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Jamadi-ul-Awwal / Jamadi-us-Sani - 1445 H

Jewish groups Criticize Pope on 'Terrorism' Remark, seek Clarification



Pope Francis speaks during the weekly general audience, at the Vatican, on November 22, 2023. Vatican Media/Handout via REUTERS/File Photo Acquire Licensing Rights

Philip Pulella

VATICAN CITY, Nov 23 (Reuters) - Jewish groups have criticized Pope Francis and demanded clarifications over his comments that they saw as accusing both Hamas and Israel of "terrorism".

Francis made the comments after meeting separately with Jewish relatives of hostages held by Hamas and with Palestinians with family in Gaza.

Later that day at his general audience in St. Peter's Square, he spoke of the meetings, saying he felt the pain of both sides.

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Abdul Bari Masoud

New Delhi/Lucknow: It appears that in Uttar Pradesh, which is led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Islamophobia is reigning supreme. Islamophobic elements are even hurting the interests of the country with their sheer madness. The most recent example of this is the prohibition on food products being certified halal, which could hurt India in the 3.5 trillion-dollar global halal trade market, especially in the

Halal Certification Controversy

It seems Islamophobia is pervasive in UP

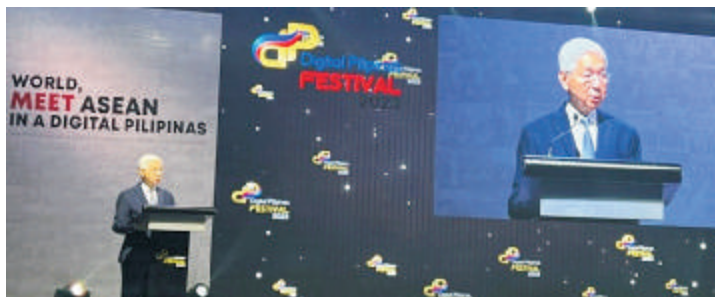


Islamic world. The UP government's ill-advised decision to outlaw halal certificates will send the wrong message to the

halal consumer market. How it has happened. On November 17, an FIR was lodged at the Hazratganj Police Station in Lucknow on a complaint by one BJP supporter. He accused Halal India Private Limited Chennai, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust Delhi, Halal Council of India Mumbai, and Jamiat Ulama Maharashtra of issuing halal certificates without any authority for some products to increase their sales. He said these organizations allegedly did not follow

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Manila Invites Global Muslim Investors to Establish Halal Businesses in Philippines



Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual speaks at the Philippine Halal Economy Festival in Manila on Nov. 22, 2023. (DTI)

amended older laws to facilitate foreign companies doing business in the country.

"These laws give more incentives

to Muslim investors from around the world. We invite them to establish and operate their halal enterprises right here in the

Philippines," DTI Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual said on Wednesday.

One of those laws is the amended Foreign Investment Act, which allows qualified non-Philippine nationals to do business in the country or invest in a domestic company, Pascual added.

The Philippine Congress also amended the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, which lowered the ceiling for capital required from foreign-led retailers to set up shop in the Philippines, allowing smaller foreign businesses to open in the country.

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A. B. Masoud

Pallapatti: Islamic Fiqh Academy's 32nd 3-day Fiqhi Seminar concluded on November 20 at "Jamia Al Uswatul Hasana Shariat College" in the Muslim-majority town Pallapatti, Tamil Nadu.

About 300 distinguished Islamic scholars (Ulema) and jurists (muftis) from across the country attended the seminar, which issued Sharia guidelines for Muslims on issues such as imitating identities, symbols, or practices of other religions, ill-gotten wealth, and contemporary investing practices. The annual jurisprudence seminar of the Academy explores solutions to contemporary problems and issues in light of the Quran, Sunnah, qiyas, and ijma.

On the issue of imitation, the seminar defined imitation as the deliberate adoption of distinctive characteristics specific to a particular community or civilization by individuals or groups of Muslims. This definition emphasizes Islamic guidance for Muslims to preserve their religious and cultural identity while avoiding practices from other communities or cultures that may compromise their religious beliefs. The seminar made it clear, though, that customs that are widely accepted and not specifically forbidden in Islam do not belong to the category of imitation, which is forbidden. It is further underlined that imitation is acceptable when it comes to inventions and necessities of daily life.

The seminar urged Muslims not to embrace symbols or customs from other religions, like hanging crosses, donning sacred thread, donning colored marks on the forehead or tilaks, celebrating Holi, lighting lamps on Diwali, taking part in Christmas celebrations, doing yoga, or

32nd Fiqhi Seminar Concludes with Shariah Guidelines in Tamil Nadu



Jurists and Scholars offer Solutions for Investment, Unlawful Income, and Imitation

performing other customs. Moreover, it was stated that practices such as Saraswati Vandana, Surya Namaskar, Vande Mataram, reciting idolatrous prayers from the Bible or the Gita, chanting the names of deities, folding hands in front of statues of Jesus Christ, and standing in front of photos of Jesus Christ are all part of other religions' rituals. Jurists stated that Muslims are not allowed to embrace any such rituals, practices, or symbols that undermine their faith.

On attire, the scholars said it should be according to the principles of modesty, while ties, coats, and pants are also regarded as appropriate clothing because they are no longer solely connected to any one religion.

Regarding income and wealth from illegal sources, the participants categorically stated that any wealth obtained by illegal means such as usury, extortion, bribery, fraud, theft, gaming, or illegal contracts is categorically prohibited.

They suggest that anyone in possession of wealth acquired illegally should give it back to its rightful owner. They emphasize that it is the duty of every Muslim to rid themselves of such immoral wealth and say that if it is not possible for them, they should give it as charity to the underprivileged or needy.

Similarly, it is required of a Muslim to return such wealth to the rightful owner if it is acquired

through inheritance and that owner is known. Scholars state that it is imperative to distribute this wealth among the poor if the rightful owner is unknown or, even if known, returning it is not practical. In a different case involving inheritance, academics argue that profits made by an heir using illegally inherited wealth for business ventures will be deemed legal. But he or she must give to charity the same amount of money that was obtained illegally. According to them, housewives can only use their husbands' or sons' earnings in cases of severe financial hardship if the income is illegal.

Concerning investments, the seminar urged Muslims to embrace the Islamic financial system, which is founded on the concepts of profit-and-loss sharing agreements rather than interest. The scholars' suggestions further declared that it is forbidden to use interest-bearing funds for any kind of personal benefit.

It should be noted that paying or charging interest in any form is strictly prohibited under Islamic law.

Additionally, they declared "estimated reduction," which is common in non-interest financial institutions and involves estimating the value of a company's fixed assets and cash assets to determine profit and loss, to be acceptable. Using this approach, an organization's assets

are valued both at the start and the end of the year. To calculate profit or loss, the difference between the two estimates is used.

The jurists also supported the idea of a "legal person," reaffirming the validity of giving a company the status of a legal person and conducting business with it as a Rabbul Mal (investor) or Mudarib (working partner).

The Fiqhi seminars were exceptionally beneficial in that they offered common Muslims direction on a wide range of modern issues arising from the

rapid advancements of the modern world, including but not limited to animal rights, the environment, bonds, currency, bank cards, educational loans, network marketing, e-commerce, organ donation, plastic surgery, women's employment, sex education, euthanasia, DNA testing, genetic science, ecological conservation, and so forth.

The 32nd seminar, held from November 18 to 20, adopted these recommendations on the three key issues mentioned above after thorough deliberations. It was spread over five sessions.

In his inaugural session address, Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, General Secretary of the Fiqh Academy and President of the All India Muslim Personal Labor Board, brought up concerns about deliberate plots to drive Muslims away from their faith and the aggressive efforts of

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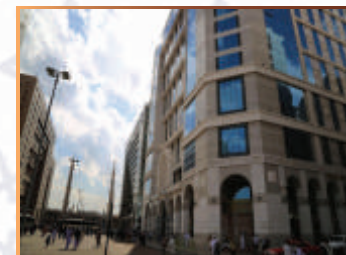
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Rehbar Financial Services is a Bangalore-based company that provides businesses with funding through ethical (non-interest-based) modes like operating leases and project finance.

Rehbar Financial Services celebrated its 10th Anniversary in great flair on 18 November 2023, attended by a galaxy of professionals, medical doctors, thought-leaders, educationists, socially conscious citizens, and financial consultants representing the cream of society. Delegates, speakers and experts in alternative finance came from Chennai, Mumbai, Vaniyambadi and different parts of the Bengaluru.

Rehbar's chairman, Mr. Sherif Kottapurath and CFO Zaid Razvi gave a brief overview of Rehbar's journey. Mr. P.C. Mustafa, founder and CEO of ID Fresh Foods motivated the audience with incidents from his own experience. He explained how Rehbar played a pivotal role in providing operating leases for a large part of his fleet of over 250 delivery vehicles and thousand fridges kept in retail outlets for his company's products. He talked about the importance of values in business and congratulated Rehbar on its growth and on the 10-year milestone.

Dr. Ebaad Momin, a PhD in Islamic finance and director on the Rehbar board gave a presentation on "Investing in line with one's value system". He detailed the way Rehbar works and how it plans to bring down operating costs and make it more attractive for businesses and investors.

The event also had 2-panel discussions with imminent panel members. The first discussion on Institution Building was

Investing in Economic Activity would Bring in All-Round Prosperity



Rehbar's chairman, Sherif Kottapurath gave a brief overview of Rehbar's journey.

moderated by another Rehbar director, Mr Ali Shariff, a graduate of the London School of Economics. The panel comprised some of the well-known names in the field of ethical funding and alternative investments. Dr. Shariq Nisar, Director of Rizvi Institute of Management Sciences, presented a brief history of the growth of institutions in this field, claiming that the first recorded institution is nearly a hundred years old. Mr. H Abdul Raqeb from Chennai spoke about his adventures in this realm and how he tried to lobby the authorities to legislate in favour of incorporating interest-free banking in the country. CA Mohamed Yunus, CFO of White House, one of Chennai's largest textile manufacturers expressed optimism when asked if more and more socially conscious people are demonstrating inclination to adopt ethical means of investment.

This panel discussion was

followed by another lively discussion on the topic of investing for Women. The two panellists, Madam Tazaiyun Oomer and Madam Nikhat Fathima are well-known activists engaged in uplifting the economic conditions of women in Bengaluru and Chennai respectively. Both of them have also been investors in Rehbar for a long time. The panel was moderated by Madam Ayesha Masood, Managing Trustee of the



highly acclaimed Oasis International School of Bengaluru.

This event was an opportune moment to honour the people who have striven so hard to lay the foundations of interest-free finance in India. Chief among them was Mr. M.H. Khatkhatay, an alumnus of IIT Mumbai who helped design products and frame policies which were to be eventually utilized by organizations attempting interest-free finance across the country. Rehbar acknowledged the deep debt it owes to Mr. Khatkhatay in this regard.

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Jewish groups Criticize Pope on 'Terrorism' Remark, seek Clarification

"This is what wars do. But here we have gone beyond wars.

This is not war. This is terrorism," he said.

He asked for prayers so that both sides would "not go ahead with passions, which, in the end, kill everyone".

In a toughly worded statement, the Council of the Assembly of Italian Rabbis (ARI) accused the pope of "publicly accusing both sides of terrorism".

It went on to accuse unnamed "Church leaders" of not

Dr. Taha Mateen, a well-known activist of Bengaluru, paid glowing tributes to Rehbar for being among the institutions that have paved the way for the upliftment of people and called upon the audience to strengthen their hands. He bemoaned the general attitude of the community to hold on to their wealth in the form of precious metals and land, which he termed as counter-productive for the betterment of society, as opposed to investing in economic activity which would bring in all-round prosperity.

condemning the Hamas attack and of "putting the aggressor and the attacked on the same plane in the name of a supposed impartiality".

At the Palestinian news conference, those who met with the pope said he condemned Hamas' action as terror but also quoted him as saying that "terror should not justify terror". They also quoted him as using the word "genocide" to describe the situation in Gaza.

(Source : <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/>)



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Karnataka Police book Child Panel Chief Kanoongo for comparing Bengaluru Muslim orphanage with "Medieval Taliban Life"

Bangalore: The Karnataka Police have booked National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) chairman Priyank Kanoongo for comparing the conditions at the Bengaluru Muslim orphanage to a "medieval Taliban life." After a surprise inspection of the Darul Uloom Sayideeya Yateemkhana in Kaval Bairasandra under the DJ Halli (Devarajeevanahalli) Police Station limits on November 21, Kanoongo said the orphanage was being run illegally, lacked toys, and the children appeared if they saw any "Maulvi" coming their way. The police registered a case based on the complaint filed by Ashraf Khan, secretary of the Yateemkhana.

Khan told the Indian Express he was taken aback by Kanoongo's post on X and questioned how ahead of the constitutional body could draw comparisons between the Taliban and the orphanage's facilities and kids.

"When Kanoongo came here, he claimed to be from the human rights commission. He inspected the entire premises. The children who had their lunch were sleeping inside, and he appreciated the facilities provided and was also assured to provide funds to develop the place. We also explained to him that more than 60 orphan children who lost their parents during COVID-19 were being taken care of," Khan said. The organization was founded in 1980 and has grown since the pandemic because the virus claimed the lives of many children's parents.

DJ Halli police filed a complaint in accordance with sections 295(a) (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs),

447 (criminal trespass), and 448 (house trespass). This FIR comes after the NCPCR directed the Karnataka chief secretary to register a case against the orphanage, saying the children at the facility are living a "medieval Taliban life."

Kanoongo, known for his anti-Muslim bias, alleged that the kids are forced to wake up at 3:30 in the morning to go to the madrasa and sleep in the afternoon. They don't have access to television or other forms of entertainment and are trained to read the Quran from dusk until dawn, with brief pauses for namaz during the day. He further claimed that the orphanage possessed assets valued at billions of rupees. The NCPCR has already sent a letter to the Karnataka chief secretary stating that a case needs to be registered under sections 42 (foster care), 34 (state government's role in maintaining children's homes), and 75 (abusing or neglecting children) of the Juvenile Justice Act, according to a report in the newspaper. The child panel also sought a report within a week.

Speaking to the media, the Yateemkhana's officials and instructors stated that the NCPCR team appreciated their hard work during the visit. According to their complaint, on November 19, around two in the morning, a group of men and women posing as human rights activists paid a visit to their trust-run orphanage. The station house officer (SHO) of DJ Halli Police Station, speaking to the website South First, stated that the management of the orphanage soon gave the police the trust deeds after the police had first sent a notice to the orphanage requesting its registration certificate and other bona fides.

Concurrently, the management lodged a formal complaint against the group of individuals who allegedly inspected the orphanage. In response to this complaint, the police filed criminal trespassing charges against Kanoongo and other individuals, as well as charges of inciting religious intolerance and hatred toward the minority community on social media. Furthermore, the activists failed to provide the Yateemkhana with any prior notice and lacked documentation proving their affiliation with the NCPCR.

This is not NCPCR's first encounter with Muslim-run establishments or madrasas, particularly during Kanoongo's tenure. In an affidavit filed before the Allahabad High Court earlier this year, the NCPCR stated that "education imparted to children in madrasas is not adequate or comprehensive" in relation to a matter pertaining to state funding for religious minority education. The NCPCR has repeatedly targeted madrasas and accused them of being in violation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act in states like Uttar Pradesh and others. It seems Kanoongo doesn't know that madrasas were exempted under the RTE Act.

In that instance, the child panel said that education in madrasas is a flagrant violation of the law and sought to assist the court in the matter through an impleadment application (IA). It asked all states and Union Territories to look into any government-funded and approved madrasas that were taking in non-Muslim children earlier in December 2022. Since taking charge of the child panel, Kanoongo, whose links are not a secret, has been in the news for the wrong reasons. ■

AMP Organizes the Country's Biggest Talent Search Exam Across 300+ Districts



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55,000+ Students appear for AMP's 4th edition of AMP National Talent Search (NTS 2023) in 400+ Exam centres

The association of Muslims Professionals (AMP) conducted its 4th Annual National Talent Search (NTS) Exam 2023, for School and college students on the 25th of November 2023

55,000+ Students – 35,000+ in Offline (physical) mode and 20,000+ in Online mode registered for the exam from 524 Cities across India. Of these 32,000+ were girls and 23,000+ were boys. For the first time this year, the NTS competition was held Offline i.e., in physical mode across 400+ centres across the Country. The online version of the exam was available on the AMP World mobile app for those who were unable to appear in person. Top 500 performers will be given **100% IIT-JEE/NEET Coaching Scholarships worth Rs. 10 Crores** by AMP's 20+ Training Partners. Also, the top 3 winners in each category will get Cash Rewards worth **₹ 5 lakhs+**. Besides these, needy and deserving students will get Academic Scholarships worth **₹ 20 lakhs +** through IndiaZakat.com, AMP's Zakat-based crowd-funding platform along with a lot of additional support.

Aamir Edresy, President – AMP, said "This is the 1st time that AMP has conducted the NTS exam in offline version. I am extremely thankful and happy for our team members as well as exam centres, who rose to the occasion and conducted the exam in an efficient and professional manner. This is the single largest Scholarship initiative of this kind in the Community, and we are grateful for the help of all the educational institutions who wholeheartedly supported it." He further added that with this year's offline mode of exam, NTS 2023 is bound to achieve many milestones.

The exam centres were carefully selected after considering the no. of registrations from each City and District. AMP's vast network of Leaders and volunteers across the Country ensured that awareness of the exam was duly created across the Schools and colleges in their Districts and registrations of Students were done duly.

The result of this competition will be duly announced on 22nd December 2023 at a felicitation event in Jaipur, Rajasthan, where the winners will be duly felicitated. ■

Spl Correspondent

Hyderabad: The All India Muslim Personal Law Board said it has been making all efforts to ensure that Muslim women receive the rights that are rightfully theirs under Islamic law. The Muslim Board has reiterated this at a public meeting organized by its women's wing here on November 15. Maulana Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahim Mujjadidi, secretary general of the Muslim Board, stated during his keynote speech that no other faith can claim to have granted women all the rights that Islam has.

He discussed "Woman's Place and Her Rights in Islam" and went to great length, highlighting some of the more sensitive aspects of Islamic divorce, polygamy, hijab, and other systems.

Women's rights have been referenced multiple times in the Holy Qur'an, according to

Muslim Board's Women's Conference

The board makes all efforts to ensure women's rights



Maulana Mujjadidi. Despite this, anti-Islamic forces criticize women's rights in Islam. He emphasized that other religions did not even make reference to women's rights. Thus, it is the duty of every Muslim, both male and female, to adhere to and completely obey the precepts of Islam and to reject any other system, which is the obligation of the faith.

The public meeting titled

"Women's Rights in Islam" was held at Metro Classic Garden Shivrampally in the city and was presided over by Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, the president of AIMPLB. The meeting began with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Maulana Muhammad Qasmi.

The board secretary, Maulana Muhammad Umrin Mahfouz Rahmani, spoke on the topic of "family disputes and their

resolution". He claimed that everyone wants to obtain their rights but does not want to give others rights, which is the root of conflicts in both society and the family. Giving everyone's rights is therefore the only way to prevent disagreements and confrontations. He added that if a disagreement emerges among believers, they should attempt to settle it in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah. Once a

judgment is given in accordance with these sources, both sides involved in the disagreement have an obligation to accept it. Maulana urged women to be forgiving and counseled neighbours and family guardians to put a stop to societal and household conflicts by attempting to bring the parties together. He also emphasized the value of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board's services at the conclusion of his speech.

Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani provided a detailed explanation of the history of the board's formation and its functions during his presidential speech. The Muslim Personal Law Board's primary responsibility is safeguarding women's rights; so, in 1937, the Shariat Application Act was enacted in India, allowing women to inherit in accordance with Islamic Sharia. Similarly, the

Spl Correspondent

New Delhi: A group of highly educated and professional Muslim women formed the All-India Muslim Women's Association to address the social, educational, and safety problems of Muslim women. Addressing a press conference on October 26 at the Press Club of India here, the association's president, Dr. Asma Zahra, said the Muslim community in India is currently facing a multitude of challenges and issues, including those related to their security, survival, social well-being, education, economic prospects, and political issues. To address these challenges and ensure the protection of the rights of Muslim women and students, as well as to promote their educational, social, and economic development, the body was formed at the national level, she added.

She also stated that the new body is an independent organization of Muslim women and not affiliated with any national, political, or religious parties, seminars, etc. It operates autonomously and is

Professional Muslim Women Formed Association to Work for Safety and Overall Development of Women



committed to advocating for the interests of Muslim women while adhering to Islamic principles. On highlighting the activities of the organization, Dr. Zahra said it has initiated various programs and activities, including those related to education, social welfare, community service, poverty alleviation, legal support for women, and social reform. These

efforts are being rolled out across multiple states in the country, and we have already begun conducting introductory conferences and awareness workshops.

According to her, Muslim women and students in the country are facing significant challenges, including:

1. State of Assam: We strongly

condemn the hostile policies of the Assam government targeting innocent Muslim girls and women. Under the pretext of cracking down on child marriages, the police and government authorities are harassing innocent married couples and their parents; cases are booked under the POCSO Act, which is nothing but harassment and oppression of the poor. We call upon Assam Chief Minister Hemant Biswa Sharma to withdraw all such cases and release the relatives.

2. Forced Evictions: India is witnessing the initiation of bulldozer politics for the first time in its independent history, driven by the anti-Muslim and hostile actions and policies of state and central governments. As a result, numerous women are now homeless and forced to live in the open in several states. We urge governments to protect the human and constitutional rights of these women. We appreciate the recent

order by the Guwahati High Court, which mandates compensation for victims of evictions.

3. Need: There is a need for immediate relief and rehabilitation of displaced people in other states, such as Madhya Pradesh and Haryana.

4. Hijab Issue: Thanking the Karnataka government for allowing female students wearing hijab to write examinations. It also made a request to the Chief Minister to take back the GO ban on hijab.

5. Education: It called upon other state governments to adopt similar inclusive measures and implement the "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" approach.

6. Safety and Security of Muslim Female Students: In certain educational institutions and universities, there is targeting, and harm directed towards Muslim female students. Harassment of Muslim girls and tragic incidents of killing and murdering of girls students, such as the suspicious death of a Nalgonda medical student in

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prescribed standards while issuing these certificates and accused them of manipulating the religious sentiments of Muslims. He also linked these organizations to alleged terror funding.

Apart from these organizations, the FIR lists as accused other unknown manufacturing companies and their managers and owners; others involved in "anti-national conspiracy"; others who are "funding notified terrorist organizations and organizations involved in anti-national activities"; and people who are "conspiring to incite large-scale riots by messing with public faith."

The complainant alleged that this was done to harm the company and lower sales for the companies that did not receive these certificates. "I believe that these unjustified gains are going to anti-social and anti-national groups; this is a criminal act," he asserted. After the FIR, the UP government acted with lightning speed, and within 24 hours, it unleashed a crackdown against halal items in the state. On November 18, the state Food Security and Drug Administration (FSDA) department, which is directly under Adityanath's ministerial control, issued an order prohibiting the production, sale, storage, and distribution of halal-certified products in the state with immediate effect, citing "public health" as justification. This order was issued one day after the FIR was filed. However, this list did not include food items intended for export.

According to FSDA commissioner Anita Singh, labels for a number of food products, including dairy products, sugar, baked goods, edible oils, peppermint oil, and salty ready-to-eat snacks, mention that the

product is halal certified.

The charges listed in the FIR included criminal conspiracy, inciting hatred between groups, extortion, speaking in public with the purpose of offending someone's religious sentiments, forging important security documents, forging documents with the intent to deceive, and passing off a forged document or electronic record as authentic.

According to the commissioner in the order copy that agency ANI tweeted, only the competent authorities listed in Section 29 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, have the authority to determine the quality of food products. They do this by applying the standards outlined in the legislation.

As stated by Anita Singh, the halal certification of food products was a parallel system that led to confusion and went against the fundamental purpose of the relevant laws. The UP government stated that misbranding food was also illegal under Section 52 of the 2006 law, which carries a fine of up to Rs 3 lakh.

Speaking to a website, two businesses that are currently facing a criminal case related to halal certification charged that the complainant, Sharma, was propagating false information about halal certification and, as a result, undermining national interest because these products support the country's trade and economy.

The head of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust, advocate Niyaz Ahmad Farooqui, responded to the controversy by telling *Islamic Voice* that the accusations made against the organization were "baseless" and intended to

Halal Certification Controversy

It seems Islamophobia is pervasive in UP

"tarnish" its reputation. Legal action would be taken to repudiate the false information.

According to him, the Jamiat Trust certification process complies with government regulations mandating that all Halal certification bodies be registered by the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies under the Quality Council of India. It also aligns with the requirements of manufacturers for both export and domestic distribution in India.

He also alleged that certain individuals are propagating false claims against halal certification, which directly undermines national interests, and added that halal trade stands as a significant \$3.5 trillion industry, and India benefits from its promotion in exports and tourism, particularly with the country's crucial trade partners in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries and Southeast Asia.

Farooqui stated that the manufacturers and retailers of these cross-community products would be impacted by the Uttar Pradesh ban on halal-certified goods. "There are other items involved here, not meat," he remarked and pointed out, "Our Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, endorses the fact that Indian companies must obtain such certification, as the global demand for halal-certified products is robust."

In his reaction, Mufti Habeeb Yusuf Qasmi, president of the Halal Council of India, stated that the reason behind the controversy surrounding halal food was that people began to perceive everything through the narrow lens of Hinduism and Islam. "Halal is about purity and good

hygiene. This has to do with food, not Hinduism or Islam," he declared.

Yusuf Qasmi emphasized that false information regarding halal certificates was not beneficial to the country because these certifications facilitated trade, particularly exports. Even though "vegetarian" products like oil, soap, toothpaste, beauty products, and honey don't need such certifications, Sharma claimed in the FIR that halal certification could be found on them, and this was hurting other communities' business interests.

Halal certification was not merely a requirement for importing countries but also for tourists visiting India, particularly those seeking halal-certified products during their stay, he said.

In the FIR, Sharma said halal certification was also found on "vegetarian" items such as beauty products, oil, soap, toothpaste, and honey, even though they don't require such certifications.

The business interests of other communities were being hurt, Sharma claimed. Rubbishing his allegations, Yusuf Qasmi underlined that Halal certification had in fact benefitted the businesses of non-Muslim firms.

"This is false. Venky's, Zorabian, and Godrej (companies certified

by the Halal Council of India) are all run by non-Muslims," he cited. After the controversy broke out, the Jamiat Trust also issued an official statement saying that depending on the qualifications of the certifying authorities, it was a matter of preference for people and manufacturers to have particular certifications for their own satisfaction. "It guarantees the availability of need-based products in the market and saves a significant number of consumers from using products that they do not want for a variety of reasons. It is okay for people to choose not to use these products.

Farooque claimed that Jamiat's halal certificates are globally recognized by different governments and authorities all across the world, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia. Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust is a member of the World Halal Food Council, he added.

Note that the word "halal" refers to what is allowed or lawful under Islamic law and is commonly associated with Muslim dietary customs, particularly those pertaining to meat consumption. However, the word can also refer to other aspects of life, such as employment, income, and the ingredients used in food, cosmetics, and medications.

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This year's annual Ivy Muslim Conference, held last week of November, brought together around 200 students to discuss issues ranging from personal religious identity to the Israel-Hamas war.

The Ivy Muslim Conference, an opportunity for Muslim students across the nation to gather and connect, took place Oct. 27 to 28 at the St. Thomas More Center. Organized by the Yale Muslim Students Association and the Chaplain's Office, the event's registration was open to Muslim college students from Ivies as well as nearby schools, including Quinnipiac University, the University of Connecticut, Vassar College, and Williams College.

Omer Bajwa, the director of Muslim Life in the Chaplain's Office, and his wife Lisa Kinney-Bajwa came up with the idea for the conference, which first occurred in 2010.

Per its mission statement, the conference serves as an opportunity for having conversations "about the intellectual and spiritual opportunities as well as challenges of being Muslim today" and for building relationships with other Muslim students.

"The conference is foremost a way for students at the different schools to get to know each other and make connections," said Kinney-Bajwa. This year the conference included a keynote address from Ustadh Ubaydullah Evans, the first scholar-in-residence at the American Learning Institute for Muslims. Evans converted to Islam in high school and has studied in America and abroad.

Evans explained that the goal of his speech at the conference was to "empower" students by providing "a framework to make a contribution to the community."

In his speech, Evans explained how everyone, regardless of their interests and abilities, has a role to play in shaping the future of the American Muslim community.

"Not everybody will feel compelled to be a religious scholar, but everybody should feel compelled to do something in their capacity, as an expression of their individual talents, that seeks to give victory to Islam in America," he said.

Another theme in Evan's address was maintaining a balance between the Islamic concepts of *deen* and *dunya* — religious life and secular life.

Evans urged the audience to practice Islam "authentically" and within the "boundaries" of the religion.

"Why not work on creating modalities of being that are authentically Islamic and fit within the world you live in?" Evans asked.

In response to a student's question

Yale's annual Ivy Muslim Conference Encourages Connection and Spirituality

The conference drew attendees from across the Northeast to discuss what it means to be a Muslim student, how to connect to one's faith in a university setting, and how to deal with current issues affecting Muslims across the globe.



Courtesy of Omer Bajwa

about how to improve their relationship with God, Evans answered that one's view of the relationship should be as a "covenant of love" rather than a "transactional" relationship.

Other questions centered around sacrifice and community.

Evans urged the audience to become an integral and respected part of the communities they inhabit. "One way you can ensure a greater rate of success is earning some credibility in the spaces" where you want to create change, Evans explained. Once you "do that work to assert your allegiance to the whole" you are more empowered to create substantial change.

Some students were particularly interested in Evans' encouragement of religious literacy, engagement with the community, and the general creation of a comfortable atmosphere where he frequently made the audience laugh.

The next event of the conference was the "Coffee House Conversations," during which students engaged in a series of discussions over coffee. The discussions were guided by student facilitators and pre-written questions.

The Coffee House Conversations

event was the brainchild of Abdul-Rehman Malik, an associate research scholar and lecturer in Islamic Studies at the Yale Divinity School. Malik has led coffee houses around the world at international conferences.

He explained to the News that his idea for the coffee house as a time for discussion of pertinent topics originated from its historical background.

"For me, the coffee house really represents, and I think in sociological history and human history the coffee house represents, this incredible eruption of human beings engaging with one another in the realm of ideas, in the realm of politics, and in the realm of literature," Malik said. "And coffee, which came from the Muslim world, became the libation that kind of sparked this. The institution of the coffee house became the institution where so much social, political, and economic change happened."

Per Malik, the questions this year surrounded the war between Israel and Hamas.

Malik said that the event felt especially "real" due to discussion members' direct connections to the conflict.

"We are in a really difficult moment right now. There are students here

who are Palestinian, whose families have been directly affected by what is happening in Gaza and Israel right now," Malik said. "We know people, families, and communities on the ground.

The conversations themselves were closed to the press because, Malik explained, of the importance

of maintaining the participating students' sense of privacy and safety.

He explained additionally that these conversations serve to encourage civic participation and community organizing among Muslim students.

"One of the things that the students are discussing is how do we combat Islamophobia and antisemitism and anti-Black racism on Campus," Malik noted. "I think to make sure that our students have an opportunity to understand these issues not as silos, but as a broader

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5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM) held in Baku

Staff Writer



OIC Labour Center set up

Baku: The OIC Member States and other relevant organizations were urged to support the Palestinian Ministry of Labor's efforts to protect the Palestinian job market from the grave consequences of the Gaza War, as part of the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM), which was held here. Over 60% of job opportunities have been lost as a result of the Israeli occupation's criminal aggression on the besieged Gaza Strip, according to the two-day conference. Over the course of the last 48 days, Israel has completely destroyed Gaza with bombs and attacks. The conference, which took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 21 to 23, concluded with the theme, "Innovative Solutions and Digitalization of Labour and Employment Services in the OIC Member States." Ministers and heads of delegation who attended the conference

discussed their respective countries' experiences with digitizing social services and employment. The ministers emphasized the necessity of creating cooperative policies that support innovation, entrepreneurship, and the expansion of small and medium-sized businesses in their conference report, which was approved at the conclusion of the meeting. During the closed session, labour ministers from OIC discussed the state of the labour market in their respective countries and put forth a set of policy recommendations aimed at improving intra-OIC cooperation in the areas of labour, employment, and social protection.

Speaking at the conference, Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said Islamic nations are facing a high

level of unemployment as their population is increasing at a high rate of growth. Unemployment remains one of the most serious challenges to development in OIC Member States, he stated.

Drawing attention to projections, he stated that the population of all OIC member states is predicted to increase from the current 2 billion to 2.9 billion by 2050, a nearly 1 billion increase in the next 30 years. As a result, the Secretary-General emphasized the pressing necessity for OIC Member States to allocate funds for suitable education and establish institutions and policies that will guarantee them steady employment.

Taha also emphasized the important role that the ICLM Conference plays in supporting OIC Labour Center policy. The implementation of several OIC resolutions pertaining to labour, employment, and social protection is the responsibility of this recently established OIC-specialized institution.

The session also approved the interim organizational structure and the budget for the Secretariat of the Center for the period of 2023-2026. Azerbaijan contributed USD 1 million as a voluntary donation to the budget of the new center. ■

14th World Islamic Economic Forum in Abu Dhabi to focus on Sustainable Future

Khoder Nashar



ABU DHABI: The 14th edition of the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF), to be hosted by the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) between 6th and 8th February 2024, will focus on shaping a sustainable future by addressing key challenges, exploring new opportunities, and showcasing the latest innovative strategies and solutions to drive socio-economic development. The flagship forum, launched in 2005 by the WIEF Foundation to strengthen dialogue and exchange of knowledge between senior government officials, academics, and business leaders from around the globe, will bring together influential leaders, policymakers, scholars, and industry experts to engage in discussions and shape the future of the global economy. The 14th edition, to be held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), is themed "Global Economic Agenda: Shaping a Sustainable Future" as it strives to reach innovative solutions to pressing challenges facing the global community.

Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of ADDED, said, "Hosting the World Islamic Economic Forum is part of our efforts to shape a smart, sustainable, and inclusive socio-economic development in the world. Inspired by our leadership's vision and approach, we believe cooperation and dialogue with key players on the global stage will enable us to reach innovative solutions that serve current and future generations."

Al Zaabi stated, "As it will convene a few weeks after UNCTAD's World Investment Forum and COP 28, the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) will provide a unique platform to build upon the discussions and outcomes of these major conferences. The participants will

gain insight into the most prominent trends in the global economy, discuss strategies, share knowledge, reach innovative solutions, and work collaboratively to create a more sustainable and equitable economic landscape."

"14th WIEF promises to be a landmark event where the brightest minds and influencers from various sectors will converge to drive meaningful discussions and pave the way for a more sustainable economic future. We look forward to a successful event," commented Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid Albar, Chairman of the WIEF Foundation.

During the three-day event, participants will have the opportunity to engage in discussions covering main topics that are influencing today's and tomorrow's economy including the role of advanced technologies and digital transformation, the global economy's key drivers, and the rising role of Asian economic powerhouses. It will also address trends, opportunities, and strategies developed in the Middle East for a better future and investment landscape in Abu Dhabi.

The Forum is expected to attract more than 2,500 participants from 80 countries, including leaders, role players, and media representatives from Central Asia, the Middle East, Asia Pacific, and beyond.

The forum's panel discussions will focus on ESG, green economy, and Islamic finance, food security, Halal industry, the role of youth and women in business, trade relations, investment opportunities, and technology-driven solutions for economic growth.

(Source: <https://wam.ae/en/details/1395303216136>) ■

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Yale's annual Ivy Muslim Conference Encourages Connection and Spirituality

human impulse to freedom is really important."

Another event was the "Changemakers' Sessions," which according to Bajwa, aimed to give students a sense of different career paths by hearing from Muslims working in a variety of fields.

The speakers this year included Saqib Lakhani, a clinical director of Yale Medicine's Pediatric Genomics Discovery Program, Mohsin Ansari, who has had a long career in hedge fund management, and Rusha Latif, a researcher, and writer who recently authored "Tahrir's Youth: Leaders of a Leaderless Revolution," a book about the role of young people in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution.

Lisa Kinney-Bajwa noted that this kind of professional panel was a feature of the conference in its early years but was later replaced by other events as a result of student feedback. This year, she explained, "we're going full circle and doing professional panels again."

The first Ivy Muslim Conference took place in 2010 despite a mid-Atlantic snowstorm.

(<https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2023/11/01/yales-annual-ivy-muslim-conference-encourages-connection-and-spirituality/>) ■

»Page 2

32nd Fiqhi Seminar Concludes with Shariah Guidelines in Tamil Nadu

communal forces to absorb Muslims into their ideology. Maulana Rahmani stated that religious institutions and organizations urgently needed to take notice of this impending threat. She presided over the session.

The seminar also pledged support for the oppressed Palestinian people's efforts to liberate their land and expressed

solidarity with them. They denounced Israel's actions as unjust and barbaric.

Attendees at the seminar included representatives of reputable establishments and groups, including Madrasa Al-Baqiyat-us-Salihah, Vellore, Mazahirul Uloom Saharanpur, Darul Islam Omarabad, Imarat-e-Shariah Bihar, and Jamaat-e-Islami Hind. ■

Quran's Moral Commandments

Never think that you have reached the final stage of knowledge and nobody knows more than yourself. Remember! Above everyone endowed with knowledge is another endowed with more knowledge [al-Isra' 17:26].

Even the Prophet [sallallahu alaihi wa salaam] was asked to keep praying, "O My sustainer! Advance me in knowledge." [20:114]

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Uzbekistan on the Road to Progress: Uzbek Journalists Delegation

Spl Correspondent

New Delhi: A 16-member delegation of journalists from Uzbekistan, an important Central Asian country, was on a 7-day official visit to India. The delegation visited Agra, Jaipur, and other places. A reception was given to the Uzbek journalists at the Press Club of India. The visiting delegation signed a Memorandum on Mutual Partnership and Experience Exchange with the Press Club of India.

Mr. Aziz Baratov, the Charge d'Affaires of Uzbekistan in Delhi, Muhammadjon Obidov, the Chairman of the Fergana regional branch of the Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan, Honored Journalist of Uzbekistan, head of the delegation, Mr. Farmon Toshev, the Member of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of Uzbekistan, Editor-in-Chief of the "Zarafshon" newspaper of the Samarkand region, and the Honored Journalist of Uzbekistan spoke about the consistently developing cooperation between India and Uzbekistan.

Speaking with *Islamic Voice*, Mr. Anvar Ikramov, head of the Directorate for Protect and Research of Akhsikent Archaeological Heritage Site, said that after its freedom from the USSR, Uzbekistan is on the road of progress and restoring its identity. He said we have 99 percent literacy, and women are



part of the work force.

Mr. Aziz Baratov said in recent years that the results of large-scale reforms being implemented in various aspects of life in Uzbekistan Particular attention was paid to the legal framework for media activities, which was created on the basis of advanced international experience, ensuring freedom of speech in Uzbekistan, strengthening the place of non-state sources of information and social networks in the lives of society, and the importance of international cooperation in this area.

Mr. Manoranjan Bharati, the Vice President of the Press Club of India, and other speakers stated that the historical relations between the Uzbek and Indian peoples have today reached a qualitatively new level. The parties emphasized that the media occupy a special place in the process of conveying the content

and importance of today's high level of Uzbek-Indian relations to the peoples of the two countries and the international community, and expressed a unanimous opinion on the development of cooperation in this direction.

As a result of the negotiations, Mr. Bharati and Mr. Muhammadjon Obidov, the Chairman of the Fergana branch of the Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan, signed a Memorandum on Mutual Partnership, Experience, and Exchange. The document states that the

Press Club of India and the Fergana, the regional branch of the Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan, have established partnerships with equal rights. The sides will assist each other in terms of information exchange between the media of the two countries, organize mutual media tours, and exchange experiences among journalists. They will jointly hold forums and conferences and mutually invite journalists from the two countries to creative competitions and other important events.

Muslim Personal Law Board Demands Immediate Withdrawal of UP Government Order Banning Halal Certification

New Delhi: The Uttar Pradesh government's decision to forbid certain registered Muslim institutions from issuing Halal certificates has drawn harsh criticism from the influential All India Muslim Personal Law Board. Demanding immediate withdrawal of anti-constitutional and anti-national action, the Muslim Board asserts that the decision goes against national interests and interferes with religious freedom and matters of faith. It also urged the Yogi government to refrain from making everything a part of Hindu-Muslim hatred and social division.

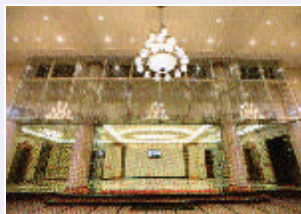
In a statement to the media, Dr. Syed Qasim Rasool Ilyas, the spokesperson for the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, said the Yogi government's ban on Halal certification will negatively impact Indian exports to the Islamic world and other nations, which will not only hurt these businesses but also have a significant negative impact on India's foreign exchange and economy. The interests of the country and the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom

should take precedence over the political agendas of the Yogi and Modi governments, as well as their animosity toward Muslims and Hindus, he added.

Acting with alacrity on the complainant of Shailendra Kumar Sharma, ex-vice president of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), the Yogi government banned Halal certification and unleashed a crackdown on stores and businesses that have halal products in their showrooms.

Dr. Ilyas also underlined that Muslims are required to abide by the rules and regulations Islam has established regarding food and beverages. Other religions operate in a similar manner. When it comes to eating habits, Islamic principles are extremely clear. Certain things are categorically forbidden by Islam, known as *haram*, which Muslims must abstain from. The issue is not just with slaughter and non-slaughter; a lot of products, like alcohol and pork, contain ingredients that are prohibited in Islam and should be avoided by all Muslims. Meat, fat, etc. Just as Muslims have the terms halal and

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UMRAH **2024**

Bookings Open



Syed Tahsin
Ahmed

A good friend of mine sent me the book **"Islamic Awakening - Between Rejection & Extremism"** written by **Yusuf Al-Qaradawi**. First published by the International Institute of Islamic Thought, London/Washington way back in the year 1987 and followed by a revised second edition in the year 1991, this book is still very much relevant to the present times. The author, a reputed scholar from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt traces the complex roots of extremist views and examines in depth the many causes of the path to intolerance, offering a variety of remedies and cures. The author refocuses the reader's attention on the original and great vision of Islam, to bring peace, unity, and stability and to treat one another with mercy, tolerance, and respect.

Moderation

This book is different from others since it highlights "moderation" in every sphere of life. Moderation which is an important trait of Islam has been overlooked over a period of time. The author says: "Islam recommends moderation and balance in everything: in belief, worship, conduct and legislation. Islamic texts call upon Muslims to exercise moderation and to reject and oppose all kinds of extremism: *ghuluw* (excessiveness), *tanattu* (nitpicking religiosity i.e., pointing out minor faults), and *tashdid* (strictness, austerity). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) struck a balance between the spiritual and the material, between the concerns of this world and the concerns of the world to come, and between the individual's right to life and its enjoyment. *"Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the hereafter"*, says the Qur'an (2:201).

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi says that these warnings against extremism and excessiveness are necessary because of our inherent tendencies. To elucidate this matter, the author tells us about why the Prophet (saw) was once angry with his eminent Companion Mu'adh,

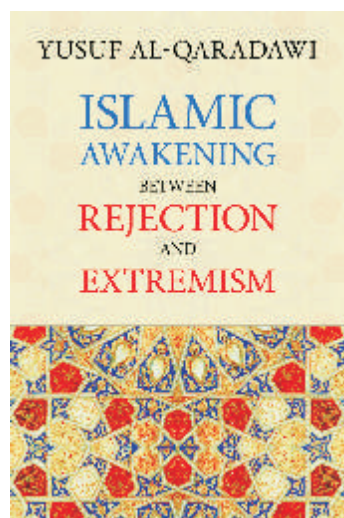
because he had led the people one day in prayer and so prolonged it that one of the people went to the Prophet (saw) and complained. The Prophet said to Mu'adh: *"O Mu'adh! Are you putting people to the test?"* and repeated it three times. On another occasion he addressed an Imam sternly, saying: *"Some of you cause people to dislike good deeds.....Whoever among you leads people in prayer should keep it short, because amongst them are the weak, the old, and those who have needs to attend to"*.

Differing Opinions

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi talks about the contention of many Muslim jurists that a woman should wear clothing that covers her entire body with the exception of her face and the hands. The exception of face and hands is based upon this Qur'anic verse: *".....that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what [must ordinarily] appear thereof"* (24:31). The author favours this point of view. However, he says, a number of eminent Muslim scholars argue that both the face and the hands are unrepresentable and must be covered, and in support of this, they cite evidence from the Qur'an, hadith literature, and established traditions. Likewise, opinions also differ on singing, music, drawing, photography, etc. However, the author makes it clear that we should not condemn the practice of any Muslim or accuse him of disbelief if he has adopted a hardline approach based on juristic judgment. We have no right to force him to abandon his opinion or ask him to follow a line of behaviour which is contrary to his convictions. You can only appeal to him with wisdom and evidence and try to convince him, says the author.

Manifestations Of Extremism

According to the author, the first indications of extremism include bigotry and intolerance. Such people claim that they alone are right and everybody else is wrong. Such people do not allow any opportunity for dialogue with others which contradicts the



principle of consensus amongst the *Ummah*. Let me mention one example here: the heated arguments and counterarguments on various *maslak* issues that we see in WhatsApp groups, carried on by people who do not have a deep knowledge of the subject. I have read abuses and counter-abuses being hurled at each other. The author's statement that a bigot neither knows nor believes in moderation becomes relevant here. Another example of extremism is to call another Muslim a *kafir* merely because he commits certain actions which may or may not be forbidden, or because he fails to observe something which may or may not be obligatory.

Thinking Ill of Others

Yet another manifestation of extremism is when the extremist considers a person guilty, the moment he suspects him of something. He jumps to conclusions. The slightest mistake is blown out of proportion. Such a reaction is a stark violation of the spirit and teachings of Islam which fosters mutual trust and goodwill among Muslims. If a Muslim sees a fault in a fellow Muslim, he should conceal it in order that Allah might conceal his faults both in this world and the next. If he finds something praiseworthy in another Muslim, he should publicize it and bring it to light.

The Literalist

The author points out that there is rigid adherence to the literal

meanings of the texts in total disregard for their essence and purpose. One authentic hadith prohibits a Muslim woman from traveling unless she is accompanied by a *maharam*. Surely, says the author, the main purpose of this prohibition was to protect women at a time when traveling was a laborious and dangerous experience. Presently, however, the means of transportation used by travelers have considerably reduced the risks faced by a woman traveling on her own.

Preoccupation With Side Issues

The author points out that "intellectual shallowness and lack of religious insight also manifest themselves in an intense interest in marginal issues at the expense of central ones. There is excessive talk about growing a beard, wearing robes below the ankle, moving the finger while reciting the *tashahhud* in prayer, acquisition of photographs, and so on. Unfortunately, such avoidable debates persist and occupy our thinking at a time when we are being confronted by unrelenting hostility". Much attention is also given to the issue of prohibiting drinking water while standing up. The author says: *"The interpretations handed down to us by the most reliable hadith scholars show that although there is a clear encouragement to drink while sitting, there is no prohibition of drinking water while standing"*.

The author explains that in matters related to eating, drinking, and dressing, for example, there are legislative as well as non-legislative pronouncements and examples in the prophetic Sunnah. Eating with the fingers rather than with cutlery is not compulsory. The former method was more natural and suitable to the simple life and nature of the Arabs at the time of the Prophet (saw). *However, this does not mean that using a spoon is forbidden or even undesirable*.

Atmosphere Of Freedom

The author advocates that we must spread and encourage an atmosphere of freedom and welcome criticism. We have an

example of this in the life of Hazrath Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA), who declared: *"May Allah bless the person who points out my faults to me!"* An atmosphere of freedom produces ideas that can be rationally discussed and analyzed by the learned, either to be adopted or to be rejected. Otherwise, this will lead to deviant thoughts which becomes the source of extremism. There is the danger of confronting one form of intellectual or political or religious extremism with another; that is confronting obstinacy with obstinacy, bigotry with bigotry, rigidity with rigidity, or reacting to a misdeed with another misdeed".

Respect The Ulema

Yusuf al-Qaradawi emphasizes that for engaging in independent reasoning (*ijtihad*), a profound and thorough knowledge of Islamic texts is required. We live in an age in which specialization has become essential; excelling in one discipline does not necessarily mean excelling in another. Just as a physician cannot be consulted on engineering matters or an engineer on law. It is a mistake to believe that the law of Islam can be interpreted by just anyone. The Qur'an and the Sunnah both teach us to refer to matters of which we have no knowledge to the learned and the experienced.

The author advises young Muslims to acquire their religious knowledge from trustworthy scholars who combine the depth of knowledge with piety, righteousness, and balance in their own lives. The main sources of Islamic knowledge are the Qur'an and the Sunnah. However, no one can enrich his understanding and knowledge of these sources without the insights of Muslim exegetes and the explanations of scholars of Islamic jurisprudence who devoted their lives to the service of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and who also established the fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence, thereby transmitting to us a legacy which only the ignorant and the arrogant would dare disregard, says Yusuf al-Qaradawi.

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

READERS RESPONSE

Making Friday Sermons More Effective



that they have gone through the ritual of attending the Jumma prayer without putting heart and soul into it.

The point I'm trying to make here

Sir,

In the November 2023 issue of IV, Tahsin Ahmed has raised a weekly and often critically debatable topic of *"Making Friday Sermons More Effective."*

The author has covered every imaginable issue of the Jumma Khutba, Imams as orators, and their inability to correlate current worldly affairs in the light of Deen and Shariah and also whether it is prudent to burden them with such issues.

Let's flip and see the other tarnished side of the coin when it comes to attendees of Jumma.

As I see every week, seventy-five percent of the people coming to the masjid for Jumma prayers arrive late, mostly just before the start or during the Arabic Khutba. People have a lackluster approach and have forgotten the basic etiquette of going to Jumma in the masjid and maintaining its sanctity. Many people occupy the spots where they can rest their backs on the walls. Some sit closer to the doors to make a quick exit. Few of them doze off during the sermon. Such audiences are there just to fulfill their self-satisfaction

is, that it is just not about the orator but also about the receptor. The message is not going to get into an individual's heart and mind if there are no active spiritual receptors illuminated in him. A person, who is not serious about his obligatory five times prayers may not get that emotional connection with the Lord of universe and his word, even when they are in Jumma obligatory Salah.

The entire article is well-written. May Allah guide the Ummah to be

on the straight path. Aameen.

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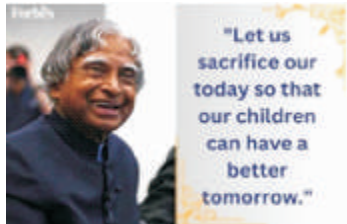
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Syed Ilyas Basha

We, Indian Muslims are proud to be citizens of this great country. We have been an architect of this land all through centuries since the days of dynastic rule. Whether it was the construction of a world-class network of transport facilities like the Grand Trunk Road linking major cities, founding new cities of the highest standards for that age, huge monumental structures to attract the world, development of living standards, and maintaining cordial relationships between groups belonging to various religions, languages, castes, and cultures, we pioneered justice and maintained the system. With the passage of years, decades, and turn of events, the foreign forces got attracted to it and slowly took over the reign of rule. We were the first to challenge and fight for the country's independence valiantly. Even our clergymen took to the streets and fought, thousands laid down their lives. Colonel Balwan Singh Nagial, a third-generation Indian Army officer who retired in 2019 wrote in *Times of India* (April 23, 2022), thus: "Muslim leadership contributed enormously to divergent phases of the Indian struggle for independence. They (Muslims) played a larger-than-life role and made significant sacrifices in this struggle for independence. From the last Mughal ruler Bahadur Shah Zafar to nawabs, princes, landlords of all sizes, clergy, ulema, and ordinary people, they all stood for the cause took on enormous challenges, and made supreme sacrifices. When the INC was formed in 1885, the Muslims responded enthusiastically and supported all its efforts throughout the freedom struggle until India became free."

India will forever be the cherished home of its Muslim citizens. We gave the independent India Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister, Dr. Rafi Ahmed Qidwai, Dr. Zakir Hussain (an Educationist and Vice President), and numerous figures as servants to the country in the form of politicians, officers, industrialists, entrepreneurs, researchers, technocrats, etc. in every field.



Our very recent contribution to the nation's public service has been the world-famous Scientist/Technocrat and President Dr. A.P.J. Kalam. He set the highest, unbelievable standard of honesty, transparency, and clean image in public life. A glimpse into the life he spent in the Rashtrapati Bhavan as President gives shocking

The Indian Muslims have a Responsibility towards the Country and Community



(Photo: cfr.org)

information. The same is as under: Mr. P M Nair, (retired IAS officer, then Secretary to Dr. Abdul Kalam, the President writes in his book "Kalam Effect" that Dr. Kalam used to receive costly gifts whenever he went abroad (as it is part of custom & and protocol) used to ask the gifts to be photographed and then cataloged and handed over to the archives. Afterward, he never even looked at them. He did not take even a pencil from the gifts received when he left Rashtrapathi Bhavan. It was a regular practice for every President to host an Iftar party, a routine. Upon being reminded about it Dr. Kalam asked Mr. Nair why he should host a party to people who are already well-fed. Instead, he estimated and donated Rs.22 lac the cost to a few selected orphanages in the form of food, dresses, and blankets besides a cheque for Rs.1. lakh from his personal funds. Though himself a devout Muslim, he never organized Iftar parties in the President's house at public expense. Once Dr. Kalam invited 50 of his relatives to come to Delhi and they all stayed in Rashtrapathi Bhavan. He organized a bus for them to go around the city which was paid for by him. No official car was used. Their lodging and food bill, which came to Rs.2 lakhs, was paid by him as per his instructions. Dr. Kalam's elder brother stayed with him in his room for the entire week as Dr. Kalam wanted his brother to stay with him. When they left, Dr. Kalam wanted to pay rent for that room too. Imagine the President of a country paying rent for the room in which he is staying. This was anyway not agreed to by the staff who thought the honesty was getting too much to handle. When he was to leave Rashtrapathi

Bhavan at the end of his tenure, every staff member went and met him and paid their respects. Mr. Nair went to him alone as his wife couldn't as she was confined to bed due to a fracture. Upon noticing her absence and knowing the reason, Dr. Kalam visited his house and chatted with her for some time. The following property was left behind by Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam: 16 doctorates, 1 website, 1 Twitter account, 1 email id, 2500 books, 1 Padmashri, 1 Padma Bhushan, 1 Bharat Ratna, 1 flat (which he has donated), 6 pants & 4 shirts (DRDO uniforms), 3 suits (1 western, 2 Indian). He didn't have any Car, jewelry, stocks, TV, AC, land, or any bank balance. He had even donated the last 8 years' pension towards the development of his village. He was a real patriot and a true Indian Muslim. We are proud of him.

Our character-building efforts continued even through the present 21st century in the country with unique results as records vouch. For example, the city of Kayalattanam (in Tamil Nadu) with 100% Muslim population. There is no Police Station, no cinema and no crime in the city because there had been no crime there for decades.

The present-day situation in the country may appear to be disheartening and disappointing for some. The irresponsible attitude towards Muslims by some extremist groups in the country belonging to a certain ideology should be viewed as a momentary period. Their efforts to demoralize, degrade, and deny civil rights are synonymous with their declared intentions. A great majority of countrymen still believe, and practice true Hinduism as had been for centuries in the past. True

Hindus do not endorse hatred, support arson, and distrust. A long history of peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Hindus for centuries with mutual respect, rejoicing especially on festivals, and long socio-economic ties in every nook and corner of the country is its evidence. Our country has been an example of 'Unity in diversity' for the world for a long time. Nobody from either community can imagine survival without another. The bond has been and will surely be as strong as Steel. The ever-increasing social evils like Corruption, nepotism, frauds, woman-bashing, and vandalism like termites in the country have made the life of the common man miserable. The decline in values like increased greediness, widespread dishonesty, revenge, vindictiveness, and non-adherence to the law need to be challenged and controlled. The 'PLEDGE' we used to read in our textbooks once on first page is long missing both from the book and in practice.

We the Indian Muslims, whether a common man, clergy, intellectual, and technocrat, worker or even those with any political group should realize that notwithstanding the company or area, we have a responsibility towards the country and are duty-

bound to work for our own community. We need to understand today's challenging scenario and strengthen its unity. We are the inheritors of a great legacy and not followers of the ilk of this day. We Muslims should remember that we are ordained by the Almighty Allah to be united, behold his Commands; make efforts to spread virtuous deeds, and work to eradicate evils. The entire country is looking forward to the honesty.

As the phrase rightly goes, 'Service to humanity is service to God'. Our population in the country according to the 2011 census stands at about 200 million which constitutes 15%. We need to contain our extravagant lifestyle, especially in matters of functions and festivals.

We should stop depending on politicians, and their promises and focus on a self, collective effort. We need to move forward together in the fields of education, and employment opportunities generating plans through mutual cooperation. For this purpose and as in the days of our Prophet, we should make our area Masjid a center for gathering, deliberation, planning, guidance, and service as per law. Experts and experience in relevant fields can be roped in for the purpose and the available resources can be put to work.

(The writer could be contacted at sdilyashyd@yahoo.com) ■

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Arshi Dokhia

Mental Health and War

Mental health seems like a very privileged thing to even think or write about when we look at the continued sufferings of our Palestinian brothers and sisters. I almost scrapped this article three times before finding the courage to pen it down.

Over the past couple of weeks, we have witnessed a tragedy in progress. As a mother, sitting next to my peacefully sleeping daughter whilst watching clips of children crying for their mothers and mothers mourning their children—I have two major feelings in my mind. Gratitude. I now realize the luxury I live in. The blessings I have. The second is guilt. Overwhelming guilt of having all the luxuries I do right now.

The roof over my head. Clean water to drink. Food on the table. How can I go about my life as normal when our ummah suffers so? How can I think of writing about anything else? Are you worried about anything else? The problems that seemed so overwhelming just a month ago seem insignificant. And I see my brothers and sisters suffer, too.

Witnessing tragedy after tragedy. News clippings of a massacre are coming in daily. Social media is filled with heart-wrenching images and videos. Our ummah on one hand is becoming desensitized. On the other hand, helplessness and inability to help leads to empathic distress. We find ourselves exhausted. The need to shut everything off and withdraw is so strong that it leads to immense guilt... and we are stuck in this vicious cycle all over again.

The question arises how do we combat this? Will we ever find a normal?

The New Norm



(Courtesy Photo abcNews)

Seeing things like this happening on such a large scale, obviously, changes our brains irrevocably. This means that things won't go the way they were because we have witnessed something that deeply impacted us and is life-altering. As Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

“The parable of believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”

So, accept that things won't be normal as we know it again. We will be affected. Our minds will not be at ease. But we do not have to give in to helplessness. There are several things that we can do.

Regain your closeness to Allah

This incident has given us an opportunity to not only realize our blessings but also regain our Taqwa. Be hopeful and fearful of Him once again. This is the perfect opportunity to focus on our deeds. Allah SWT in Surah al Baqarah, verse 153 says:

“Oh, believers! Seek comfort in patience and prayer. Allah is truly with the patient.”

There's not much we can do on the

political map. The power is not with us. But remember, it's the dua'a and faith in Allah that has changed tides for us in the past. Perhaps, it is time for us to look at the strength and resilience of our ummah. Focus on our deeds. Correct our salah. Bring *khushoo'* in our salah. Do voluntarily good deeds. Increase our sunnah. Relying on Allah will not only improve our mental health but give us hope. But also improve our *akhirah*.

Manage the Guilt

Focus on the things you can do. Be it creating awareness. Monetary help in the form of donations. Prayers and duas that you make daily.

Remember Allah promised us in Surah Ash-Shu'ara, *“Call upon Me, I will respond to you.”*

So firstly, seek some tranquility in prayer and the promise of Allah.

Seeking Information

The other thing you can do is be informed. Social media can become a wildfire of misinformation and the filter bubbles of Instagram and other platforms can create echo chambers of your own thoughts

and ideas. It is important to look at the objective news to stay informed. Find objective resources to inform you of the situation.

In seeking information, try and understand the conflict, as well. There's a lot of political and historical context here. Read that up. The objective side of the story. This will help you a lot in creating awareness about the issue. To raise your voice with half a knowledge might lead you to get your information disregarded and deemed untrue. If you step out of the echo chambers, you will realize that many people have contrary views, and you need to be well-informed to create awareness.

Always double-check your sources. Understand what you are reading. Dig deeper.

Don't Give Yourself to Hate

Allah says in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13,

“O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

Islam has acknowledged the differences that humans have in the forms of tribes, cultures, color, and race. But also reminds you that there's no superiority based on these things.

In the hadith collected by Imam Ahmed, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says:

“O humanity! Your Lord is One and your ancestry is one. No Arab is superior to non-Arab, nor is any white superior to any black, nor is any black superior to any white except on account of their righteousness.”

It becomes very easy to end up

negative in such circumstances and begin to hate a group of people or an entire religion based on the work of a few powerful people.

This negativity can further harm your mental health and also harm your cause to help our brothers and sisters. Remember to be calm and collected so that you can make the most beneficial decisions in such trying times.

Focus on What We Can Control

In therapy, we often ask our clients to make circles of control. If we focus too much on the things that are beyond our control, we can either become depressed or anxious. If we look at it objectively and logically, there are very few things we can change or control beyond our own thoughts, actions, and beliefs. So, what can you do?

• **Make dua:** We have discussed this enough in this article. But another reminder of the benefits of dua is in a hadith in Sahih Muslim, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says, *“No Muslim servant supplicates for his brother behind his back but the angel says: And for you the same.”*

• **Help people around you:** You might not have much to go about helping the brothers and sisters who are war-struck but you can actually make a change by helping the weak, elderly, and needy in your own society and the people around you. Take this opportunity to make things better for everyone.

• **Make donations:** Find authentic legitimate organizations to make donations. Or even volunteer if that's possible for you.

Lastly, remember to stand up for what you believe but hate will not cure hate. Be proactive and educated to help our ummah in a productive way.

May Allah guide us all and ease the conditions of those who are suffering. Aameen. ■

» Page 5

March 2023 and a 19-year-old Muslim girl from Belgaum, Bengaluru, in July 2023, where parents have alleged she was raped and murdered.

7. Crimes: There is a sharp rise in crimes against women and hate crimes. Numerous reports highlight unwarranted violence and harassment against Muslim women and girls, including a horrific incident in which a woman was burned alive in Jharkhand recently. The media is hiding numerous such crimes and atrocities. It called upon the state government to ensure the safety and security of females.

8. Lady journalists facing hate: A Muslim Kashmiri journalist was prevented from receiving the award in Pune (Maharashtra Institute of Technology) due to political pressure, and another female journalist was stopped at the airport when she was flying from Delhi to Paris to receive the award.

Professional Muslim Women Formed Association to Work for Safety and Overall Development of Women

9. Release of Shaheen Bagh Protesters: We demand the immediate release of innocent protesters who participated in the Shaheen Bagh protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

10. Social Reform: We are working hard for social reform, eliminating dowry demands in marriages, discouraging extravagant marriages, and counselling couples for marital disputes within the Muslim community. It appealed to the Muslim community to encourage simple marriages.

11. Promoting Higher Education: It appealed to parents not to hinder their daughters' pursuit of higher education. We urge parents to encourage the higher education of girls. Likewise, we urge Muslim female students to maintain their hijab while pursuing their educational goals.

12. Financial support for girl's education: We are committed to ensuring that the daughters of underprivileged families have full access to government schools and educational institutions for the completion of their studies.

13. Women Empowerment Schemes: There is a need for effective utilization of women empowerment schemes.

14. Appeal to Political Parties: We appeal to all secular and democratic political parties to prioritize the welfare of Muslim students and women, especially after their successes in the upcoming state elections.

15. Unity: We appeal for unity among the Muslim community, the 10 crore women and girls, to transcend sectarian divisions and collaborate in building a just righteous, developed, and modern society.

As concerned citizens of the

Muslim community, we are deeply committed to addressing these urgent and pressing issues and challenges faced by Muslim women and students in India. Dr. Zahra, who was earlier working with the All India Muslim Personal Law Board's women's wing, in response to a question, she said the criminalization of triple talaq was not in favour of Muslim women, as the act makes women

destitute. She said the act was passed to appease the Hindutva constituency, not for the good of Muslim women.

In the first body through elections, Dr. Asma Zahra has been elected as the President, while Mrs. Zakia Moin Hyderabad, Mrs. Mamdooha Majid from New Delhi, Dr. Neelam Ghazala from Kolkata, and Mrs. Afroz Fatma Jafri from Noida have been elected as Vice Presidents. Ms. Uzma Parekh, Nagpur, is the general secretary, and Ms. Huda Rawal is the organizing secretary. ■

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Arshad Sayyed

• What is Confidence...??

Confidence is the trust of an individual in their abilities and themselves. A state of mind that determines how you feel about yourself, your qualities, and abilities as well as your self-image. To know and embrace who you are, understand your strengths and weaknesses, and develop yourself in a positive manner.

Confidence is the combination of Qualities, Abilities, and Awareness. It is about diving into the states you are afraid of by overcoming your fears and living more happily. If you look at some of the successful people around the world, they look more confident because they know what they are doing, they train themselves every day to become better and better in their skills and learnings. And it is well known fact that confident people often find greater success in life.

The fact is, we all are seeking confidence in life. But on the other hand, most of us are lacking in confidence even in smaller things. The feeling of insecurity or the moments of instability and uncertainty haunts us and the result of which is we are unable to summon the confidence.

• How to Stay Confident...??

Fortunately, there are several ways that will help you to gain confidence as well as to become more positive in life. By following these steps, you will understand the areas where you lack confidence, and the areas where you struggle and help you to overcome these feelings and to be more confident in life.

• Caring About Your Physical Fitness:

Believe it or not, physical fitness plays an important role in your confidence. If you're not fit or don't feel good about your body/appearance (obesity for example) then naturally, it is quite difficult to feel confident with such a mentality. So, to stay fit and healthy, you need to start practicing self-care which will again naturally help you to gain confidence and it won't just positively affect your body but your mind and spirit as well. Remember, all glory comes from daring to begin and the hardest part is the beginning. You need to take baby steps in order to achieve the big milestones. So:



- Sleeping 6-8 hours per night.
- Walking 30 Minutes per day.
- Eating healthy, nutritious food

How to Stay Confident: Methods and Tips to Improve Self Confidence

“Confidence isn't something we are born with, but confidence is a skill which we can learn with time and effort.”



with enough amount of carbs and protein in it and avoiding junk food.

- Going to the gym 3 to 5 times per week.
- Drinking enough water.
- Getting morning and evening sunlight.

If you make these things a regular habit then in a couple of months, you will notice a drastic change in your life which eventually boosts your self-confidence to the next level.

(Note: The above points are taken from the general practice. Before actually starting, you should be aware of your health conditions and for that, consult your doctor, certified fitness coach, and dietitian for a properly balanced and monitored program, otherwise serious health issues may occur.)

• Conquer Your FearsBy Getting Comfortable With Uncomfortable Scenarios:

Suppose you want to learn how to swim and for that you are reading many books, watching videos about swimming, and trying to learn each and every aspect of the swimming skill but, you never actually jump into the water. So, will you ever be going to learn how to swim like this?

Similarly, learning about exercise, stage courage, or any other skills from books/videos without actually doing it will take you now here. If you never leave your comfort zone and try to do things that will make you feel uncomfortable, then you are surely missing the first step of learning.

So, in order to become more confident, the first step should be 'Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone' because venturing out of your comfort zone is the opportunity to develop more self-confidence. And yes, you might feel fear, uncomfortable situations, and awkwardness but when you push yourself to perform these little steps then it will surely help you to grow.

It will also give you a realization that sometimes, making mistakes or being anxious isn't as bad as you might have thought. but it is a part of learning. And this realization gives you more confidence next time when you are trying to get out of your comfort zone and try to face new challenges which eventually makes you more self-confident in life

• Proper Knowledge, Proper Skills, and Proper Preparation:

Gaining Proper knowledge, learning proper skills, and doing enough practice it is the basics of gaining confidence because your preparation becomes your strength and that strength helps you to believe in yourself which naturally makes you more confident. But many times we don't feel confident because we don't value our skills or don't put enough effort in learning and preparations.

So, first of all, we should understand this universal fact that every person knows some skills. From hobbies to passion, we all have something within ourselves that we can do better than others, all we have to learn is how to convert that passion into a profession because there are so much higher chances that we can perform that particular task way more confidently than any other task. Also, if somehow, we found a proper way of converting our passion into the profession, then that could be the best outcome for spending a happier life.

Overall, proper knowledge, proper skills, and proper preparations will eventually play a key role in developing confidence.

• Turning Negative Mindset into the Positive :

Your mindset plays a very important role in your confidence-building journey. In my first book 'Ek Shuruat: Kaamyabi Ki Raah Me', I have explained the whole process of our mindset. In short – your brain cells known as neurons

take the command from your conscious mind and act on it. So if you are giving negative commands knowingly or unknowingly like 'I can't do it' or 'I am not worthy of it' then your neurons will take it as a command and they will never produce the energy of physical actions which is necessary to accomplish the goals.

The below table will help you distinguish between the mindset of Confident People vs. Diffident People.

Confident People	Diffident People
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believe in themselves• Do proper learning and practice• Learn from their mistakes• Take risks• Optimistic in life• Embrace the change• Open-minded• Learn new skills• Take Responsibility• Positive in Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afraid of surrounding• Believes they know it all• Balme others for their mistakes• Afraid of taking risks• Pessimistic in life• Afraid of change• Close-minded• Make excuses / Procrastinate• Run away from responsibilities• Negative in Life

• Asking Yourself:

“Did you really value your own opinions in life?” Ask yourself.

It is okay to take others' opinions and ask the right people. But that doesn't mean putting others before yours each and every time. What will people say about me? What will people think about me? This mentality of Seeking validation from others and not valuing your own understanding will make you less confident in nature because, in reality, confidence comes from asking yourself that question.

We should have some sort of certainty about ourselves, about our opinions, our likes, and dislikes. Because when we value ourselves then people will value us. Otherwise, if you don't value yourself, or your opinions then why would people do it? So, when we start valuing our own opinions, that builds a sense of confidence within us.

And yes, we should take advice as well as constructive criticism from the right people but at the same time, ask yourself how you truly feel about yourself, what your genuine beliefs are, and how you truly feel about something right from choosing clothes to taking life decisions. Then by avoiding all the external uncertainty, you can actually act on that internal certainty.

• Always be truthful:

Yes...!! We have to admit this. **“Honest people are always more confident in life”**. When you do everything with honesty, and always be truthful, then you have

nothing to hide, and when you have nothing to hide then you have nothing to fear. With this nature and behavior, not just you but every person in your surroundings will believe in you, will admire you and this nature will naturally not just boost your confidence but establish you as an ideal person in society.

Following are some additional tips to stay more confident in life :

- Dress properly and improve your posture and body language.
- Maintain a positive and growth mindset.
- Speak with confidence and smile.
- Plan achievable goals and maintain schedule.
- Read books and avoid time wasting.

- Be a good listener and never stop learning.

- Crate a better self-image and think positively
- Be Optimistic
- Develop good habits and stay away from bad habits.
- Stop the Procrastination habit.
- Be grateful for the blessings you have in life.

- Believe in yourself

Being confident is something that will be beneficial in every aspect of life. Without wasting time worrying or negativity, we can improve ourselves in performance, relations, etc. When you believe in yourself then exploring new opportunities, and learning new things becomes much easier and it gives you the strength that is needful to achieve your dreams suppose we fail, then it will give us the energy of resilience and the ability to bounce back for the new beginning and success.

(Software Engineer, International NLP Master, Motivational Speaker, Corporate Trainer.)

Quran's Moral Commandments

Say with your mouth what is in your heart
[al-E Imram 3:167]

Speak in a civilized manner in a language that is recognized by the society and is commonly used [An Nisa 4:5]

When you voice an opinion, be just, even if it is against a relative [al-An'am 6:152]



Moin Qazi

In several cities and even towns, girls who had exposure to modern schools to pursue careers ranging from journalism to teaching have chosen in the past few years to wear the hijab (a scarf wrapped tightly around their heads to conceal every wisp of hair). Most strikingly, however, these women fluently and cogently articulate how they believe Islam has liberated and empowered them. The Islam they describe is a million miles away from that of the Taliban, let alone the Islam practiced in many Muslim countries from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia. Still, they insist - and back up their points with Quranic references - that the Islam they first discovered when they were teenagers is faithful to the Prophet's teachings. They don't need Western feminism, which, they argue, developed as a reaction against the particular expression of Western patriarchy. Within the Quranic tradition and the life of the Prophet lies the rights and inspiration Muslim societies have a misconception that the struggle for women's rights is confined, historically and geographically, to European and North American locations. This 'myth' enjoys such great credibility that women's rights in Muslim societies have almost become an alien idea, and whoever works for them is believed to be promoting some 'foreign' agenda. The misconception is confined to Muslim societies, and some people in non-Muslim cultures see Muslim women as passive and silent victims. This misconception is so prevalent that any example of brave Muslim women resisting patriarchal values, whether in the past or present, is brushed aside as an exception. This 'myth' has been repeated so often that everyone now considers it a reality in public and private lives.

New status for women

The Quran enshrined a new status

for women and gave them rights that they could have only dreamed of before in Arabia, so why the seeming disparity between what once was and what now appears to be?

Historically, Islam was incredibly advanced in providing revolutionary rights for women and uplifting women's status in the seventh century. Many of the revelations in the Quran were by nature reform-oriented, transforming critical aspects of pre-Islamic customary laws and practices in progressive ways to eliminate injustice and suffering. Still, it is not enough to merely flaunt these values. We must act on them.

The reforms that took place in the early years of Islam were progressive, changing with the needs of society; however, the more detailed rules that the classical jurists laid out only allowed many pre-Islamic customs to continue. These rules reflected their society's needs, traditions, and expectations, not the progressive reforms that started during Muhammad's time. Hence, the trajectory of reform that began during Muhammad's time was halted in the medieval period through further elaborating fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), which was then selectively codified in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Muslims need to look at themselves realistically instead of their imagined selves. The Prophet was centuries ahead of the men of his time in his attitudes toward women, and not surprisingly, right after he died, men started rolling back his reforms. The Prophet may have been too advanced for the mindset of seventh-century men, but his compassion for women is precisely the model that Muslims in the 21st century need to emulate today.

Twenty-four women appear in the Quran in various forms and for multiple purposes; 18 appear as minors, the primary five being Mary, mother of Jesus. Bilquis,

Does Islam Disenfranchise Women?



(Photo: freepik.com)

the queen of Sheba, Mary's mother, Hannah, Hawa (Eve), and Umm Musa, the mother of Moses. All of them are potent examples of the tremendous potential of women.

The women scholars

Islam is arguably the most discussed religion in the West today, in both media and society, and after terrorism; the plight of Muslim women is probably the most controversial topic of debate. , there is only a small amount of published work available on Muslim women fighting sexism within Muslim communities and much of that focuses on women who see Islam as inherently part of the problem if not the whole problem that Muslim women face. The assumption is that Muslim women must be disengaged from the religion entirely before anything close to liberation or equality can be achieved.

In the 21st century, the combined spread of literacy, the availability, and promotion of public education for both girls and boys, and the expansion of job opportunities for women have added to Muslim women's desire for greater empowerment in practicing and interpreting their faith. We have hundreds of examples of women who defied culturally defined gender norms to assert their right to be different and to be agents of

change in their society.

Modern Muslim women in the arts

Like the other forms of art, cinema is a reflection of reality. However, the truth on the screen is not natural, which means the seventh art presents a fact reproduced by human hands to its audience. While cinema, as a critical artistic language, has witnessed life and reflected society-structured reality since its beginning, it has represented women in many different ways for over 100 years.

This representation of women on the big screen started to be scrutinized and criticized over time. The primary criticism was that women were reflected in a distorted way and in line with the interests of patriarchal culture. As productions diversified, various complaints were added to these primary problems. Among these ensuing criticisms was **diversity**.

Today, Muslim women are active in Quranic study circles, mosque-based activities, community services sponsored by religious organizations, and Islamic education as students and teachers. There are a rising number of female Quran reciters, Islamic lawyers, and professors of Islamic studies worldwide.

While many Muslims worldwide learn about such exceptional Muslim women in school, their relevance to the contemporary context is frequently overlooked. Most critical aspects of their personalities are glossed over. Through learning and celebrating their examples, men and women can better understand and build upon notions of the role of Muslim women in a culturally authentic paradigm.

A woman needs to achieve their full potential - the challenge ahead

is to educate Muslim girls and women, so they have that knowledge. They justify wearing the hijab, either as a public statement of their spiritual quest or of their political identity in a world where Islam perceives itself as under threat, or both.

In a traditional Muslim home, the emphasis was on cultural conservatism rather than piety. At first, parents would remain firm about wearing conservative garments; parents were shocked". But these girls found liberation in Islam. It gave them the confidence to insist on a good education and reject arranged marriage. Islam made sense to them, and they could understand it, unlike a generation back.

They argue and reiterate an affirmation of themselves as women: *"The Qur'an says that men and women are equal in the eyes of God and that we are like a garment for each other to protect one another."*

Again and again, these women emphasize these two themes, evoked in richly poetic Quranic metaphor: first, the equality of the sexes in the eyes of God (the most meaningful equality of all, they argue), and second, the complementarity of the sexes. *The Qur'an says, "I created you from one soul, and from that soul, I created its mate so that you may live in harmony and love."*

The stereotype of a Muslim woman as a passive victim is a dangerous myth. It is promoted by the opponents of gender equality within and outside Muslim societies. It has to be challenged, debunked, and laid to rest. Without completely shattering it, Muslim women will keep fearing to speak out for their rights, afraid of being treated as the 'other,' as someone who has imported these 'problematic' and 'negative' ideas from foreign cultures. ■

"The Qur'an says that men and women are equal in the eyes of God and that we are like a garment for each other to protect one another."

» Page 1

Manila Invites Global Muslim Investors to Establish Halal Businesses in Philippines

"These ventures can cater to our vibrant domestic market or the burgeoning community of local halal consumers, which holds immense promise and potential," he said, adding that the government was also seeking to create 120,000 new jobs in the halal sector.

The Philippines is home to around 7 million Muslims, most of whom live on the island of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago in the country's south, and in the central-western province of Palawan.

Pascual was speaking at the Philippine Halal Economy Festival, part of the Invest Philippine Week that brings together domestic and international investors to engage with Filipino businesses and officials.

"At the end of this series of investment promotion activities, we hope to create new business partnerships and investments. We want to signal that the new Philippines is open for business," he said.

(<https://arab.news/w6g68>) ■

« Page 4

Muslim Board's Women's Conference

The board makes all efforts to ensure women's rights

1938 Marriage Annulment Law permitted a wife who was offended by her husband's harshness to dissolve their marriage. The media's lie that the board was made up exclusively of men was rejected by Maulana. According to him, the board launched the creation of *Dar-ul-Qaza* locations across the country so that women may consult them on atrocities.

Various representatives of community organizations also addressed the meeting and highlighted women's rights in Islam. Notable among them were

Maulana Shah Jamalur Rehman Miftahi Sahib (Amir Shariat Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Maulana Shafiq Alam Jami (Ahlul Hadith Jamiat Telangana), Maulana Mufti Ziauddin Naqshbandi (President Mufti Jamia Nizamiya Hyderabad), and Maulana Muhammad Umar Abidin Nadvi.

There were two sessions held throughout the course of the full day. Women from several community organizations spoke during the first session. Dr. Rifaat Seema, the founder and chairman of Jamia Makarim-ul-Akhlaq,

moderated this session. The women were addressed by Ms. Dr. Jalisa Sultana, the convener of the women's department, and Dr. Qudusa Sultana, a professor in the ECE department at Deccan College of Engineering and Technology. They also urged them to adhere to Sharia law, claiming that since Islam is the only religion that grants women complete rights, women shouldn't be misled or deceived about Islamic law. Approximately ten thousand women and students attended the gathering, which was organized by women. ■

Commentary by Adil Salahi

The surah describes people's different attitudes to the Last Hour, which is a Qur'anic expression denoting the arrival of the Day of Judgment: "Those who do not believe in it seek to hasten it, whereas the believers stand in awe of it and know it to be the truth." The ones who do not believe in it neither feel its seriousness nor understand what awaits them when it comes. Hence, it is no wonder that they take a frivolous attitude asking for it to be hastened. In contrast, the believers are certain of it and, as a result, they shudder as they think about it, dreading its outcome. They know what it is like when it finally comes. They also know it to be the truth, for they have always had their bond with the truth. Whereas, "those who argue about the Last Hour have gone far astray." Having gone far astray, it is difficult for them to turn back.

Harvest in this World

The surah now speaks about the sustenance God, out of His grace, provides for all people. "God is most kind towards His creatures. He provides for whomever He wills. He is the Powerful, the Almighty." The link between this verse and the previous one speaking about the Last Hour and the different attitudes people take towards it seems unclear. However, it becomes very apparent when we read the next verse: "To anyone who desires a harvest in the life to come, We shall grant an increase in his harvest; whereas to the one who desires a harvest in this world, We shall give a share of it, but he will have no share in the life to come." God provides for all His servants, the good and the bad, the believer and the unbeliever. People are too weak to be able to provide for

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent

QURAN

Hastening the Last Hour The Time That May Well Be Near

"It is Allah, Almighty who has bestowed revelation from on high, setting forth the truth, and established the balance. For all you know, the Last Hour may well be near. Those who do not believe in it seek to hasten it, whereas the believers stand in awe of it and know it to be the truth. Those who argue about the Last Hour have gone far astray. God is most kind towards His creatures. He provides for whomever He wills. He is the Powerful, the Almighty. To anyone who desires a harvest in the life to come, We shall grant an increase in his harvest; whereas to the one who desires a harvest in this world, We shall give a share of it, but he will have no share in the life to come". (Consultation, Al-Shura: 42: 17-20)

themselves. God has brought them into life and given them what meets their basic needs. Had he chosen not to provide for the unbelievers and the wrongdoers, they would not have had anything and would have died of thirst and hunger. Had this been the scenario, God's purpose of giving them life and allowing them a chance to do what may be counted for or against them would not have been fulfilled. Therefore, He attached the question of provisions to different factors related to life situations and personal abilities. He made it part of the test people undergo in this life and the result of which is known only in the life to come. Thus, it has nothing to do with belief or unbelief, goodness of character or personality. Furthermore, God has made both this life and the life to come as a harvest for people, and they choose the type of harvest they want. A person who wants to have the harvest of life to come will work to achieve this. God will help such people because of what they intend and bless their work. They will not only have their harvest in the life to come but will also have whatever God has apportioned to them of provisions in this life. They will



lose nothing of it.

Means of Earning a Livelihood

On the contrary, their provisions in this world may be, as far as they are concerned, the means to achieve their harvest in the life to come. Such people use what God provides for them, investing, enjoying, and spending it only in ways that are acceptable to, and please Him. By contrast, those who desire only a harvest in this life will have the provisions God has allocated for them, denying them

nothing of this, but they will have nothing in the life to come. They do not work for such a harvest, and as a result, they receive nothing. A glance at each group is sufficient to expose the folly of the one who desires only their harvest in this life. God grants both groups the provisions they will have in this life as He has determined. No one will miss out on any of it. What is achieved in the life to come is that which people actually desire and work for. Among those who work

only for the harvest of this life, we find some who are rich and some who are poor, according to their means of earning a livelihood. Such means are interlinked with general situations, local circumstances, and personal abilities. The same applies in equal measure to those who desire a harvest in the life to come.

There is absolutely no difference between the two groups in this present life concerning their livelihood. The difference, however, will be obvious in the life to come. So, what folly makes anyone abandon the harvest of the life to come, when this will not change his lot in this life even by a small measure? Ultimately, the matter is determined by the truth and the balance established by the book God has revealed. Truth and justice are evidently seen in providing sustenance for all people, and all living things, as also in increasing the harvest of the life to come or denying the same to those who desire only this present life. ■

God has made both this life and the life to come as a harvest for people, and they choose the type of harvest they want. A person who wants to have the harvest of the life to come will work to achieve this. God will help such people because of what they intend and bless their work. They will not only have their harvest in the life to come but will also have whatever God has apportioned to them of provisions in this life.

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Muslim Personal Law Board Demands Immediate Withdrawal of UP Government Order Banning Halal Certification

haram, similarly, Hindus have the terms *shudhand ashudh* and other terms in other religions. According to him, all organizations operating in the halal certification sector are registered with the government, and obtaining this kind of certificate is now required by the Ministry of Commerce. A certificate certifying that a product satisfies the necessary requirements and standards to be classified as Halal is provided to the consumer. Although there isn't a formal regulatory body in India for halal product certification, there are several halal certification organizations that offer halal certification to goods and restaurants. Their legitimacy stems from the fact that Muslim consumers and regulators in Islamic nations both recognize their brand. Nowadays, the movement of halal products and halal certificates is growing at a

rapid pace throughout the world, particularly in Western countries. India exports meat to Middle Eastern countries that is certified as Halal slaughtered. Being Halal certified creates trust among Muslims around the world, including India, for Indian products. This contributes to an increase in exports and profits in business.

Dr. Ilyas went on to say that the Muslim Personal Law Board is demanding that the Yogi government immediately stop its anti-national and anti-constitutional actions and stop using everything as a means of inciting social division and Hindu-Muslim hatred.

It is to be noted that the halal trade is a substantial \$3.5 trillion industry, and India gains from its export and tourism promotion, especially with trade partners in Southeast Asia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. ■

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Nikhat Fatima



Madiha Basheeruddin

We talked to her about her 8-year-long journey and what inspires her to go on.

• **What inspired you to get into this business of catering ebusiness for Muslim children that is unlike any other business?**

Having been born and grown up in the Middle East in an Islamic environment, I always wanted to do something that would benefit me in the *duniya* as well as in the *akhirah*. But it took me quite some time to figure out what exactly I wanted to do. I finally came upon the idea to introduce Islamic learning to Muslim kids in a way that would be fun, interactive and authentic. So I began curating gift boxes containing a handcrafted prayer mat, *tasbeeh*, an Islamic story book, and an alphabet toy laptop for children and called my business 'The Little Muslims gift factory' that formally began on 1st Ramadan, 1436 (2015).

• **Did you face any challenges?**

The concept of having an Islamic store in India was new, the concept of teaching Islam in a fun way was new because where there were advancements in secular education, I analyzed that the Islamic teaching process was still the same. Also, in the beginning, I approached some successful Muslimahs for advice and suggestions, but they did not entertain me. So, I had to learn on my own. While setting up the business I had to learn about the customs duties, licensing, and

Meet Multi-Talented Madiha Basheeruddin: Writer, Trainer, Entrepreneur from Hyderabad

Madiha Basheeruddin, Founder/CEO of The Little Muslims Gift Factory runs writers' workshops and is the Co-founder of Little Ummions. She does all her business online from Saudi to Hyderabad.



shipping in order to not depend on anyone.

• **Tell us about the growth of your business**

In order to add more authentic international brands of Islamic products to the gift boxes, we are the first to introduce many brands from the UK, USA, Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai, etc to India. Alhamdulillah.

I joined hands with my childhood friend Umamah and together we created two sub-brands under The Little Muslims Gift Factory-

1. Little Ummions- We develop storybooks with Islamic values for children in the age group of 0-10 years. Since we both are teachers, we realized that the best way to attract children towards the *deen* is through attractive pictures and in the form of stories. So we focused on writing and together we have published 3 paperback and 5 soft plush books.

2. F.S.W.A (Focus, sacrifice, Work and Achieve) our latest addition are workshops oriented towards uplifting Muslim sisters around the world to help them contribute towards Islamic education for future generations In sha Allah. It also acts as a *sadaqah jariyah* for all of us, where everyone benefits everyone.

We successfully hosted 2

interactive writing workshops and some of our participants have started their own Halal businesses, and started writing books.

• **Tell us about the books and products of your store**

The first book 'So Remember Me, I shall Remember You' teaches kids to remember Allah often. 'The Last Sermon' on the guidance to lead a pious life by Prophet Muhammad pbuh. The other products are dua journals, Arabic alphabets, numbers, shapes, duas, and chapters from the Quran (surahs). The books are in English and have illustrations, activities like puzzles, riddles stories from the Quran, and Hadees. Our gift boxes are customized as per the demands of the customers. Each box is curated keeping in mind how best it can be utilized.

We also have *Dhikr* magnets, Rehals, salah trackers, and Islamic books from other publishers from different countries thus showcasing their work in Islamic education.

• **How do you face competition as we see many Islamic publications today?**

There was a lot of competition in the beginning also, but my intention of starting this business was not for money, my intention has been to help, to serve, and to

provide sources of learning to our young generation. We keep an eye on what is happening within our industry but focus solely on our work and how we can serve the community better, on what we can do better, rather than what anyone else is doing.

• **Who/What inspires you to keep going?**

My parents and Allah swt are my strength. Muslim women have proven time and again to be phenomenal game changers. Khadija r.a. surpasses them all. Every time I read about her; it inspires me to be like her. My zeal to instill in our future generations the love for Allah swt, remember Him often and know HE is always there with them at every walk of life, and make them follow the true path of Prophet Muhammad pbuh keeps me going.

• **How do you market your products? Where can we buy them?**

Our marketing is done mostly through WhatsApp groups, Instagram reels and stories on Snapchat. Interested people can buy our products from our Instagram page the Little Muslims Gift Factory where they can also get updates about the workshops we conduct. We are working on hosting our own website, In sha

Allah.

• **How has your journey been so far?**

The journey was like a roller coaster ride I'd be happy to be in for the rest of my life. Every day every moment is a learning curve in business and personal life. An Islamic business is rewarding in every way. You learn patience, become more God-fearing as you are dealing with commodities and customers, and have to be fair and keep it halal.

• **What are the Future plans for The Little Muslim Gift Factory?**

Right now, we are focusing on creating unique products for our #LittleUmmions In sha Allah and personally I plan to write more books. In sha Allah, we hope one day our work reaches every household.

• **Tell us a little about yourself.**

I am an Educationist/Teacher, Author, Interior designer, product designer/consultant, and a family person. I am very organized in dividing my time with all that I want to do which includes family time. Also, I am very focused on my work. I try to give due attention to my work, hobbies, family, and/or friends.

I organize my time around salah, which helps me keep track of time and also adds to barakah.

• **What advice do you want to give to young Muslim women who want to start their own business?**

Intention is the key. Introspect why do you want to do it, the purpose and ideology behind what you want to do.

Any Islamic information requires authenticity and should be the first priority. Also, keep it halal and fear Allah swt in your dealings, Save up money and invest carefully by doing a lot of research.

Luckily, there is a platform set now for many muslimahs to come forward and contribute to the Islamic education industry. Bismillah. Good luck to them. ■



Mekail Ahmed

Whenever Satan wants to deceive me, I get addicted to the study of God's creation theory. It works well. Every person should research the mystery of Allah's creation. Then the faith will be strong. Satan will be defeated because Allah the Almighty is Omnipotent. One of the things that affects me the most is the sea. It works as a wonder drug. Strengthens the foundation of my faith. I think the ocean is a source of mystery. When we dive into the ocean of thinking about the mystery of God's creation, we will not have the opportunity to see Satan's Satanism.

The current era is at the peak of

technological excellence. With the help of technology, people are now able to know all such strange things that were unimaginable to people even a few centuries ago. Whatever is unknown to man is under the finger of the great creator. The vision of a curious man and the vision of an ordinary man are never the same, though the power of the eye is the same. Some people go to the seashore just for entertainment but some inquisitive people go to know the unknown. People must know why the sea is so unique, and what is its secret. This desire to know awakens in man an eternal thirst. People are rushing to the bottom of the bottomless sea to see what lies beneath. The seawater has a sanctuary for all kinds of animals.

There are also gold mines, diamonds, gems-pearls-jewelry. All the corals that connect the eyes, connect the mind. Algae that were once thought of as marine garbage are now gracing people's dinner tables. Algae provide nutrients to the human body and increase human immunity. People are not only looking for gold mines in the seabed, but people's eyes of curiosity have also fallen on whether there are oil and gas fields in the seabed. People did not sit still after discovering oil and gas fields, their oil and gas business expanded worldwide. A few countries have entered the ranks of the rich only by extracting, storing, and selling oil and gas. Their economy has blossomed overnight. Those small

desert countries are now the world's most influential economic countries that once used to ride camels in the desert.

Undoubtedly, Allah's plan is the best. God has scattered all those secrets that people cannot yet imagine all over the world since the beginning of the creation of the earth. The sea is the reservoir of all the strange mysteries. Soon, there may be discoveries from the sea that we cannot yet imagine. Allah says in the Qur'an, "All that He has created for you on the earth are of different colours. In this, there is evidence of the Truth for the people who take heed. It is He who subjected to you the sea, so that you may eat its fresh seafood and bring forth from it ornaments to wear. You see the

ships cleaving through it. All this, so that you may seek His bounty and feel grateful." (Surah Nahl, verses 13-14)

The sea is a laboratory of thinkers. Allah is the creator of the universe. He is the greatest engineer. He is the greatest planner. He has created everything in this universe with perfect skill. He has spread innumerable blessings all over the world. The intention is that people should enjoy all His blessings and worship Him alone. Seek the happiness of the eternal life of the hereafter by exploiting the earthly blessings. One of these creations is the ocean. The ocean is a creation of God which is a storehouse of endless blessings for humans. The ocean is a great wonder of God's creation. The ocean has always aroused

This workshop came at a time when I needed healing and guidance to deal with a dozen challenges such as the loss of loved ones, moving to a new place, remarriage, pregnancy, pursuing PhD and my business career goals while trying to practice my *deen*.

This workshop proved instrumental in boosting my spiritual health, subsequently benefiting my mental and emotional health, and improving my academic performance, relationships, work efficiency, and overall well-being.

I was restlessly searching for answers and was making desperate prayers. At the beginning of the workshop, I was full of uncertainty and despair. However, by the end of the second day, my questions disappeared, helping me shift from the human world of duality to the world of unity.

I found peace in being aligned with Reality and it is a beautiful, new beginning for me. Being accountable and in submission moment to moment has helped me break free from the cycle of anxiety, micromanaging, shutting down, and getting depressed.

The workshop helped me see my blind spots and made me acknowledge the need for personal transformation instead of wasting my energy on changing what is not in my control. The most beautiful realization for me is that submission leads to the disappearance of problems that

Discover Yourself Concepts are the Most Effective and the Simplest Solution to the Epidemic of Loneliness and Depression

I attended the Discover Yourself Workshop which was held in Dallas on the 18th and 19th of November 2023 at HEB Islamic Centre, Euless, Dallas, USA
Ayesha Nikhat



were never there in reality but were created inside my head. It became clear to me that resistance causes persistence as I keep carrying and projecting my unresolved feelings. Solutions often lie outside the comfort zone, and it is truly wonderful how Sadath Sir facilitates this transformation.

Learning to communicate from 'LA' is the greatest victory for me to defeat my ego triggers. Being grounded in humility, identifying the self-deception game, and **being able to rise above my personal demons is the greatest transformative experience that I wish I could find early on in life.** I highly recommend this workshop to those who are sincerely seeking transformation and committed to living a life in alignment with the will of Allah SWT.

The workshop provided practical insights on improving relationships with Allah, family, spouse, children, siblings, in-laws, and colleagues. I feel fulfilled in my relationships. The Discover Yourself concepts are the most effective and the simplest solution to the epidemic of loneliness and depression.

I hope to continuously attend these workshops and practice the distinctions to sustain these positive results and not go back to the default mode of behavior - action, reaction, right, and wrong, which is very easy to slip back into as we deal with individuals in the toxic world. This inside-out approach that is rooted in *Emaan* (faith) has increased my resilience, helps me be conscious of my falls, and reduces the frequency of my falls.

The distinction between animal

consciousness and spiritual consciousness has helped me transcend personal reality to embrace the Absolute reality and strengthened my connection with Allah. *The Talibul Akhirah* mindset helps me keep a check on who I am being, and this is truly liberating and gives beautiful outcomes for me even though I am not self-seeking. I am grateful to Sadath Sir for doing this important work of helping us become aware

of our blindness and showing the true way of life that promises success, happiness, and peace in both this world and the hereafter.

For decades, I have struggled to break free from the personal stories and opinions that disempower me and consequently, drain those around me. I never realized how disconnected I was from Allah's reality because of my point of view which led to suffering inside and around me. I am able to see others with eyes of love and accept them for who they are, thereby radiating love and happiness around me.

I am extremely grateful for being able to identify my true enemy, Shaytan, and for being saved from the flames of anger, hatred, and envy that turn friends into enemies. I was merely surviving but after the workshop I'm energized to truly live as a human being in spiritual consciousness, manifesting excellence in all areas of my life. I recommend everyone to attend this workshop repeatedly and the Ten Days DYS Leadership Development Program. ■

"I highly recommend this workshop to those who are sincerely seeking transformation and committed to living a life in alignment with the will of Allah SWT, and the Ten Days DYS Leadership Development Program."

Yusra Nisar

In the present busy and capitalist world where the greed for achieving more and more wealth is increasing among the masses, there has been a vacuum of contentment, peace, happiness, and tranquility. Such a vacuum is seen among those who seem to be apparently religious. They too face problems in dealing with the people around them and the society they live in. There is a sort of chaos and confusion-like situation. People get anxious, frustrated, and depressed most of the time and they are habitual of expressing their anger often when things don't go their way with the result blame game goes on, and thereby peace and happiness are rarely visible in families that comprise individuals.

To me, the reason behind this is that we don't know ourselves. We don't know 'Who am I?' and the things like 'What potential do I have inside?' 'How I can be at integrity with the outer world?' 'What is the purpose of my creation in this world?' 'How I can be at peace with myself?' 'How the external world will not affect my interior?' and 'How I can face the challenges of life with utmost courage and peace inside me?' Our

Connecting to the Inner Self and to Allah



whole focus nowadays is on our exterior self, our outer personality like how we can look more beautiful, how we have to pray, utter some supplications, try to express before others that I am happy (though not within), etc. and we thereby neglect working on ourselves internally or working on our inner self which is of prime importance as Allah (SWT) says in the Holy *Quran*,

"Verily Allah does not change a people's condition unless they change their inner selves" (13:11).

From this verse, this is very clear that unless and until we don't change ourselves from within, our external can't be changed. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to work on bringing the

transformation from within, a thing that is being neglected nowadays.

If we go back to the times of Prophet Muhammad SAW and observe his mentorship or leadership keenly, we find that the first 13 years of his prophethood in *Makkah* were wholly and solely dedicated and spent on bringing the transformation of people from within and it took him 13 complete years to work on that and the result and fruit of that hard work were seen in the later 10 years of his prophethood in *Medinah* where it was observed that whatever and howsoever any instruction of Allah (SWT) came e.g., about the observance of fast; *Pardah*; wine being prohibited; the command of *Jihad Fi*

Sabilillah; etc. the Muslims followed that in letter and spirit without an iota of giving it a second thought. They were the people of *Sami'na wa ata'ana* (We heard and we obeyed). Such obedience to Allah's commandments was only possible because their inner selves were transformed and then the external transformed itself.

Hence in order to live a life of complete submission to Allah (SWT) and thereby live a life of utmost happiness and peace, working on my inner self is very important and in today's modern times I find none other than the three-day Discover Yourself workshop of Sadathullah Khan is beneficial in this regard.

Sadat Sir beautifully, intelligently, and wisely demonstrates how a human being can get connected to his interior self; be aware of the whispers of *Satan* (your clear

enemy) 24 hours a day and in turn, submit to the will of Allah (SWT) which therefore helps him to understand what the word '*Islam*' means in its true sense and then live a life of utmost bliss. Since I have been a part of the DYS workshop this year, I believe that everyone regardless of age and profession, living in any part of the world should attend the 3-day DYS workshop of Sadat Sir wherever is feasible for a person because Sadat Sir conducts the DYS workshop in different parts of the world at different times. I myself am eager to find an opportunity to be a part of this wonderful workshop again in my life *In Sha Allah*.

The workshop marvelously helps to get connected to the inner self and then to Allah and therefore helps in accepting reality as it is and experiencing complete joy in life.

(Yusra Nisar, Research Scholar, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar) ■

"The need of the hour to work on bringing the transformation from within, a thing that is being neglected nowadays."

India's First Woman Supreme Court Justice Fathima Beevi Passes Away

Staff Writer

Thiruvananthapuram: Justice M. Fathima Beevi, whose appointment as the first Muslim woman judge of the Supreme Court had inspired women to pursue the legal profession, died at a private hospital in Kerala's Kollam on November 23. She was 96. Justice Fathima Beevi accomplished the unimaginable in the late 1980s and broke through the glass ceiling to become the first woman judge of the Supreme Court of India, passed away. Justice Beevi was also appointed as the Governor of Tamil Nadu after her superannuation as Supreme Court judge. Kerala's Health Minister Veena George condoled her death by saying that the demise of Justice Beevi was extremely painful. The minister said that Justice Beevi made a mark as the first woman judge of the Supreme Court and as the Tamil Nadu Governor. "She was a brave woman who had many records to her name. She was a personality who through her own life showed that willpower and a sense of purpose can overcome any adversity," George



said in a statement.

According to Live Law, Justice Fathima Beevi obtained her Bachelor of Law Degree from the Government Law College and enrolled as an advocate on 14 November 1950. She became the first female law graduate from Kerala. Following her graduation from Ernakulam Law College, Fatima began her career in the courts in her 50s. She was Kerala's first Muslim woman to occupy the position of magistrate. She soon rose through the ranks serving as the Munsiff in the Kerala Subordinate Judicial

Services, as a Subordinate Judge, as a Chief Judicial Magistrate, as a District and session Judge, as a Judicial Member of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal. Justice Beevi became High Court Judge in 1983 and Supreme Court Judge in 1989. She was also the first Muslim judge to be appointed to any Higher Judiciary. After her retirement, Justice Beevi first served as a member of the National Human Rights Commission, later she was appointed as Governor of Tamil Nadu.

Justice Beevi also served as Chancellor of Tamil Nadu University during her tenure as a Governor of the state. She was awarded the Bharat Jyoti Award and the US-India Business Council (USIBC) Lifetime Achievement Award. She was born at Pathanamthitta in the Kingdom of Travancore, now in the Indian state of Kerala, on 30 April 1927. She was the daughter of Annaveetil Meer Sahib and Khadeeja Beevi into Rowther Family. Her father persuaded Fathima Beevi to pursue a law degree after she graduated in Chemistry.

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The Medicine to Fight Against Satan

curiosity among people since the dawn of civilization. People's continuous research and exploration of the ocean is still going on.

Many people may wonder what to do to know Allah. How can we understand the existence of Allah? To know Allah, to understand Him, to feel His existence, what we can do is to think about the signs He created. Since Allah Ta'ala does not come before any man because He prefers to remain hidden; Therefore, He must be found out with the signs created by him. And there is a great reward for the believer. Marine algae rich

in nutrients are now being eaten by people and being exported abroad, and gas and electricity are being produced from human and animal excrement. So, what's trivial? The useless clock hanging on the wall of your house? No. Even a broken clock shows the correct time twice a day. And this is why Allah commanded: Say: "Travel in the earth and see how the first creation was. Then Allah will build (fulfill) the Creation of the Hereafter. Surely Allah has Power over all things".

(The Writer can be contacted @ mekailahmed117@gmail.com, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

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