righteousness and purify it, for You are the Best Purifier thereof. You are the Protecting friend thereof and Guardian thereof.”* (Sahih Muslim). With Ramadhan fast approaching, it is worth mentioning that our pious predecessors used to often seek protection and safety from Allah so that they could witness the beautiful month of Ramadhan and enjoy the Mercy it brings forth with it through the words: *Allahumma*

sallim-nee lee Ramadaana Wa sallim Ramadaana lee Wa tasallam-hu min-nee mutaqabbala (Oh Allah, keep me safe for Ramadhan. And keep Ramadhan safe for me And accept it from me.) [Siyaar 'A'laam an-Nubalaa']. In the background of the disastrous news of our brothers and sisters from Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon suffering due to the recent earthquakes and the loss of lives brought about it, it is only pertinent that we keep invoking Allah for His safety and protection. May Allah allows us not only to witness the beautiful month of Ramadhan but also to use every split second of it in improving our Taqwa and earning the good pleasure of Allah. Ameen. ■

Come March, then exams stare in front of us. The step to our next level is here. We study day and night for this moment. Competing ourselves against our biological clock to achieve the target of being the class topper. However, settling for one among the top 10 after being "realistic" of one's capacity. Can we say capacity here means "memory power." That means, who memorizes and puts on the paper the most is considered successful. The question of whether we understood the concept (lessons) or not is not the issue here. We have to secure the coveted position of being the class topper - that is the target. Nothing wrong though to be the class topper. However, that is not the end either. Many toppers are still struggling in their lives. So where has it gone wrong? What we study and what we do as an occupation are entirely poles apart in most cases. Many factors are there for this scenario: studying for the sake of my parents; my friend is also studying the same; because my teachers told me so because I'm interested and so on... And from there, "because I'm interested" would be applicable for a minuscule few. Let the parents make a resolve to not compare their child to another child and to accept whatever grades the child is able to achieve, and accept it as

Child First- Then the Rest



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their child's best performance. And also promise to support their child in whichever field he/she likes during or after schooling years. Let the child study for their own sake and not for our sake or more importantly to show off for others. Keeping our child's overall mental-physical-spiritual health in our mind; allow them some

freedom to choose what they want to study, of course, the best one within the family budget too. Kids when raised in such a way are understanding and will gladly accept what can be achieved within that budget. In the long run, such children will be thankful to their parents, and parents would be satisfied with having done their

duty of proper bringing up. ■

Let the parents make a resolve to not compare their child to another child and to accept whatever grades the child is able to achieve, and accept it as their child's best performance. And also promise to support their child in whichever field he/she likes during or after schooling years.

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