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February 2024 Bengaluru Pages 20 Rs. 40

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## Hyderabad-born Prof. Mumtaz Ali wins Malaysia's National Book Award for third time



**Kuala Lumpur/New Delhi:** In a significant achievement, Professor (Dr.) Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, hailing from Hyderabad, India, has been honored with Malaysia's National Book Award for the third time. Currently teaching at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuala Lumpur, Prof. Ali was recognized for his outstanding contribution through his latest work, "Islamic Research: Theory, Methodology, and Thesis Writing," published in 2022.

The prestigious National Book Award 2023 and Certificate for the year 2023 were presented to Prof. Ali in a grand ceremony

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## Israeli PM Netanyahu and US at Odds Over Gaza Offensive and Palestinian Statehood

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the United States are in disagreement over the ongoing Gaza offensive and the issue of Palestinian statehood. The tension reflects a widening gap between the allies regarding the goals of Israel's military campaign and its plans for the future of the troubled region.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken recently asserted that Israel's genuine security requires a



(Smoke rises in Gaza following Israeli strikes on October 9, 2023.  
Source: Mohammed Salem / Reuters)

pathway toward Palestinian independence. However, Netanyahu, in a televised news conference, remained defiant, stating that Israel would not cease its offensive until it achieves its objectives of dismantling Hamas and rescuing all hostages.

The conflict, initiated by a Hamas attack on October 7, has raised international concerns, with calls for a halt to the offensive. The U.S., initially supportive, has

urged Netanyahu to outline postwar plans for Gaza, emphasizing the revitalization of the Palestinian Authority and steps toward a Palestinian state. While Blinken advocates a two-state solution, Netanyahu opposes it, expressing concerns about security control and sovereignty. The White House rebuked Netanyahu's stance, reaffirming President Biden's commitment to

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## AIMPLB Urges Government to Safeguard Places of Worship Amid Rising Controversies



Abdul Bari  
Masoud

**Hyderabad:** In response to the recent surge in petitions targeting mosques, the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has strongly appealed to the Union government to uphold the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991. The board, representing Indian Muslims, emphasized the need to prevent new disputes and specifically mentioned the Gyanvapi Masjid



in Varanasi and the Shahi Eidgah Masjid in Mathura.

During its Executive Committee meeting on January 18, AIMPLB, led by Moulana Khalid Saifullah

Rahmani, expressed deep concern over developments in lower courts related to the Gyanvapi and Shahi Eidgah cases. The Supreme Court's stay on the survey of Shahi

Eidgah granted by the lower court was also noted.

The board stressed that the legislative intent, as reflected in the 1991 law, prohibits any modifications to the status of places of worship. It raised apprehensions that communal forces might exploit legal avenues to create fresh disputes if not properly addressed.

Addressing the Shahi Eidgah matter, the AIMPLB highlighted a 1968 agreement between Shahi Eidgah and the Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust, which had

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## SIO Karnataka Launches Higher Education Awareness Drive Across the State



Staff Writer

**Bangalore:** In response to a significant drop in the enrollment of Muslim students in higher education, the Karnataka chapter of the Students Islamic Organisation of India (SIO) has initiated a state-wide Higher Education drive campaign from January 16 to February 15. The campaign aims to raise awareness among youth, particularly focusing on Central Universities and other prestigious institutions. Data from UDISE+ and AISHE revealed an alarming 8.5% decline in Muslim student enrollment in higher education during the 2020-21 academic year, dropping from 21 lakh to 19.21 lakh. During the campaign launch at Hooode on January 19, SIO Karnataka President Rameez EK stressed the importance of empowering students in the

community to pursue higher education. He highlighted the need for an inclusive environment and emphasized that earning a degree alone is insufficient. Rameez called for universal access to postsecondary education, urged the government to ensure student safety, and encouraged the selection of central universities. The campaign's objectives include informing minority and economically disadvantaged students about higher education and fostering parent-student cooperation. Dr. Dada Hayat Bawaji, a recent Ph.D. graduate from Kannada University in Hampi, was honored at the event, emphasizing the urgent need for such initiatives to empower individuals across social, political, and economic domains through higher education.

## India and Saudi Arabia Sign Bilateral Haj Agreement for 2024



A. B. Masoud

**Jeddah/New Delhi:** India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have officially signed the bilateral Haj agreement for 2024, finalizing a quota of 1,75,025 Indian pilgrims. Out of this, 1,40,020 seats are reserved for pilgrims through the Haj Committee of India, benefiting first-time pilgrims, and 35,005 pilgrims can proceed through Haj Group Operators. The agreement was signed by Smriti Zubin Irani, the Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs, along with V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, and Dr.

Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, Minister of Hajj and Umrah, KSA, in Jeddah. The Saudi side appreciated India's digital initiatives facilitating and promoting ease for Haj pilgrims. The Indian government's encouragement of participation through the Ladies without Mehram (LWM) category was highly valued. Following the agreement signing, Irani and Muraleedharan visited the King Abdulaziz International Airport's Haj Terminal to oversee arrangements and explore improvements for logistics and monitoring systems for Indian Haj pilgrims' convenience.

## Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Hosts Educational Seminar for Institution Heads

**JAGUAR:** The Education Department of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind organized a one-day education seminar for heads of educational institutions at Shanti Sadan Arni Magar Bangor. Mr. Syed Tanveer Ahmad, Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Center, addressed the participants on the theme of elevating school standards. In his speech, Mr. Ahmad emphasized the department's commitment to improving the quality of educational institutions. He likened an educational institution to a small state and urged participants to consider themselves responsible for this "state." Encouraging the transfer



of goals to teachers and parents, Mr. Ahmad stressed the importance of organizing special training for school teachers. Maulana Hafiz Wahiduddin Khan Umari Madani, Acting Amir of the Constituency of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Karna Malik, presided over the event. He highlighted the need for institutions to be more than just centers for disseminating movement thought, urging continuous efforts toward this goal. Al-Gaffar Hamid Omari, Constituency Secretary of the

Education Department, and Dr. Syed Kazim, Assistant Secretary of the Constituency, elaborated on human resource development and the role of institutions. The seminar, attended by officials from Jamaat-run educational institutions across the state, aimed to foster creativity and enhance educational standards. The program commenced with the recitation by Muhammad Ali Sidi Ba Pa, Assistant Sukkur Big Circle, and opening remarks by Riyaz Ahmed Ron, Secretary of the Board of Islamic Education. Murtaza Abdul Qadir and Muhammad Asif were responsible for the coordination of the seminar.

## 'Modern Educational System: A Critique from an Islamic Perspective'

Professor (Dr.) Muhammad Mumtaz Ali shares insights with Abdul Bari Masoud for *Islamic Voice*

**Q: First of all, congratulations on receiving this prestigious award for the third time. How do you feel?**

A: I am thankful to Allah SWT that my books, written from an Islamic perspective, have been recognized with the National Award. This indicates that experts appreciate academic books from an Islamic viewpoint. The Islamic perspective offers a people-oriented outlook for guidance and well-being. Readers and scholars seek academic books from an Islamic perspective as it reveals the truth about life and society. Islam discusses humanity and society, intending to enhance life and society based on virtues and noble values.

**Q: What does Islamization mean?**

A: Islamization of Knowledge involves presenting modern



knowledge in a way that helps people understand their Creator, the purpose of life, and how to improve life and society. It aims for a meaningful life free from crime, crisis, and chaos, ensuring success in this world and the Hereafter. Islamized knowledge emphasizes the reality of the Next World, motivating individuals to lead a virtuous and morally sound life.

**Q: What are your observations on modern education systems and subjects? Has it failed to foster good human beings?**

A: The prevailing global modern

educational system produces skilled workers and professionals but falls short in developing individuals into spiritually and morally elevated human beings. Despite offering numerous courses and programs worldwide, this system does not instill in students the values of obedience to parents. Highly educated graduates often do not resist corruption and crime; in fact, organized criminal syndicates are run by modern-educated individuals. In contrast, the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuala Lumpur serves as a model for an integrated and holistic education system. IIUM focuses on developing the spiritual dimension of life, emphasizing that humans are created by a Powerful Creator (Allah SWT) and are accountable

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## Issues and Challenges Facing Minorities in India



Dr. Malika B. Mistry

The Indian Association for Muslim Social Scientists (IAMSS), Western Zone, in collaboration with the Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi, and the Muslim Chamber of Commerce and Industries (MCCI), Pune, organized a national seminar on "Issues and Challenges before Minorities in India" on 30/12/2023 at the YMCA Conference Hall, Pune. In the Inaugural Session, Shailesh Mehta, Secretary of Dnyanoday Prashikshan Sevabhavi Sanstha (DPSS), emphasized India's rich diversity with many religious groups. He highlighted noticeable gaps in education, employment, and economic opportunities among religious groups and minorities, urging the filling of

these gaps. Mehta stressed the rights of security and safety for everyone, promoting diversity, and celebrating inclusivity as essential for all Indians. Prof. Ashwani Kumar, a prominent political scientist from the School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), delivered the keynote address. He underscored India's status as a land of minorities, emphasizing the importance of diversity for the nation's unity. Referring to India as a "salad bowl," Kumar explained that every group remains distinct yet integral, contributing to the syncretic culture of the country. He highlighted constitutional rights granted to minorities, particularly through Articles 29 and 30, allowing protection for linguistic

and cultural minorities. Nisar Sagar, President of MCCI, urged unity, discouraging groupism, and emphasized the dissemination of messages of love and peace. Prof. Khaja Moin Shakir discussed political representation of minorities in state assemblies and Parliament, presenting data on the impact of Muslim votes on BJP percentages. Prof. Mulla identified indicators of inequality between Muslims and other religious groups, pointing out challenges in the implementation of the New Education Policy (NEP). Sohail Ansari, Director of MCCI, emphasized the dismal situation of Muslims in India, stressing the role of education and economic upliftment. He conducted a SWOT analysis, highlighting the importance of MCCI in addressing these challenges. In the valedictory session, Dr. Daniel Penkar, Director of Symbiosis International University, called for drastic steps for the upliftment of Muslims in India. Prof. M.D. Lawrence, Vice-Chancellor of P.A. Inamdar University, outlined the CSGD strategy for minority sustainability: Continuity, Solidarity, Growth, and Development. Mubeen Khan, Vice President of MCCI, emphasized the need for Muslims to take responsibility for their

situation, work towards economic upliftment, and acquire skills in emerging technologies. The seminar concluded with a call

for Muslim unity, interaction with non-Muslims, and a focus on education and economic empowerment. ■

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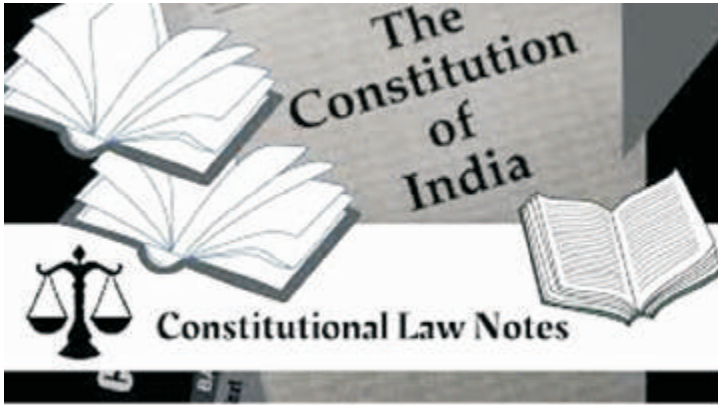
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## A Call to Indian Intellectuals: Uphold the Constitution for Inclusive Progress



Dr. Mohammad  
Manzoor Alam

Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam emphasizes the significance of the Indian Constitution, which, in its secular essence, aims to grant equal rights to all citizens. However, he points out that despite the constitutional framework, certain sections, including Dalits, Adivasis, minorities, and other marginalized groups, still face discrimination and denial of rights.

Dr. Alam highlights the need for intellectuals to lead a campaign ensuring the supremacy of the Constitution. He urges them to educate people about constitutional values, emphasizing equality and justice for all. While acknowledging progress over the last 70 years, he stresses that full implementation is still a distant goal.

The article calls on intellectuals to scrutinize how discrimination persists, even violating constitutional provisions. Dr. Alam asserts that some individuals prioritize traditions over the Constitution, necessitating a concerted effort to rectify this and ensure sincere

implementation.

He underscores that the government, executive, and judiciary should always be guided by the Constitution, making it the responsibility of intellectuals to monitor and advocate for its adherence. Dr. Alam stresses that India's identity is rooted in diversity, and intellectuals must protect this by fostering an environment where love prevails over hatred.

The piece encourages intellectuals to connect people with the Constitution, promoting a commitment to its principles. It cites former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's faith in the Constitution and urges the ruling party not to tamper with it.

In conclusion, Dr. Alam calls for collective efforts to strengthen the Constitution, create awareness, and build a harmonious society that transcends barriers of caste, creed, race, region, and language. The aim is to transform the dreams of India's builders, constituents, and freedom fighters into a tangible reality, ensuring equal rights and eradicating discrimination. He extends the call for unity and amity to all citizens, including Muslims, emphasizing the need for collective action in the pursuit of inclusive progress.

(The writer is General Secretary, All India Milli Council) ■

## Largest Renewable Energy Park



This photograph taken on 12 January 2024, shows employees working during the installation of a wind turbine at the Adani Group owned Khavda Renewable Energy Park in Khavda. Photo: AFP

Gautam Adani, India's billionaire with a diverse empire spanning ports, airports, media, and energy, is rapidly building the world's largest renewable energy park in the desert along the Pakistan border. Adani, once the world's second-richest man, faced setbacks with accusations of stock manipulation, but his firms have rebounded, and he is now

investing heavily in renewable energy. The \$2.3-billion Khavda Renewable Energy Park is set to cover 726 square kilometers, generating 30 gigawatts of solar and wind energy when completed in 2027. The ambitious project aims to contribute significantly to India's renewable energy goals and Adani's vision for a sustainable future. ■

## Rahmani30 Institute Celebrates Success in Regional Mathematics Olympiad

Staff Writer

Patna: In a remarkable achievement, Rahmani30 Institute in Patna celebrates the success of three of its students qualifying in Category B of the Regional Mathematics Olympiad (RMO) in the South Bihar Zone. Out of the six qualified students in the region, half belong to Rahmani30, showcasing the institute's dedication to academic excellence and nurturing mathematical talent.

RMO is a significant competition organized by the Homi Bhabha Center of Science Education (HBCSE) as the regional level of the International Olympiad for Mathematics. It spans 25 regions across India, aiming to encourage

and recognize outstanding mathematical abilities among students.

The success of Rahmani30 students Ayan Ashraf, Mohammad Shariq Jamil, and Shabaz Alam in securing 50% of the qualifying positions in the South Bihar Zone reflects both their individual brilliance and the effectiveness of the institute's teaching methodologies.

Ameer E Shariat, Maulana Ahmad Wali Faisal Rahmani, the patron

of Rahmani30, extends heartfelt congratulations to the successful students, parents, the management team, and all stakeholders. He acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the faculty members in shaping the minds of these young achievers. Rahmani30 Institute remains committed to providing quality education and fostering an environment conducive to the holistic development of its students. ■



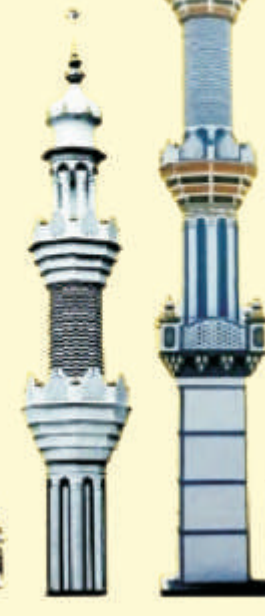
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## Interfaith Leaders Unite to Address Communal Concerns in Aurangabad

Aurangabad recently hosted an interfaith conference where prominent leaders from various religious backgrounds expressed deep concern about the escalating communal tensions in India. The conference, organized by Dharmik Jan Morcha and Sadbhavna Manch on January 10, served as a platform for leaders to pledge concerted efforts towards fostering harmony and addressing the challenges posed by communalism.

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) Vice President, Professor Salim Engineer, emphasized the urgent need for religious leaders to collaborate in promoting unity, trust, and tolerance. He identified communalism as a major impediment to the nation's progress and lamented the rise of radical discourse, communal polarization, and targeted violence against religious



minorities. Professor Salim Engineer urged the government to fulfill its primary duty of safeguarding all citizens, irrespective of their faith, and to take decisive action against hate speech and violence targeting minorities.

Highlighting India's rich history of multiculturalism, multi-religiosity, and multilingualism, Professor Salim Engineer stressed the importance of maintaining unity in diversity. He called for concerted efforts to promote interfaith harmony and expressed support for groups dedicated to peace, justice, and democracy.

Dr. Rafiq Parnerkar, Regional Secretary of Sadbhavna Manch, emphasized kindness and

compassion as the cornerstones of human civilization. He urged individuals to uphold the principles of their respective religions to foster unity and peace in society.

Maulana Ilyas Falahi, President of JIH Maharashtra State, underscored India's diverse heritage and its long tradition of religious tolerance. He called for collective cooperation to preserve this heritage and recounted instances of people from various faiths coming together during critical periods in history. The conference featured additional speakers, including Maharaj Ram Pal, Atant Bhoware of Samuddhan Manch, and Dr. Vinod Kumar of the Sant Nirankari Mandal. All speakers echoed the importance of social harmony for a prosperous and peaceful India, urging residents to collaborate in cultivating tolerance and understanding among diverse communities.

«Page 1

## Hyderabad-born Prof. Mumtaz Ali wins Malaysia's National Book Award for third time

held on December 22, 2023. The certificate carries the signatures of Prime Minister Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Minister Dato Seri Zambry Abdul Qadir.

Born in Hyderabad in 1955, Prof. Ali holds a doctorate in philosophy in Islamic studies from Aligarh Muslim University. He began his academic journey by completing his master's degree in Islamic studies at Aligarh Muslim University and a bachelor's degree in modern western political thought from Osmania University. Joining IIUM in 1987 as an assistant professor, Prof. Ali has been a dedicated member of the university ever since. Currently, he leads the Abdulhamid Abusulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in the Department of Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion. His award-winning book, "Islamic Research: Theory, Methodology, and Thesis Writing," advocates for the transcendence of Islamic research

beyond religious topics, emphasizing its relevance to all aspects of life and society. The book distinguishes Islamic research from conventional methods, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive theory and methodology.

Prof. Ali's contributions extend to various branches of Islamic theology, including developmental studies, modernization, epistemological and methodological studies, critical thinking, philosophy of science, and modernity. His books, especially those on the Islamization of Knowledge, are widely regarded as bestsellers on campus.

In 2014, Prof. Ali received the National Book Award for his book, 'Issues in Islamization of Human Knowledge: Civilization Building Discourse of Contemporary Muslim Thinkers.' His consistent recognition reflects his commitment to advancing Islamic research and knowledge.



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## Middle East Security Hinges on Palestinian Statehood, Says Saudi Ambassador at Davos

**DAVOS:** Ensuring security in the Middle East region hinges solely on the establishment of a Palestinian state, emphasized the Saudi ambassador to the US during a panel discussion at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Thursday (January 18, 2024). Princess Reema bint Bandar, speaking in a Saudi-focused session, acknowledged Israel's legitimate need for security, especially in the aftermath of the October 7 attacks by Hamas militants. However, she asserted that this security should not come "at the expense" of the safety of the Palestinian people, highlighting the urgency for an immediate ceasefire.

Addressing the toll of the conflict, Princess Reema asked, "How many more children need to die? How many more limbs need to be lost? How many more parents need to lose their livelihoods?" She emphasized the Kingdom's condemnation of violence on both sides.



While emphasizing the Middle East's united call for peace in Gaza, Princess Reema recognized the

volatile period in the region, acknowledging the daily hardships faced by the Gazan people. She stressed the importance of "doing the right thing for the future." Princess Reema made it clear that discussions about normalizing relations with Israel would be off the table as long as Israeli forces continue to harm Palestinian civilians. She emphasized the Kingdom's continuous efforts for peace and underscored the responsibility toward guiding the Palestinian people toward statehood. "The Kingdom's policy is a finite, irrevocable path that means 'today' for the Palestinian people," she concluded.

## Saudi Arabia Achieves Guinness World Record for Highest Hanging Prayer Room in Makkah



Photo: Jabal\_Omar\_SA

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has attained a remarkable achievement by securing a place in the Guinness Book of World Records for unveiling the world's highest hanging prayer room in Makkah. This prestigious title was earned by Jabal Omar Company, a leading real estate developer in Makkah. Situated within the 165-meter skybridge that connects the two towers of the Address Jabal Omar Hotel Makkah, the prayer room stands 483 meters above sea level, offering awe-inspiring views of the Holy Kaaba and other

significant religious landmarks. This architectural marvel, spanning 550 square meters and has the capacity to comfortably accommodate around 520 worshippers. The 650-tonne steel bridge was meticulously assembled at 312 meters above ground before being raised to its final position, seamlessly connecting the hotel's twin towers across floors 36, 37, and 38. The prayer room seamlessly blends traditional Arabic designs with modern luxury, featuring Arabic calligraphy adorned with Allah's names, showcasing the

rich Islamic heritage. Khaled Al Amoudi, the CEO of Jabal Omar Development Company, expressed his joy after the hanging prayer hall was officially recognized and registered in the Guinness Book of World Records. This remarkable achievement stands as a testament to Saudi Arabia's commitment to combining architectural innovation with reverence for its religious heritage.

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### "Potential Impact"

## Saudi Diplomacy's Role in Shaping the Middle East, Insights from Israeli Journalist at WEF

**LONDON:** In a panel discussion at the World Economic Forum in London, experts and government officials examined the potential impact of strategic deals, including those involving Saudi Arabia, on the Middle East. The Gaza conflict, Iran, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and potential Saudi-Israel normalization were key topics. Jane Harman emphasized the need for a two-state pathway to manage the Gaza conflict, with Mahmoud Sariolghalam stating that no Arab country would accept Iranian dominance. Barak Ravid suggested

that Saudi-Iranian convergence could open a path to peace, and despite regional conflicts, economic progress in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries is anticipated in 2024. Ravid warned of a potential Hezbollah-Israel war, and Sariolghalam highlighted Iran's delicate balancing act with its militias. Despite prospects for Saudi-Israel normalization, Ravid cautioned that Tel Aviv's momentum is moving toward a one-state reality in the West Bank that may not be a sustainable solution for Palestinians.



People attend the 54th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, on Jan. 16, 2024 (Reuters).

«Page 1

## Israeli PM Netanyahu and US at Odds Over Gaza Offensive and Palestinian Statehood

working toward a two-state solution. Divisions within Israeli society have resurfaced, particularly among families of hostages calling for a new ceasefire. International criticism, including accusations of genocide at the UN world court, further complicates Netanyahu's objectives. Critics

argue that his delayed postwar planning is influenced by ongoing investigations and potential political repercussions. As the conflict continues, questions persist about the feasibility of Netanyahu's goals, with polls indicating a decline in his popularity amid corruption charges and governance failures.

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## Ismailia's 'French church' a Marvel for Tourists in Egypt



One of the standout tourist attractions in Egypt's Ismailia Governorate is the Church of St. Mark, located about 100 km east of Cairo. (Supplied)

**CAIRO:** The Church of St. Mark, nestled in Egypt's Ismailia Governorate, stands as a timeless testament to architectural grandeur. Located about 100 km east of Cairo, this 160-year-old church is often referred to as the French Church, with its association with Ferdinand de Lesseps, the visionary behind the Suez Canal. Flobater Gad, a Coptic architectural art researcher, emphasizes the church's status as an architectural masterpiece that attracts visitors from various faiths. It has gained heritage importance due to its resemblance to a church in France and features stunning paintings and a cave symbolizing Christ's birthplace. Shahinaz Malak, an Ismailia resident and archaeology student, highlights the church's significance as one of the oldest in the governorate. The Cathedral of

Saint Mark, affiliated with the Coptic Catholic denomination, boasts artistic value and historical roots dating back to the construction of a small church in 1864.

During the excavation of the Suez Canal, three churches were built in Ismailia, serving as places of worship for workers. Despite facing challenges, including a major flood in 1865, the church persevered. Abdelmajid Abdelaziz, an Egyptian heritage researcher, notes that the church's expansion and construction of a new building in 1924 further solidified its presence as a cultural and religious landmark. Today, the Church of St. Mark continues to draw visitors, transcending religious boundaries and captivating all who appreciate its rich history and architectural splendor. ■

## Ancient Egyptian Tomb Unveiled in Saqqara Necropolis



**Cairo:** Archaeologists in Saqqara, Egypt, have revealed a 4,000 year old tomb carved into rock, marking a significant discovery. Dated between 2649 and 2150 BC, the tomb offers insights into different historical periods. The findings include burials, architectural elements, and artifacts like a vividly colored mask, a child's burial site from the

Second Dynasty, and a well-preserved alabaster vessel from the 18th Dynasty. The tomb, situated south of Cairo, showcases Egypt's rich history. Saqqara, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is home to numerous pyramids and has been a site of recent archaeological revelations. [Source: Azernews] ■

## Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Secures Fifth Term Amid Election Boycott and Low Turnout

**DAKA:** Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has secured her fifth term in office, despite a widespread boycott by the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and low voter turnout. Hasina, who first became prime minister in 1996, faced criticism for refusing opposition demands to resign and allow a neutral authority to oversee the election. The BNP boycotted the polls after their demands were rejected. The election, marred by violence, saw a turnout of around 40%, significantly lower than the 80% in the 2018 election. The ruling Awami League won 167 out of 227 seats, raising concerns about virtual one-party rule and calls for a free and fair election from the United States and Western nations. Rights groups warn of a lack of political diversity and democratic principles in the South Asian



(Reuters) - Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina swept to a fourth straight term as expected

country of 170 million people. Critics accuse Hasina of authoritarianism, human rights violations, and economic challenges, as the nation sought a

\$4.7 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund last year due to the Russia-Ukraine war's impact on fuel and food prices. ■



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## Celebration of World Arabic Language Day at OIC Headquarters



**Jeddah:** The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language (KSGAAL) jointly organized an event on January 14 at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah to commemorate the first World Arabic Language Day. The event, themed "Arabic: The Language of Poetry and Arts," aimed to highlight the global significance of Arabic.

Arabic, the language of the Noble Quran, has witnessed a resurgence beyond its geographical origins, with Arabic speakers settling worldwide. It stands as one of the four official languages of the UN and ranks as the fifth-largest language globally, following English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Urdu.

### Key Points:

### OIC Secretary-General's

**Remarks:** Hissein Brahim Taha emphasized the pivotal role of Arabic, considering it the language of the Noble Quran and an integral part of Islamic prayer. He underscored Arabic's historical significance as one of the world's oldest and widely used languages, emphasizing its

relevance in the Islamic religion and the global context.

**Collaboration Between OIC and KSGAAL:** Taha highlighted the successful collaboration between KSGAAL and the OIC General Secretariat. This partnership, focused on celebrating Arabic, reflects the OIC's commitment to working with Saudi Arabian and Member State stakeholders. Taha expressed a desire for increased collaboration to enhance the capacities of institutions in Member States.

### KSGAAL Secretary-General's

**Perspective:** Dr. Abdullah bin Saleh Al-Washmi emphasized the strategic cooperation between OIC and KSGAAL, highlighting their active partnership in promoting the Arabic language globally. He stressed Arabic's unique significance, serving not only as a symbol of national and Arab identity but also as the language of the Noble Qur'an, with profound connections to Islamic civilization.

### Preserving Arabic Language's

**Cultural Heritage:** Dr. Saleh bin Hamad Al-Suhaibani, the Permanent Representative of

Saudi Arabia to the OIC, highlighted the Arabic language's cultural significance. He emphasized its role not only as the first language of Muslims but also as a vital contributor to their rich culture. Al-Suhaibani stressed the importance of preserving and promoting Arabic for cultural preservation and fostering mutual understanding.

### Historical Background in

**Azerbaijan:** Shahin Abdullayev, the Azerbaijani envoy to Saudi Arabia, shed light on the historical background of the Arabic language in Azerbaijan. He shared insights into the nation's efforts to preserve and propagate the language.

The celebration included panel discussions, a poetry session featuring poets from Member States, and an Arabic poetry display. Throughout the event, speakers highlighted the language's importance in building a global civilization.

It is noteworthy that the OIC adopted a ministerial resolution during the 49th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, designating December 18 as World Arabic Language Day. The resolution aimed to support the presence of the Arabic language in regional and international forums. With a global Arabic-speaking population exceeding 466 million, the language plays a crucial role in diverse regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle East, and North Africa. Its recognition in international forums reflects its cultural, religious, and historical significance. ■

## Entrance Fee Introduced for Foreign Tourists at Istanbul's Hagia Sophia Mosque

Starting from January 15, foreign tourists visiting Istanbul's Hagia Sophia Mosque will be charged an entrance fee, announced Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy. A separate entrance will be designated for tourists, while the current one will be reserved for those arriving for religious purposes. This move aligns with



UNESCO recommendations and global practices. Tourists can explore the mosque using a special audio guide, which can be downloaded or obtained at the entrance for a self-guided tour. Hagia Sophia, initially built as a cathedral in 532-537, later transformed into a mosque, and then a museum, regained its mosque status in July 2020. ■

## First Turkish Astronaut to fly Space Begins

The historical 14-day journey of the first Turkish astronaut, Alper Gezeravcı, will begin on the night between January 17 and January 18.

Launching from Florida as part of the National Space Program's first manned space mission, Gezeravcı will join the Axiom Mission 3 (Ax-3) crew heading to the International Space Station (ISS). The launch is



scheduled for January 18, 2024, at 01:11 Turkiye time, with docking at the ISS on January 19. The mission includes 13 science experiments covering human genetics, health, biology, material science, production technologies, and basic sciences. Live broadcasts and events in cities across Turkiye will celebrate this historic space journey. ■

## Armenia and India Plan Trade Route via Iran, Targeting May 2024 Opening

Armenia's Economy Minister, Vahan Kerobyan, has announced plans to open a trade route connecting Armenia and India

through Iran by May 2024. The proposed route will link the Indian port of Mumbai to Armenia via Iran's Chabahar port. Minister Kerobyan recently met with his Indian counterpart and the head of



the company operating the Indian section of Chabahar port to discuss and outline an action plan to ensure the route's operational readiness by the specified date. The initiative is part of the International North-South Transport Corridor, aiming to enhance cargo movement efficiency between India, Iran, and Russia. ■

## France Implements Ban on Foreign-Funded Imams in Counter terrorism Move

French Interior Minister Darmanin has announced a ban on approximately 300 foreign imams, primarily from Algeria, Turkey, and Morocco, funded from abroad, from entering France. This policy, aligned with President Macron's 2020 measures to counter radical Islamist extremism, seeks to promote locally trained imams while curbing foreign influence and funding. Existing foreign



imams are required to transition to being paid by French Muslim associations, with an exception for the 'imams of Ramadan' group. The move is part of

broader efforts to address radicalization challenges, including securing agreement on a charter of principles for Islam in France and handling tensions around closing radical mosques. The deportation of foreign radical imams, such as Hassan Iquioussen, underscores the delicate balance France navigates between free speech, secularism, and counterterrorism efforts. ■

## Saudi Arabia Successfully Issues \$12 Billion in International Dollar Bonds

Saudi Arabia has completed its first international dollar bond issue for 2024, amounting to \$12 billion. The National Debt

Management Center, overseeing government borrowing and public debt, confirmed the successful placement of bonds in three tranches with varying



Azernews reports

maturities: 6, 10, and 30 years. The oversubscribed offering attracted nearly \$30 billion in applications, demonstrating strong investor interest in Saudi bonds. The funds raised will contribute to the kingdom's fiscal initiatives and economic projects. ■

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## Iran Achieves Successful Launch of Sorayya Satellite, Heightening Global Concerns



Iranian satellite carrier rocket "Simorgh" is seen in an unknown location in Iran, in this picture obtained on December 30, 2021. (photo credit: Ministry of Defense of Iran/Wana/Handout Via Reuters)

Iran has successfully launched its Sorayya satellite into orbit, marking a significant milestone, as reported by Iranian state media on Saturday, 20 January 2024. Developed by the research arm of the civilian Iranian Space Agency, the satellite reached a 750 km (466-mile) orbit, representing the highest altitude achieved by Iran to date.

Launched via the Qaem 100, a three-stage solid-fuel rocket manufactured by the elite military

Revolutionary Guards, the 50 kg (110 lb) Sorayya satellite's successful orbit entry raises concerns among Western nations. The U.S. military contends that the long-range ballistic technology used for satellite launches could potentially enable Tehran to deploy longer-range weapons, including nuclear warheads.

Despite international concerns, Tehran denies allegations that its space program serves as a cover for ballistic missile development.

**London:** In a notable policy change, the United Kingdom government has declared visa-free entry for travelers from various Arab countries, effective from February 22, 2023. This move aims to facilitate easier entry for residents of Jordan and all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations.

Starting February 22, 2023, citizens of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Jordan, and Bahrain will not require visas for entry into the UK. Instead, an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) will be sufficient. Qatar's residents have been using ETA since November 15, 2023.

The UK government's statement

highlights the transition to an ETA system, eliminating the need for a visit visa. Under this system, tourists of all age groups must electronically apply for a £10 travel permit, valid for two years.



This change is intended to simplify entry procedures, promoting smoother and more accessible travel for citizens of these nations visiting the UK. Earlier this year, the UK

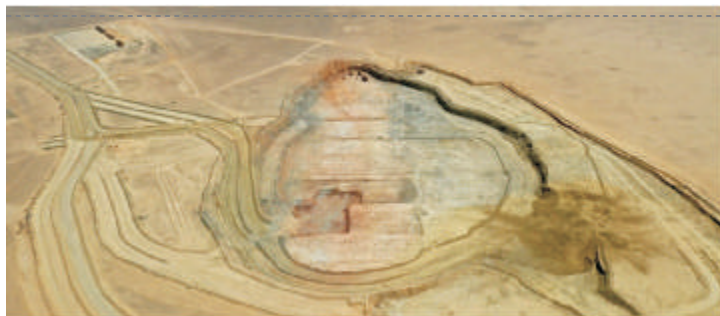
government outlined plans for a new ETA scheme as part of its border digitization by 2025, aiming to enhance border security and customer experience. An ETA serves as digital permission for travel, applicable to those visiting or transiting the UK for short stays, without requiring a visa.

By reducing costs and visa requirements, the ETA scheme seeks to ensure that visitors from Gulf states and Jordan experience convenient travel to the UK, fostering stronger business and tourism links. Gulf visitors play a crucial role in the UK economy, with over 790,000 visitors from the region spending £2 billion during their stays in 2022.

Iranian authorities assert that their space activities are entirely peaceful and that they have never pursued the development of nuclear weapons.

The successful launch of the Sorayya satellite adds a layer of complexity to the geopolitical landscape, prompting heightened vigilance and discussions among nations wary of the potential dual-use nature of Iran's technological advancements.

## Saudi Arabia Unveils Extensive Gold Deposits in Makkah Region



The drilling results suggest that the strike can become a major gold belt in Saudi Arabia. Credit: MA'ADEN (Saudi Arabian Mining Co.).

Saudi Arabian Mining Company (Ma'aden) revealed a substantial discovery of gold deposits in the Makkah region, extending along a 100-kilometer stretch from the existing Mansourah Massarah gold mine. This marks the first success within Ma'aden's intensive exploration program launched in 2022, aiming to establish a mineral production line. The discovery showcases the untapped potential of mineral resources in Saudi Arabia, aligning with Vision 2030 to diversify the country's economy.

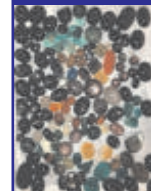
Ma'aden CEO Robert Wilt emphasized the significant growth potential, highlighting the Arabian Shield's immense possibilities for world-class discoveries. The ongoing exploration aims to identify

similar-sized deposits with comparable geology, with positive results indicating a potential major gold belt in Saudi Arabia.

As of 2023, the Mansourah and Massarah gold deposits boast an estimated 7 million ounces of gold resources, supporting an annual production capacity of 250,000 ounces.

In September 2022, the Geological Survey of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia revealed the discovery of new gold and copper ore sites in the Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah region. Saudi Arabia, holding the 18th position globally as the largest holder of gold, stands out among Arab countries for its significant reserves, according to data from the World Gold Council.

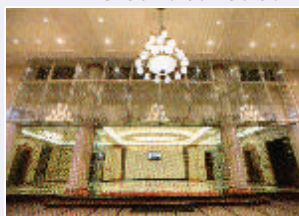
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## Saudi Crown Prince Inaugurates Rua Al-Madinah Project, Aligned with Vision 2030 Goals



A rendering of the Rua al-Madinah project. (Twitter)

In a significant step towards realizing the goals of Vision 2030, Saudi Crown Prince inaugurated the Rua Al-Madinah project near the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah. Developed and implemented by Rua al-Madinah Holding Company, a subsidiary of the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF), the project focuses on development, operation, and real estate investment in Madinah. The project, designed to meet the

highest international standards, exemplifies the Kingdom's commitment to supporting Madinah's transformation into a modern Islamic and cultural destination. As reported by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the development aims to contribute to the city's cultural prominence and aligns with Vision 2030's overarching objectives. Key features of the project include the addition of 47,000 hotel

rooms, with a focus on luxury accommodation. Furthermore, 63 percent of the total land area, spanning 1.5 million square meters, will be dedicated to open and green spaces, enhancing the overall aesthetic and environmental quality.

Rua Al-Madinah will incorporate various transportation hubs, comprising nine bus stops, a metro station, tracks for self-driving vehicles, and underground parking facilities for personal vehicles. This comprehensive approach to infrastructure and transportation aligns with the broader vision of creating a modern and accessible urban environment.

The inauguration underscores the Kingdom's commitment to sustainable development and reinforces its position as a global leader in advancing cultural, economic, and tourism initiatives. Rua Al-Madinah is poised to contribute significantly to the enhancement of Madinah's appeal as a hub for cultural and Islamic experiences. ■

## Saudi Arabia Unveils Renovation Project for 7th Century Al-Safa Mosque in al-Baha Region



Al-Safa mosque in the al-Baha region. (SPA)

In a significant initiative, Saudi Arabia is set to undertake a comprehensive renovation plan for the historic Al-Safa Mosque, a structure that dates back nearly 1,350 years to the 7th century. As part of the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Project for the Development of Historical Mosques, the renovation aims to preserve the mosque's distinctive Sarat style and historical significance.

According to the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the renovation project will encompass restoring the mosque's aesthetics

and refreshing its facade using natural materials such as stone sourced from the Sarawat Mountains and local wood, which will be employed in ceilings, columns, windows, and doors. Notably, the renovation will maintain the mosque's original dimensions, with no expansion of its 78 square meter, 31-worshipper capacity.

Situated in the al-Baha region, the Al-Safa Mosque holds a special place in history, surrounded by buildings in a mountainous region connected by narrow passages. Supported by two distinct columns

of juniper trees, the mosque was originally constructed by Sufyan bin Auf al-Ghamdi.

Historically, the mosque played a crucial social role, serving as a gathering place for villagers to discuss affairs and resolve disputes between the Maghrib and Isha prayers, as reported by SPA.

The renovation initiative is part of the second phase of the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Project, launched in July 2022, covering 30 historic places of worship across 13 regions. This includes prominent mosques in Riyadh, Mecca, Medina, Asir, Eastern Region, al-Jauf, Jazan, and others. The comprehensive restoration efforts aim to preserve the rich cultural and architectural heritage of these religious sites.

During the first phase of the project, 30 mosques were successfully restored at a cost exceeding \$13.3 million (SAR 50 million), with the oldest mosque restored dating back 1,432 years. The ongoing commitment to preserving these historical landmarks underscores Saudi Arabia's dedication to both cultural heritage and religious significance. ■

## Asia's Most Eligible Bachelor Weds

**Brunei:** Brunei's Prince Abdul Mateen, renowned for his looks and military service, has tied the knot with Yang Mulia Anisha Rosnah in a 10-day royal wedding. The 32-year-old prince, an internet sensation, announced his engagement in December. The bride, 29, owns a fashion and



tourism company and is the granddaughter of an adviser to

Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. The ceremony at Istana Nurul Iman palace was attended by about 5,000 guests, including dignitaries and royalty from various countries. Prince Abdul Mateen, the 10th child of the Sultan, is a major presence on social media with millions of followers. ■

## India surpasses Hong Kong to become world's fourth-largest Stock Market

**January 23, 2024 (MLN):** India's stock market capitalization has surpassed Hong Kong's for the first time, making it the fourth-largest equity market globally. This shift is attributed to India's promising growth prospects and policy reforms, attracting investors as global capital diverts from China.

The combined value of shares listed on Indian exchanges reached \$4.33

trillion, surpassing Hong Kong's \$4.29 trillion. India's market value crossed \$4 trillion for the first time on December 5, 2023, with a significant portion of this increase occurring in the past four years.

India's equities have experienced significant growth, driven by a rapidly expanding retail investor base and robust corporate earnings. The country has positioned itself as an attractive alternative to China, drawing global investors and companies with its stable political

environment and a consumption-driven economy that ranks among the fastest-growing globally.

In contrast, Hong Kong has faced challenges, including a historic slump, stringent anti-Covid-19 measures in China, regulatory

crackdowns, a property-sector crisis, and geopolitical tensions, diminishing China's appeal as a global growth engine.

Analysts view India as a

compelling structural growth story, citing its demographic advantage, a surge in educated youth, and a progressive government implementing key structural reforms. Meanwhile, Chinese and Hong Kong equities have experienced a significant decline, with their total market value falling by over \$6 trillion since their peaks in 2021. Hong Kong has seen a decline in new listings, losing its status as one of the world's busiest venues for initial public offerings. ■



## OIC's New Secretariat Sprawling Headquarters Commences its Operations

**JEDDAH:** The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has commenced its operations from its new headquarters in Al-Rayan District, northeast Jeddah, after relocating from its previous location. The new headquarters provides expanded capabilities for the OIC's work and supports its operations and campaigns.

Hissein Brahim Taha, the Secretary-General of the OIC, expressed gratitude to Saudi Arabia for its continuous support and highlighted that the new headquarters will contribute to enhancing the OIC's performance. The OIC General Secretariat has already started its activities at the new facility, hosting meetings and events. ■



## China's 2023 GDP Surges to \$17.71 Trillion, Growing by 5.2%



Photo Source China.org

China's gross domestic product (GDP) for 2023 has reached \$17.71 trillion, marking a growth of 5.2%, according to the State Statistical Office of China. Despite facing external and internal challenges, the country achieved its economic goals for the year, with a revival and improvement in various sectors. The value added in China's industry increased by 4.6%, investments in fixed assets grew

by 3%, and retail trade volume rose by 7.2%. The average unemployment rate stood at 5.2%, and the total number of rural migrant workers increased to 297.53 million, with improved average monthly income. ■

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## Spl Correspondent

## Senior Journalist Ziya Us Salam Launches Controversial Book "Being Muslim in Hindu India"



**New Delhi:** Renowned journalist and author Ziya Us Salam unveiled his controversial book, *"Being Muslim in Hindu India,"* at the India Islamic Cultural Center in New Delhi on January 9. The Associate Editor of The Hindu addressed the gathering, acknowledging that some consider him brave for writing about the challenges faced by Muslims in India, highlighting the need for such discussions in the current climate.

Ziya Us Salam explained the book's focal point, shedding light on the pervasive issue of Muslims being perceived solely as community representatives, facing threats to their lives, safety concerns in mosques and madrasas, and constant scrutiny of their lifestyle choices. The book aims to address these challenges

and provide answers to the queries raised.

During the event, RJD leader and MP Manoj Kumar expressed concern after reading the book, stating that it was a sad occasion rather than a joyous one. He

highlighted the unsettling nature of the book's title, emphasizing the absence of interrogation in it. The leader commended the Prime Minister for revealing the true faces behind masks, expressing his worry about the erosion of

India's secular fabric.

Noted author and journalist John Dayal stressed the urgent need to curb the aggressive spread of Islamophobia, emphasizing its potential threat to the core essence of being Indian. He pointed out the state's sponsorship of this phenomenon and its infiltration into various facets of society, projecting a prolonged battle to eradicate this "virus."

Historian Prof. Syed Irfan Habib observed that individuals responsible for the current divisive climate existed a decade ago but have become more visible and aggressive. He highlighted the shift from subtle occurrences of mutual respect to overt displays of hatred and othering, transforming medieval history

into conflict zones.

Nidhi Razdan, former executive editor of NDTV, moderated the conversation, recalling her father's teachings about secularism and the importance of respecting all religions. She acknowledged that errors occur but emphasized the need to take pride in India's secular heritage.

The prevailing sentiment among speakers was that deep-rooted hatred would take decades to subside, even if the political landscape changes. The book, *"Being Muslim in Hindu India,"* presents a critical compilation of challenges faced by Indian Muslims during the BJP/NDA rule, shedding light on communal rhetoric across political parties. The author calls for sincere efforts toward secularism, criticizing parties like the Congress and AAP for their lack of commitment to these principles. ■

### New Book Release

S. Moinuddin Pasha

**Mysore,** a historical hub of literary and creative endeavors, has witnessed significant contributions in various languages over the decades. Mr. S. Moinuddin Pasha's recent book, *"SUKHUNWARAN-E-MYSORE,"* published by Anjuman-e-Hadeeqat-ul-Adab, Mysore, is a commendable effort to revive and document the literary works of Urdu poets and prose writers from the region.

The book delves into the rich literary history of Mysore, shedding light on the patronage extended by King Shri Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV, which propelled Urdu language and literature. Mr. Pasha meticulously compiles biographical information, including birth and death dates, family details, education, profession, awards, and publications, along with photographs and samples of work for 55 poets, 22 prose writers, five artists, and nine calligraphists.

Among the listed luminaries are Hassan Khan Gardish, Prof. Siraj Adeebi, Agha Mirza Mahmood Sarosh, Husna Sarwar, Ikram Kawish, Syed Ahmed Rahil, Razzaq Afsar, Prof. Ghaffar Shakeel, Prof. Sheik Ali, Dr. Syed Khudrathulla, Dr. Habibunnisa Begum Valiulla, Prof. Meer Mahmood Hussain, Saleem Tamannayi, Dr. Aamina Khatoun, Neelufer Sameena, and others.

The book serves as a valuable directory of literary giants from Mysore, covering contributors to education, culture, and literature. Mr. Pasha's meticulous documentation ensures that the book is an essential resource for Urdu enthusiasts, academics, and libraries. *"SUKHUNWARAN-E-MYSORE"* is a significant addition to the series chronicling the noteworthy personalities of Mysore and their lasting impact on various fields, making it a must-read for those connected with Urdu language and literature.

Syed Tahsin Ahmed ■



*Book Title:*  
**SUKHUNWARAN-E-MYSORE (Urdu)**

*Name of the author:* S. Moinuddin Pasha

*Publishers:* Anjuman-e-Hadeeqat-ul-Adab, Mysore

*Year of publication:* 2023

*Number of pages:* 196

*Price:* Rs. 200

*Copies can be had from:*  
United Minorities Credit Cooperative Society Ltd.

18<sup>th</sup> West Cross, Ashoka Road, Mysore.

*Phone:* 0821-2444406, 0821-4257024, 0821-2450024

**Sukhunwaran-E-Mysore**

### Three-year-old girl from UAE makes history by becoming youngest writer in World



Photo source: Azernews

environmental awareness from an early age. The young prodigy's

A groundbreaking achievement was accomplished by Al-Maha Rashid Al-Meiri, a three-year-old girl from the United Arab Emirates, as she became the world's youngest writer by publishing two children's novels titled "Flower" and "Honeybee." Al-Maha's remarkable accomplishment, selling over 1,000 copies of her books within 24 hours, earned her a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the youngest female writer globally. Driven by her passion for storytelling and drawing, Al-Maha is using her stories to impart the importance of environmental principles to young readers, aiming to instill a sense of

achievement follows in the footsteps of her older siblings, with her sister being the youngest bilingual book author, and her brother recognized as the youngest male author. Their mother underscores the significance of identifying and nurturing children's talents, fostering self-confidence, and enabling them to become active contributors to society. ■

### The 4 Sacred Months in Islam

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- Dhul-Qa'dah.
- Dhul-Hijjah.

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Naqi Ahmad Nadwi

In an era when India's mainstream media faced accusations of acquiescence to the government, Ravish Kumar emerged as a steadfast journalist who refused to compromise his principles. While some in the media succumbed to external pressures, Ravish Kumar's commitment to truth and honesty became a beacon of journalistic integrity. The term "Dock Media" gained popularity, synonymous with a form of journalism marked by its lack of scruples.

Born in 1975 in a small village in East Champaran, Bihar, Ravish Kumar's journey took him from Patna, where he completed high school, to Delhi's Deshbandu College, where he pursued a Post

Graduate Diploma in Journalism in Hindi. His entry into NDTV in 1994 marked the beginning of a remarkable career. Programs like Prime Time, Hum Log, Ravish's Report, and Desh Ki Baat not only gained recognition in India but also earned him acclaim internationally. Known for his honesty, dedication to his profession, and fearless critique of those in power, Ravish Kumar became a thorn in the side of the government. Despite facing threats, vilification on social media, and attempts to force him out of his job, Ravish Kumar remained resilient.

However, the dynamics shifted when the Adani group acquired

Ravish Kumar resigned from NDTV on November 30, 2022.



NDTV, the channel Ravish Kumar worked for. Facing a compromised media landscape,

With no mainstream channel upholding his principles, he turned to YouTube, launching a small news channel.

To his surprise, Ravish Kumar discovered a massive following for honest journalism. Opening his YouTube channel garnered one million subscribers within a day and surpassed six million subscribers within a year. Now, India's most honest journalist fights for truth through alternative media.

Ravish Kumar's impact on journalism extends beyond his

online presence. In 2019, he received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award, the highest honor in journalism, and twice earned the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award. Additionally, he was recognized on World Press Freedom Day in 2023 with the Université libre de Bruxelles Award, considered one of the world's most important journalism accolades.

Apart from his journalistic contributions, Ravish Kumar is an accomplished author with several books to his name, including *"The Free Voice: On Democracy, Culture and the Nation"* and *"Ishq Mein Shahar Hona."*

Ravish Kumar stands as a symbol of unwavering journalistic principles, and his resilience in the face of challenges serves as an inspiration for those who value the pursuit of truth. ■

Allama Iqbal, a renowned philosopher and poet born in 1877, transcended mere poetry with his profound vision that addressed the challenges faced by the Muslim world under colonial rule. His reflections, particularly in works like *"Asrar-e-Khudi"* (1915) and *"Rumuz-e-Bekhudi"* (1918), aimed to revive a sense of selfhood, freedom, and jihad among Muslims navigating the complexities of colonialism. Iqbal's spiritual and intellectual journey was deeply influenced by his early exposure to the

Quran through his father, Sheikh Noor Muhammad. His father's guidance to approach the Quran as a personal directive from Allah had a profound impact, transforming Iqbal's engagement with the holy text into a personal and intimate connection. Treating the Quran as a divine address became a pivotal perspective for Iqbal, elevating his understanding beyond ritualistic recitation to a profound and direct communion with Allah. His poetic expressions mirrored this reverence, emphasizing the need

## Allama Iqbal's Vision



to infuse genuine devotion into religious practices, moving beyond empty prostrations.

Iqbal's insights into the challenges facing the Muslim world were grounded in a deep understanding of Islamic principles. He called for a revival of selfhood, urging a renewed commitment to faith and action. His concept of jihad went beyond armed struggle, encompassing intellectual, financial, and linguistic dimensions with the aim of achieving stability, religious order, and public peace. Furthermore, Iqbal foresaw the

importance of Islamic education for Muslim youth. He emphasized its role in nurturing a generation rooted in Islamic principles, striving to create mature Muslims dedicated to the welfare of their community.

In summary, Allama Iqbal's contributions extend far beyond poetry; they embody a visionary call for the revitalization of Islamic principles. His thoughts remain relevant and influential, challenging individuals to contemplate the intersection of faith, selfhood, and societal responsibility. ■

Maulana Abdul Majid Dariyabadi, in his advice on October 21, 1932, prompts us to reflect on how we react to valuable advice, especially when it comes to matters of our spiritual well-being.

He begins by presenting scenarios where we receive information about a disease in our body, a fire in our house, or an impending trouble would typically make us grateful to the person delivering this news. Drawing on this common human response, Maulana Abdul Majid Dariyabadi questions why, when it comes to receiving religious advice, people often react

differently. Instead of gratitude, individuals may resist, fight, or even consider the advisor an enemy.

He highlights the contradiction in human behavior. When someone advises on matters of the world, people appreciate and express gratitude. However, when the advice concerns spiritual well-being and the hereafter, resistance and opposition often arise.

The Maulana suggests that when someone advises on addressing diseases of the heart, such as

## Gratitude or Resistance:

### Reflecting on our Response to Spiritual Advice



jealousy, envy, greed, and arrogance, or guides towards fulfilling religious obligations, people should be even more thankful. These pieces of advice

offer not just temporary relief but permanent solutions for a better life.

He concludes by urging individuals to ponder their reactions to spiritual advice. Are

they responding with the gratitude that such guidance deserves, or are they resisting, fighting, or considering the advisor an enemy? The Maulana encourages introspection on whether our actions align with what should happen when receiving beneficial advice for our spiritual growth. ■

**“He urges individuals to ponder their reactions to spiritual advice. Are they responding with the gratitude that such guidance deserves, or are they resisting, fighting, or considering the advisor an enemy?”**



Sana Rubiyana

Good and clear communication doesn't work with everyone. Especially people who've decided your perspective isn't relevant.

They aren't open to understanding and accepting your perspective.

Instead, they are committed to misunderstanding you.

There is no convincing that can be done because they're not

going to listen.

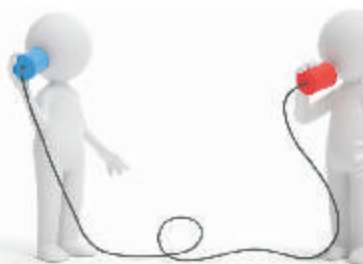
Instead of using the conversation to find a middle ground, they're using it to prove you wrong.

When you can feel this is the energy of an interaction, it's important to not be swept away in emotion. You want to be conscious of what's happening. This will allow you to set a boundary.

**A Boundary Sounds Like:**

"I see this isn't going anywhere and we can agree to disagree."

## Good Communication Falters, When someone Determined to Misunderstand



"I'm going to disengage with this because it feels like I don't get to share my perspective."

"I don't feel good about this

conversation, and I think it's best for us to stop talking about this."

"I see this differently and am uninterested in debate."

"I don't feel comfortable being spoken to this way, so I am going to remove myself."

Part of maturing emotionally is understanding that you can't change or control how people behave. If they're committed to misunderstanding you, they're likely gaining something from that interaction.

It might be a feeling of power, a feeling of importance, or the control of a narrative. By feeding into this and continuing to try to get them to hear you, you give them more control.

**Keep Your Peace**

Save your energy and your communication for people who validate what you feel, who care about what's going on for you, and who are not intent on holding their narrative.

(The writer is Psychologist and Rational Emotive Cognitive Behaviours Therapist sanarubiana@gmail.com) ■





Syed Tahsin  
Ahmed

Islam has always regarded animals as a special part of Allah's creation. The Holy Qur'an emphasizes that animals, like human beings, form communities: "There is not an animal that lives on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but they form communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they all shall be gathered to their Lord in the end" (Qur'an 6:38). The Qur'an contains over 200 verses related to animals, and six Surahs are named after them: Al-Baqarah (The Cow), Al-Anaam (The Cattle), Al-Nahl (The Bee), Al-Ankabut (The Spider), Al-Naml (The Ants), and Al-Fil (The Elephant). In total, 31 animals are mentioned by name in the Qur'an, each serving as a metaphor to explain something, teach a lesson, or highlight their usefulness. Islam insists on ethical treatment for animals, emphasizing their purpose in creation.

#### What Do the Ahadees Say?

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) consistently urged his Companions to treat animals with kindness and compassion. He emphasized the need for humane treatment and stated, "Whoever is kind to the creatures of God is kind



Photo: source Vecteezy.com

to himself." The Prophet (peace be upon him) had a favorite cat named Muezza, and he prohibited mistreatment of animals, such as using them as shooting targets, dragging, mutilating, branding, making them fight, or causing them any harm. His teachings stressed the importance of showing mercy and compassion to all living beings.

#### What Do the Experts Say?

Baiting animals for entertainment or gambling is strictly prohibited in Islam. Animals should only be killed for food or to prevent harm to people. Islam permits the

consumption of meat from certain halal animals, emphasizing a humane and specific method of slaughter. The German Constitutional Court and other studies have confirmed that the halal cut is painless, causing swift unconsciousness. The emphasis is on a quick and merciful method to minimize suffering.

#### Guidelines for Zubah or Halal Cut

Halal standards dictate that the knife used for zubah should be very sharp, without blemishes, and at least double the width of the neck. The cut should be swift,

aggressive, and across the throat to induce immediate and massive blood loss. Animals should not be stressed, and the slaughter should be carried out in a humane manner. Islam sets strict guidelines to prevent cruelty to animals during slaughter, ensuring that the process is as painless as possible.

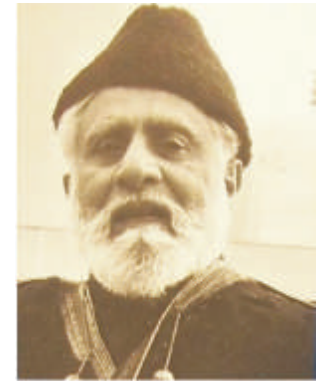
#### Responsibility of Mankind

The Qur'an states, "It is He who has made you successors upon the earth" (35:39-part). As representatives of God on earth, humans must act responsibly, treating animals with mercy and sympathy. Islam, a religion of peace and compassion, extends its care not only to mankind but also to animals. Before Islam, animals faced cruelty and were mistreated. However, Islam's teachings revolutionized attitudes toward animals, emphasizing their ethical treatment and welfare.

#### Famous Muslim Animal Welfare Activist

Al-Hafiz Basheer Ahmad Masri (1914-1992) was a pioneer of animal welfare activism in Islam. He wrote extensively on Islamic obligations to animal welfare and criticized the unethical treatment of animals in factory farms. He advocated for semi-vegetarianism, asserting that if

Muslims were aware of the suffering involved in factory farming, they would choose a more ethical diet.



#### Corrective Steps Needed

Many people are unaware of the routine cruelty inflicted on animals during transport, pre-slaughter, and slaughter. Islam emphasizes humane treatment, and Imams and khateebis should raise awareness of animal welfare in Friday sermons. Those involved in the livestock trade need to be educated on Islamic teachings regarding animal welfare. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated, "If you want to be loved by your Creator, love His creatures" (Al Tirmidhi). Islam's teachings on compassion extend not only to fellow humans but also to the animal kingdom, emphasizing responsible and ethical treatment.

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

### READERS RESPONSE

#### Importance of Political Awareness - A Call to Action

Editor,  
I hope this message finds you well. I recently read the article "Importance of Political Awareness" by Tahsin Ahmed in the first issue of ISLAMIC VOICE for the year 2024. I found the topic highly relevant and well-articulated, particularly in light of the upcoming general parliamentary elections. The piece effectively addresses the question of why voting is crucial, emphasizing that it is the primary means by which individuals can assert their presence and existence in a country. The author rightly highlights the significance of voting as a way to secure representation for the minority community in the national legislative body. The article delves into short- and long-term strategies for enhancing the representation of the minority community. It is alarming to note the decline in minority representation in parliament, leading to the spread of false propaganda and promises. The lack of political awareness, especially among women, is identified as a major concern that has broader societal

implications.

The author emphasizes the need for the community to utilize both young and experienced resources to achieve fair and desirable political outcomes. The call for increased political awareness among youth and the establishment of systems to train political leaders within the community is particularly noteworthy.

In my opinion, the steps outlined in the article present a compelling call to action for responsible citizens in a democratic country. It is crucial to echo the importance of participating in the election process through various platforms, expose candidates with questionable motives, and educate the impoverished about the sanctity of their voting rights.

I commend the author for shedding light on these critical issues and providing practical steps towards building a healthier democracy. I believe that this message needs to reach a broader audience, and I encourage you to consider sharing it through additional channels to maximize its impact.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to reading more thought-provoking articles in the future.

Qazi Minhaj Azher,  
USA



#### Appreciation for the Article on Political Awareness

Editor,  
I recently had the opportunity to read the article titled "Importance of Political Awareness" by Syed Tahsin Ahmed in the January 2024 issue of ISLAMIC VOICE. I wanted to express my appreciation for the insightful and well-articulated piece. The article covers various aspects of the subject under different sub-headings, providing a holistic view of the importance of political awareness. It serves as a timely reminder for readers to delve deeper into news and social issues, encouraging a more informed and engaged citizenry. I completely agree with the author's perspective on the role of NGOs. The emphasis on focusing wholeheartedly on a single issue and avoiding diversion into

unrelated topics resonates with the need for a focused and impactful approach.

The suggestion to read at least one article a day from the editor's section is an excellent way to foster a habit of informed reading and critical thinking. I believe such initiatives contribute

significantly to building a more aware and responsible society.

Thank you for publishing such thought-provoking articles, and I look forward to more insightful content in the future.

Mrs. Sharifa Shaheen,  
Richmond Town,  
Bangalore

### DO YOU KNOW

#### Taylor Swift's Cat Ranks Among World's Wealthiest Pets

In the latest ranking of the world's richest pets, Taylor Swift's cat, Olivia Benson, secures the third spot with an impressive fortune of \$97 million. Olivia amasses her wealth through appearances in music videos alongside her owner, Taylor Swift, as well as endorsing her own line of products and featuring in various commercials. The top position in the list goes to German Shepherd Gunther VI, owned by media mogul Maurizio Mian, with a staggering fortune of \$500 million. Nala the cat claims the second spot with a substantial income of \$100 million, boasting



four million subscribers on social media. Taylor Swift, a top-earning singer, continues to amass wealth, earning around \$150 million annually from her global tours.



Yusra Nisar, Srinagar

## “Building Strong and Beautiful Marriages: Insights from Islamic Teachings”



Living in a world where qualities like trust, honesty, empathy, truth, and loyalty are increasingly rare, married couples often face numerous challenges, leading to a rising divorce rate. The absence of essential qualities contributes to conflicts, stress, and misunderstandings within marriages.

Marriage, considered a sacred institution in Islam, is intended to be a source of tranquility and peace for spouses, as stated in the Holy Quran: *"And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect"* (30:21).

Despite this divine guidance, many couples experience chaos in their relationships. One fundamental issue is the failure to accept one's

spouse as they are. Each of the spouse wants to live and run the world around him or her as per his or her way. Both want to impose their likes and dislikes on the other half which in turn leads to conflicts in the marriage.

Assumptions and preconceived notions about the other person, often influenced by external

opinions, contribute to damaging relationships.

Learnings from the DYS (Discover Yourself) workshop by Sadath Khan provide valuable insights into maintaining a beautiful relationship with one's spouse:

**1. Acceptance:** Spouses should be accepted as they are, and instead

of dwelling on why certain situations occurred, acceptance of reality is crucial. Responding wisely within the framework of Allah's and Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W.) commandments is emphasized.

**2. Avoid Assumptions:** Instead of making assumptions, it is recommended to communicate directly with one's spouse. Avoiding assumptions, opinions, and judgments fosters a healthier relationship.

**3. Live in the Present:** Forget past unfavorable situations instantly, living in the present, and refraining from bringing past events into current discussions are essential aspects of maintaining a positive relationship.

**4. Forgiveness:** Forgiving a spouse for any wrongdoing is emphasized as a significant step in nurturing a beautiful relationship.

**5. Obedience in Permissible Matters:** In matters where there is no disobedience to Allah's commandments, obeying one's spouse is considered beneficial for the relationship.

**6. Responsibility:** Fulfilling all marital responsibilities and being mindful of these obligations contribute to a calm and stable relationship.

**7. Effective Communication:** Prioritize conversations over arguments. Engage in meaningful conversations where possible and avoid unnecessary conflicts.

**8. Focus on Goals:** Clarifying and focusing on the goals of the marriage is crucial. Understanding why one got married and working towards shared goals eliminates unnecessary worries and keeps the focus on success.

By incorporating these principles, couples can strive to build strong, resilient, and harmonious marriages, aligning with the teachings of Islam. ■

## A Spiritual Encounter in Anatomy Class: Distinguishing Truth from Falsehood

Alaisa Sehrish

In the midst of an anatomy class, on the third-to-last bench, I found myself immersed in a unique intersection of academia and spirituality. The topic of the lecture was the **"Posterior Compartment of Thigh,"** a realm of muscles that held more than just anatomical significance. As the lecturer delved into the intricacies of these muscles named as "The hamstring muscles" specifically the division between "true" and "false" hamstring muscles, a question hung in the air:

"What do you think differentiates the true hamstring muscles from the false ones?" Silence enveloped the room, mirroring the quiet wonder within each student. However, the answer offered by the lecturer transcended the realm of anatomy and resonated deeply with a spiritual truth – **"Their origin."**

In a moment of reflection, I found myself transported to the insights gained during a **"Discover Yourself"** workshop. The workshop had imparted a profound lesson on distinguishing truth from falsehood, a skill often considered elusive but, once

grasped, surprisingly simple.

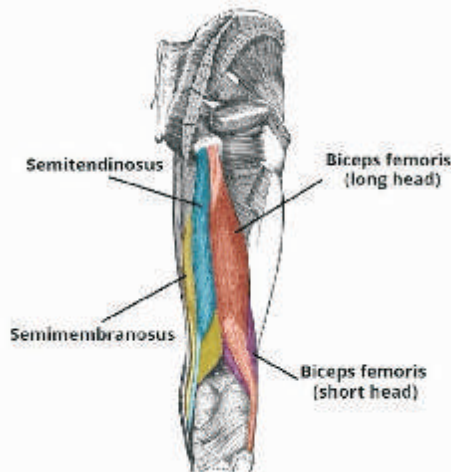
The core teaching emphasized that recognizing truth involves a profound internal knowing or feeling, untainted by judgments, opinions, interpretations, or assumptions. This deep sense of knowing resonated with the inherent truth present within each individual, an essence often overshadowed by external influences.

Drawing a parallel, the author reflects on the divine truth encapsulated in the **Ruh** (spirit) of Almighty Allah residing within

every individual. This absolute truth, untouched by human biases, serves as an unwavering guide.

The narrative takes a poignant turn as the reader is invited to ponder the same question – "What do you think differentiates the truth from the falsehood?" – with a hint that the lecturer will provide the answer.

In this unexpected confluence of anatomy and spirituality, the author beautifully weaves together the complexities of muscle origins and the profound simplicity of recognizing truth, leaving readers with a thought-provoking invitation to explore the depths of their own understanding. ■



## A Glimpse into a DYS Practitioner's Journey: Wisdom from an Auto Rickshaw Driver



He shared a poignant shaiyr (poetry) highlighting how ego imprisons the self-centered, hindering progress. His wisdom extended to the power of a gentle disposition, emphasizing that even the most powerful individuals are defeated by someone with a kind and gentle heart.

He said: *"Narm mizaaj insaan se koi nahi jeet sakta.. Sabse ghussa wala taaqatwar insaan bhi narm*

*mizaaj insaan se haar jaata"*

Quoting Prophet Muhammad s.a.w, he reminded everyone of the importance of showing mercy to others, as it invites divine mercy in return.

Anecdotes from his own life, such as intervening in his sister's potential divorce with compassion and understanding, showcased the transformative potential of approaching conflicts with an open heart.

In this unexpected encounter with a DYS leader in an auto rickshaw, lessons in submission, gratitude, and kindness unfolded, offering a profound reminder that wisdom can be found in the most ordinary moments.

Sana Noorein.

(Sana.noorain7@gmail.com) ■

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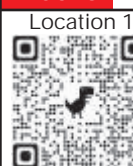
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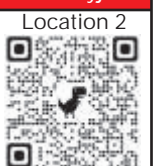
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Abu Amina Elias

The command to cleanse our hearts from sin is a crucial teaching in Islam, known as 'purification of the soul' (*tazkiyyat an-nafs*).

Allah said: "He has succeeded who purifies the soul, and he has failed who corrupts the soul." (Qur'an, 91:9-10)

And Allah said: "A day when there will be no benefit in wealth or children, but only in he who comes to Allah with a pure heart." (Qur'an, 26:88-89)

The success in the Hereafter depends on purifying our hearts in this life, as stated in the Quran. This involves removing spiritual sins like greed and arrogance, replacing them with virtues like compassion and humility. Moses and Abraham were instructed to purify themselves in the Quran Allah said: "Go to Pharaoh, for verily, he is a transgressor. Say to him: 'Will you purify yourself?'" (Qur'an, 79:17-

## Purification of the Heart and Soul in Islam



18) Purity of heart is also one of the defining characteristics of Abraham (peace be upon him). Allah said: "Verily, among his people was Abraham, when he came to his Lord with a pure heart." (Qur'an, 37:83-84) Sincere supplications and prayers, following the prophetic way, are

primary methods for purification. These acts remove arrogance, malice, and worldliness, fostering love for others and detachment from material pursuits. The ritual prayer is designed to prevent immoral deeds, as mentioned in the Quran. Allah said: "Verily, the prayer prohibits immorality and

wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Qur'an, 29:45)

Charity and good deeds for others are also powerful tools for heart purification. Giving in charity, whether wealth or time, removes worldly attachments and fosters hope for the Hereafter.

Allah said: "But the righteous one will avoid Hellfire, who gives from his wealth to purify himself." (Qur'an, 92:17-18)

And Allah said: "Take from their wealth a charity by which you cleanse them and purify them, and invoke blessings upon them." (Qur'an, 92:103)

The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the charity of good deeds, including a kind word or a smile. Every good deed is considered charity in Islam. Muslims are encouraged to refrain from harming others,

contributing to their purification. Repentance and good deeds remove stains from the heart caused by sins. The heart is polished through repentance, seeking forgiveness, and increasing in good deeds.

In conclusion, a Muslim's salvation depends on purifying the heart from vices and cultivating virtues. This involves sincere supplications, prayers, acts of charity, and good deeds. On the Day of Resurrection, individuals will be judged based on the purity of their hearts and the righteousness of their deeds. Allah looks beyond appearances and wealth, focusing on the sincerity of hearts and actions. Success ultimately comes from Allah's guidance.

Abu Huraira reported: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Verily, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth, but rather He looks at your hearts and actions.'" (Sahih Muslim 2564) ■

The much-anticipated Annual Day at St. Haris High School, Meera Road, Mumbai commemorating its Silver Jubilee unfolded on the 19th and 20th of January 2024, radiating the school's vibrant spirit and steadfast commitment to holistic education.

## A Spectacular Showcase of Excellence - St. Haris High School's Silver Jubilee Annual Day Celebrations Unfold

development of the students. Alongside him, Mrs. Arifa Mohsina, his wife and guiding light in matters of Islam and Islamic values, was also honored by the Girls on January 19 for her

nurturing environment at St. Haris High School.

### A Holistic Celebration of Achievement and Commitment

The Silver Jubilee Annual Day at St. Haris High School not only celebrated academic achievements but also underscored the school's commitment to nurturing

creativity, cultural diversity, and character development. The seamless blend of entertainment and education showcased the holistic approach to learning at St. Haris, leaving an indelible impression on all attendees. The event served as a

testament to the school's rich legacy and its ongoing dedication to shaping well-rounded individuals. ■



### Girls Annual Day Illuminates January 19, 2024, while Boys Annual Day Dazzles on January 20, 2024

The festivities commenced with a dazzling array of performances, featuring captivating action plays, delightful comedy, and meaningful dramas that not only entertained but also enlightened the audience. The linguistic diversity of the school took center stage with skits presented in Hindi, Marathi, English, and Urdu, showcasing the remarkable linguistic prowess of the students.

### Felicitations of Visionary Founder and Managing Director, Mr. Khalid Khan

The celebrations reached their zenith with a heartfelt felicitation extended to the visionary founder and managing director, Mr. Khalid Khan, during the Silver Jubilee Annual Day celebration. Mr. Khan, not only the Managing Director but also the inspirational force driving the school's success, was lauded for his tireless efforts in nurturing the growth and

devotion and service to the school and its students.

In a impactful speech, Mr. Khalid Khan expressed gratitude to the entire St. Haris High School community for their unwavering support over the past 25 years. Reflecting on the school's journey, he underscored the significance of quality education, values, and collective effort in shaping the institution.

### A Visual Journey: Showcasing Progress and Milestones

An engaging video presentation offered a visual chronicle of the school's progress, highlighting milestones, student body growth, and impactful initiatives. This visual testament underscored the school's continuous evolution and unwavering commitment to excellence.

### Innocence and Charm: Little Ones Steal Hearts

Adding a touch of innocence and charm to the celebration, the little children stole hearts with their presentations of various prayers, showcasing their talents and the



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## Discover Yourself Workshop in Malaysia

### A Highly Effective Means to Explore our Inner Selves



**Feedback from participants of the Discover Yourself workshop conducted at Kelab Shah Alam Selangor, Malaysia on January 13th and 14th, 2024:**

- The workshop offers a unique perspective on life, fostering a positive approach towards humanity."
- "A highly effective means to explore our inner selves."
- "The workshop is impactful, comprehensive, and yields tangible results."
- "I've found myself closer to the straight path, appreciating its commendable approach."
- I feel a lasting connection to Allah SWT, shaping a lifetime commitment."
- "Confidence has grown not just as a Muslim but as a Momin. The workshop brought clarity, relief, and peace."
- "Now, I have clarity, a sense of relief, and peacefulness. A truly effective workshop."
- "The workshop experience stands out from conventional lectures or sermons, providing practical insights without relying solely on books or lectures."
- "It aided in anger control and taught the valuable skill of submitting to reality."
- "My advice: attend at least once; it's crucial in a world transforming individuals into machines."
- "Feeling motivated, mentally fortified, and notably more positive after the workshop."
- "Every individual should partake in this workshop. Previously, I perceived everyone around me as problematic, but now I see not through deception."
- "Highly beneficial; it assisted in resolving personal issues, letting go of fear, ego, and ceasing to blame others. I am determined to live in the present."
- "Useful and instrumental in positive decision-making for the future. Missing it would mean missing something invaluable."

**ROZANI:** "I've strengthened my connection with Allah SWT for a lifetime. Confidence has grown, living not just as a Muslim but as a Momin. The workshop provided clarity, relief, and peace. I am committed to making a positive impact on the Muslim community."

**ANIBA:** "A crucial lesson learned is that all stress originates from negative thoughts. Distinguishing between good and evil, accepting the former, and rejecting the latter have been transformative. The workshop equipped me with a process to purify my heart."

**KHALID:** "This workshop is

truly fantastic. I feel more adept at connecting with people efficiently."

**MIRZA:** "Discover Yourself workshops serve as valuable reminders and sources of learning. This workshop helped me break free from the dilemma of right and wrong, guiding me to be a genuine human being."

**SAMRIN:** "It helped uncover my inner Islam, fostering a commitment to be a compassionate human being. Post-workshop, I aspire to be genuine, patient, and to treat my family, especially my children, with kindness."

**ABDULLAH:** "I've achieved a

greater sense of calmness and presence in reality. The transformative journey has provided insights on addressing life problems at their core."

**RAYYAN:** "The workshop deeply influenced my decision-making process. Life, I've realized, is not just about right and wrong; it's about truth (haq) or falsehood (Batil), good or evil. The workshop instilled in me the value of being in a state of nothingness, the power of submission, and the understanding that we are always in Jannah; our reactions, opinions, judgments, etc., are what move us out of paradise."



#### Rafik ul Islam

## 30 Lessons learnt at Discover Yourself Workshop in Malaysia, hosted on the 13th-14th, January 2024.

**1. Shift Perspectives:** "I am right, you are wrong" – leave this mindset that only my point of view is right.

**2. Be an Active Participant:** Be a player instead of being an observer. So, acquire the abilities to be a player. Be aware whether you are in the court (player) or stand (observer).

**3. Conscious Salah:** Recite and listen every verse, every word in salah (prayer). Being conscious.

**4. Practice Relaxation:** Relax, relax, while walking also. Accept to 'WHAT IS'

**5. Embrace Humility:** I am nothing, Be in the state of "LA" to cultivate humility.

**6. Forgiveness Lightens:** Forgive and feel lightened (I forgive you for Allah's sake). Completing the past. Unless you complete the past, you cannot be in the present.

**7. Attentive Azan:** Listen to the azan delivered at mosque, leave aside works and give full focus /attention to it.

**8. Accountability:** I am responsible to do my job and make others responsible for their job. Hold them to account and not make them wrong.

**9. Acceptance of Reality:**

Whatever be the situation, take it as OK (accept the reality)

**10. Respect Diverse Perspectives:** People perceive things in their own way, I perceive in my own way. Both may be correct. Each one is blind and each one's responsibility is to make the other person see what they cannot see but often we make them wrong.

**11. Focus on the Present:** Bring



your focus and attention to the present task you are doing, whatever the task may be as simple as cutting vegetables, while Making ablution.

**12. Equality for All:** I am a human being, so I see and treat every human being as human being. All are equal.

**13. Avoid Self-Questioning:** In spiritual journey, no questions to be asked to myself why me?

**14. Decision-Making:** Life is happening, and we need to take decisions. Check decisions we make are based on reality or based on opinions, past or fear of future.

**15. Importance of Diagnosis:** For curing any disease first Diagnosis is important. If the diagnosis is wrong the treat is wrong. Diagnosis is based on reality or on assumptions.

**16. Live in the Present:** We must

of it. Do not allow it to make decisions.

**21. Differentiate Between Reaction and Response:** You must be aware of the distinction between reaction and response. Human beings have a choice to respond, and reaction is animal instinct.

**22. Teach Fundamental Values:** Basic education every child must First learn to distinguish between Haq and Batil, good and evil.

**23. Take Charge of Your Life:** This is your life, you must take charge of it. You alone are responsible for your success and happiness.

**24. Use Rational and Realization Faculty:** Human Beings have Rational and Realization faculty. Man uses the rational faculty to deny or accept the reality.

**25. Reality Check:** Every moment – Reality check- Triple test – Haq or Batil (True or false not right or wrong) Good or evil, Beneficial or harmful

**26. Spread Love:** We are the Khair e ummah to establish love in

the hearts of human beings. Love yourself and love every human being as human being for the sake of Allah.

**27. Equality and Peace:** I am at war with myself when I look down upon others. You break the law of equality and come out of peace.

**28. Divine Perspective:** From perspective of Allah, he is not a human being who cannot distinguish between Haq and Batil (True and false not right or wrong). We have a choice to live from Allah's (Reality) perspective or from Human (Mind) Logic - reason- opinion- assumption perspective.

**29. Hijrah - Abandon What Allah Dislikes:** To embark on the spiritual journey we must ask what I must give up or what I should let go?. Hijrah means to give up or drop everything which Allah does not like, abhors.

**30. Purpose in Life:** Our purpose in life is to connect to Allah and live a life that Allah loves. When loves us He grants wisdom. For Allah to love us we must first disconnect from Satan (Evil) Ego. To connect with Allah, we must purify our heart. Those who bring *Qalb- Saleem* enter heaven. ■



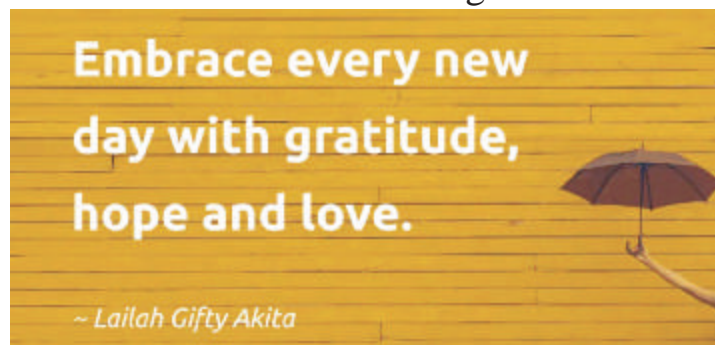
«Page 1

## AIMPLB Urges Government to Safeguard Places of Worship Amid Rising Controversies

resolved the conflict. The resolution expressed expectations that the apex court would ensure no room is left for new disputes to maintain peace and the rule of law. Additionally, the board raised concerns about the New Delhi Municipal Council's plan to remove Sunheri Masjid near the parliament house, along with six other mosques in the Lutyens zone, citing traffic problems. The board emphasized that these mosques, listed among the 123 Waqf properties with a court stay, are heritage structures, and any attempt to tamper with them damages the country's heritage. On the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), AIMPLB reiterated that India's diverse cultures and religions did not warrant such a law, and any attempt to implement it would contradict the spirit of the Constitution. The board strongly opposed discussions on UCC implementation by certain BJP-ruled states, deeming it completely unacceptable. Addressing controversies surrounding the Waqf legislation, AIMPLB denounced any efforts to revoke the Waqf Act. The board called for strengthening Waqf laws and empowering Waqf Boards to eliminate encroachments. The meeting

emphasized the misuse of Waqf properties and advised against attempts to repeal the Waqf Act. The board also urged adherence to Sharia in social and familial contexts, suggesting dispute resolution through Darul-Qaza for marital issues. Expressing concerns over women's rights and dignity, AIMPLB criticized the inadequate action by the government and stressed the need for more comprehensive measures. The board called for Muslim women to play a leading role in societal transformation, addressing issues like talaq and fostering amicable relationships. Lastly, AIMPLB condemned Israel's aggression in Gaza, describing it as a genocide against the Palestinian people. The board criticized world powers for supporting Israel and Muslim nations for their silence, urging the Indian government to maintain its longstanding support for Palestine. Notable members present at the meeting included Moulana Mohammed Fazlur Raheem Mujadiddi, Vice President Syed Sadaullah Husaini, Secretaries Moulana Umreen Mehfooz Raehmani, Wali Faisal Rehmani, Moulana Dr. Yaseen Ali Osmani, and Treasurer Professor Riyaz Omer, among others. ■

## Embracing a New Beginning: A Lesson in Living Life



Just as the sun rises after every night, life offers a fresh start after sorrows and failures. Even in the darkest times, a glimmer of hope persists. To embark on a new beginning, it's crucial to let go of the past, focusing on aspirations and maintaining a positive mindset. Let's explore the possibility of making a fresh start. **Moving Forward:** Reflecting on the saying, *"He who looks back becomes the second,"* emphasizes the idea that dwelling on the past hinders progress. Those fixated on memories find it challenging to move forward, often leading to future failures. Living in the regrets of yesterday is a common pitfall, especially for those pondering over missed opportunities. Instead, learning from past mistakes and adjusting one's perspective can pave the way for a successful future.

**Learning from Mistakes:** The key is to consider each setback as a new starting point. Dwelling on past errors only restrains progress. Rather than being bogged down by regrets, view them as lessons, shaping a new mindset to achieve future goals.

**Embracing Hope:** Despite a painful past, the world is built on hope. Looking to the future unveils new opportunities and possibilities. Embracing this perspective allows individuals to discover what awaits them in the journey ahead.

**Conclusion:** Living life to the fullest involves understanding that every ending signals a new beginning. By breaking free from the shackles of the past, learning from mistakes, and embracing hope, one can embark on a journey of continuous growth and achievement. ■

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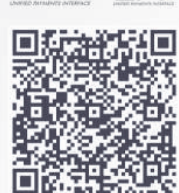
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