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Jamadi-ul-Awwal / Jamadi-us-Sani- 1446 H

Syed Iftekhar Jamal Honored with Urdu Academy Award



Renowned Urdu poet and writer **Syed Iftekhar Jamal** from Kadapa has been named the recipient of the prestigious **'Yousuf Safi Lifetime Achievement Award'** by the Urdu Academy of Andhra Pradesh. The award recognizes his outstanding contributions to Urdu literature, drama, and activism.

Writing poetry since **1987**, Mr. Jamal has had his works featured in prominent Urdu publications such as *Saalar*, *Siyasat*, *Etemaad*, and *Dabistan*. He has also organized several notable *Mushairas* (poets' gatherings), including the first state-level *Riyasati Urdu Mushaira* post-bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

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Abdul Bari Masoud

New Delhi: Maulana Arshad Madani, President of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind (JUH) Arshad faction, led a massive **"Save the Constitution Convention"** at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium on November 3, 2024. The event gathered prominent Muslim leaders to oppose the proposed Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 and address pressing issues facing India's Muslim community.

"Save the Constitution Convention" Warns Government on Waqf Act Amendments



In his keynote speech, Maulana Madani criticized the Waqf Amendment Bill, calling it a veiled attempt by the government to seize

Waqf properties under the guise of protection. "Waqf properties are a sacred inheritance belonging to Allah," he asserted, warning the

government of the consequences if the bill is passed. He also questioned the apparent targeting of Muslim institutions and minority rights, demanding fairness and respect for all faiths.

Historical and Current Challenges

Maulana Madani highlighted historical injustices and ongoing struggles, including:

- The inability to provide documentation for ancient mosques, some over 500 years old,

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Indonesia Champions Humanitarian Islam for Global Peace

Jakarta (ANTARA): At the International Conference on Humanitarian Islam in Depok, West Java, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, represented by Religious Affairs Minister Nasaruddin Umar, reaffirmed Indonesia's dedication to promoting global peace through **"humanitarian Islam."**

President Prabowo highlighted Indonesia's status as a model of harmony, where over 280 million people coexist peacefully, embracing diversity in religion, culture, and ethnicity. He credited this unity to the nation's foundational philosophy, **Pancasila**, which merges Islamic principles with a humanist,



Religious Affairs Minister Nasaruddin Umar delivering a speech on behalf of President Prabowo Subianto at the opening of the International Conference on Humanitarian Islam in Depok, West Java, (ANTARA/HO-Nahdlatul Ulama)

inclusive spirit. "Indonesia exemplifies friendly,

peaceful, and soothing Islamic values," Prabowo noted, emphasizing the importance of preserving the legacy of Indonesia's founding fathers in fostering unity.

Reflecting on Indonesia's historical contributions, the President cited the **1955 Asia-Africa Conference** as a milestone in advancing solidarity and peace. He also mentioned Indonesia's ongoing role in UN peacekeeping missions and mediating international conflicts as evidence of its commitment to a harmonious global order.

Looking ahead to **Vision 2045**, Prabowo underscored Indonesia's aspiration to become a developed

nation that actively contributes to world peace. He identified **humanitarian Islam** as a strategic approach to achieving this goal, rooted in dialogue, inclusivity, and respect for diversity.

The conference, organized by **Nahdlatul Ulama**, brought together scholars and academics from around the globe to share insights and best practices. The agenda includes visits to Central Java to further promote collaboration and understanding.

"Let this conference inspire collective efforts to build a brighter, more harmonious future," Prabowo concluded. (en.antaranews.com) ■

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Abdul Bari Masoud

Justice Eludes Madhya Pradesh Communal Violence Victims

Amid Delhi's crowded streets, an 8-year-old girl's plea for justice resonated as she clutched a placard that read, "We want justice." Maida, the daughter of slain Amjad Khan, appealed directly to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, pleading, "Modi uncle, hum bhi aapke parivar ka hissa hain, mere papa ke qatilon ko giraftar karo" (Modi uncle, we are also part of your family; arrest my father's killers).

Maida's father, Amjad Khan, was murdered on September 23 in Maksi, Madhya Pradesh, during an altercation allegedly linked to a BJP membership drive. The attack left Maida's family devastated: her mother, who is physically disabled, is now left to care for Maida and her two-year-old sister alone.

A Community in Mourning



The incident has become emblematic of the increasing communal violence in India. The

altercation began when BJP members allegedly pressured local Muslims to join the party, leading to a deadly clash. Amjad was shot dead, and his brother-in-law Junaid was critically injured and remains in a coma. Victims and activists accuse local police of complicity, claiming that officers stood by as the violence unfolded and are now shielding the perpetrators.

Political Intervention

Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh accompanied Maida and other victims' families to Delhi to demand accountability. Speaking at the Constitution Club, Singh accused the BJP-led state government of fostering communal tensions and failing to protect minorities.

"There has been a marked rise in communal violence since 2014," Singh said, criticizing what he described as biased governance and police inaction.

False Claims and Escalation

Singh also highlighted an earlier incident in Ratlam on September 7, where a Ganesh Chaturthi



procession took an unauthorized route past a mosque, sparking false rumors of stone-pelting and vandalism by Muslims. CCTV footage later disproved these claims, but tensions had already flared.

The police registered an FIR against over 250 people, including BJP Yuva Morcha leaders, but the Superintendent of Police (SP) Rahul Lodha, who acted to prevent violence, was subsequently transferred, raising concerns of political interference.

The Maksi Tragedy

In Maksi, tensions boiled over during the BJP membership drive. When local Muslims resisted pressure to join, violence erupted. A written complaint by the Muslim community to the police further enraged BJP leaders, leading to a retaliatory armed attack.

On September 23, attackers allegedly led by BJP leaders, including Mahendra Patel, stormed the Muslim neighborhood, opening fire. The attack left Amjad dead and several others injured. Despite complaints filed by the victims, no action has been taken against the perpetrators, while some victims were arrested.

A Cry for Justice

Maida's poignant plea symbolizes the anguish of families caught in the crossfire of communal violence. With no financial assistance or official inquiry into the tragedy, the victims are left to fend for themselves.

Javed Dipty, a High Court advocate accompanying the victims, criticized the inaction: "If the police had acted swiftly,

the violence could have been prevented. Instead, they allowed the situation to spiral out of control."

Singh called for a fair investigation, the arrest of the perpetrators, and compensation for the victims. He pledged to raise the matter in the upcoming winter session of Parliament, stating, "If the government continues to ignore the plight of the victims, we will march for justice."

A Poignant Reminder

The tragedies in Maksi and Ratlam reflect the human cost of rising communal tensions. Maida's voice, along with countless others, serves as a call to action for justice and accountability.

As Singh aptly summarized the plight of the victims with a couplet:

"Wahin kaatil, wahin mukhbir,
wahin munsif therey
Aqraba merey Karen khoon ka
dawa kis par?"

(They are the murderers, the informers, and the judges.

Who then will my kin accuse for my murder?)

The fight for justice continues, even as hope remains elusive. ■



Supreme Court Upholds Madrasa Education Act: A Landmark Verdict

Sohail Anjum

The Supreme Court of India, under Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, delivered a historic verdict on the Uttar Pradesh Madrasa Education Act, 2004, declaring it constitutional and overturning a prior Allahabad High Court decision that had quashed the act. The ruling, which came just days before Chandrachud's retirement on November 10, has been widely praised for safeguarding the centuries-old tradition of madrasa education while ensuring regulatory oversight.

Background of the Case

The Allahabad High Court had earlier declared the 2004 Act unconstitutional and directed the state government to transfer madrasa students to government schools. This decision sparked widespread opposition from madrasa representatives, human rights activists, and political parties, who argued that it undermined the rich cultural and historical significance of madrasas in India. Many approached the Supreme Court to challenge the ruling.

Supreme Court's Observations

Chief Justice Chandrachud emphasized India's pluralistic heritage, stating that the nation's inclusive culture must not be



disrupted. He highlighted that madrasas play a vital role in religious education, which is not limited to Muslims but extends to other communities like Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians.

The court ruled that the UP Madrasa Education Act aimed to standardize education without interfering with day-to-day madrasa operations. Chandrachud remarked that abolishing the act would leave such institutions unregulated, hindering efforts to maintain educational standards.

Regulatory Concerns

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) had earlier directed state governments to deregister madrasas failing to comply with the Right to Education Act, 2009, and to transfer students to regular schools. This directive was challenged in court, with madrasa representatives labeling it discriminatory and accusing the government of targeting Islamic educational institutions. The

Supreme Court stayed the implementation of the directive, providing temporary relief to madrasas.

Madrasa Contributions and Challenges

Madrasas have historically played a crucial role in India's freedom movement and continue to produce scholars who contribute to the nation. However, they face allegations of

promoting outdated curricula and extremism—claims that madrasa representatives vehemently deny. Efforts are underway to modernize madrasa education by incorporating subjects like English and modern sciences alongside traditional religious teachings.

Implications of the Verdict

The Supreme Court's decision removes the immediate threat of regulatory overreach against madrasas in Uttar Pradesh. However, concerns persist about future challenges. Madrasa officials argue for systemic improvements from within, urging the government to recognize and support their contributions rather than attempting to integrate them into mainstream schools.

This ruling reinforces India's commitment to preserving its diverse cultural and religious heritage while balancing the need for educational standards. ■

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"Save the Constitution Convention" Warns Government on Waqf Act Amendments



amidst government scrutiny.

- Crackdowns on madrasas and citizenship issues in Assam.

- Fabricated allegations by communal groups labeling JUH as a haven for terrorists, despite its work defending the falsely accused.

He recounted the sacrifices of Muslims during India's freedom struggle, from Shah Abdul Aziz's resistance against British colonial rule in 1803 to the martyrdom of thousands in the 1857 rebellion. Madani emphasized the pivotal role of Muslim scholars and the JUH in shaping the freedom movement, including its influence on Congress policies through historic fatwas like *Nusratul Abrar*.

Resolutions and United Opposition

The convention adopted five resolutions, including:

1. Opposition to the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024:

Highlighting the existential threats to madrasas, mosques, burial grounds, and Eidgahs.

2. **Condemnation of Israeli aggression in Palestine:** Calling for decisive international action.

3. **Rejection of the Uniform Civil Code:** Citing constitutional protections for religious freedom.

4. **Safeguarding Islamic educational institutions:** Addressing the identity and autonomy of madrasas.

5. **Protection of the Indian Constitution:** Emphasizing its role as a bulwark of rights and freedoms.

Leaders such as Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, President of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, and Prof. Salim Engineer, Vice President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, echoed these concerns. They urged the Muslim community to unite in defense of their institutions and constitutional rights.

Call for Action

The convention concluded with a call for collective action against the perceived erosion of minority rights. Maulana Madani reminded attendees of the pledges made by leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Motilal Nehru to safeguard Muslim identity and Waqf properties, urging the community to remain steadfast in preserving its heritage and rights. ■



Masoom
Moradabadi

Restoration of Aligarh Muslim University's Minority Status: A Significant Victory

The recent Supreme Court ruling on Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) has sparked widespread joy among Muslims, as it restores the university's minority status. Following the announcement, celebrations broke out at AMU, with sweets distributed on campus and many members of the Muslim community expressing satisfaction over the decision. Despite some concerns over whether a three-judge bench will officially confirm the university's minority status, the judgment is significant for its affirmation of AMU's rightful place as a minority institution.

A Long-Standing Legal Struggle

The case traces its origins to a 1967 Supreme Court decision that denied AMU its minority status, a move that had a lasting impact on the institution. Although the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi enacted a legal amendment in 1981 to overturn this ruling under pressure from the university community, the situation remained unclear. In 2005, the Allahabad High Court revisited the issue and ruled against the university's minority status, citing the 1967 judgment. However, the recent Supreme Court ruling, after extensive hearings, has clarified the situation by upholding AMU's minority character.

The Court's Ruling and Its Significance

The Supreme Court's ruling



(Photo credit: Economic Times)

recognizes AMU as a minority institution, affirming that it was founded by Muslims with the intent to promote modern education for the community. The court emphasized that the minority status of an institution cannot be revoked solely because it was established under a central law. The judgment further clarified that minority institutions are those founded by minorities to benefit their community, with the case of AMU serving as a prime example.

The outgoing Chief Justice delivered the verdict on his final day, with a seven-judge bench ruling in favor of AMU's minority status. However, the decision did not come without dissent, as three judges wrote a note of disagreement.

Government's Opposition and Legal Challenges

The decision is even more significant given that the current government had filed an affidavit opposing the university's minority status. There was genuine concern within the AMU community that the court might rule against the minority character

of the institution due to the government's stance. Yet, the court's ruling has dispelled these fears, leading to widespread celebrations among the Aligarh community.

Prominent lawyer Rajeev Dhawan, who represented the university in this matter pro bono, alongside Kapil Sibal, played pivotal roles in pursuing this case and advocating for the restoration of AMU's minority status.

The Emotional Attachment of Indian Muslims

The issue of AMU's minority status has been a point of emotional attachment for Indian Muslims, as it represents a longstanding struggle for their educational and cultural rights. The original 1967 Supreme Court ruling led to a massive public movement, with students,

teachers, and the public rallying against the decision. This movement eventually led to the 1981 amendment of the AMU Act, which restored its minority status. However, the issue resurfaced in 2006 when the Allahabad High Court questioned AMU's minority status again, leading to a series of legal battles. The matter was ultimately brought before the Supreme Court in 2019, which referred it to a seven-judge bench, eventually overturning its 1967 decision.

Looking Ahead: The Path Forward for AMU and Other Institutions

The court's ruling has not only clarified AMU's status but also established important guidelines for other institutions seeking recognition as minority entities. The ruling reinforces the idea that

the establishment and purpose behind an institution are crucial to determining its minority status. Institutions must demonstrate that they were created by a minority group for the benefit of that group. The judgment also clarifies that institutions seeking minority status must prove that their establishment was the result of the community's sacrifices and efforts. AMU, with its foundation laid by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and other prominent Muslims, stands as a model example of such an institution. The vision of Sir Syed Khan to uplift and develop the Muslim community through modern education has been largely realized through AMU.

Conclusion

The restoration of Aligarh Muslim University's minority status is a landmark decision in the ongoing struggle for Muslim rights in India. It affirms the university's historical and continued role in promoting education for Muslims, while also setting a precedent for other institutions seeking similar recognition. As the court's ruling clears the path for the university's future, it serves as a reminder of the significance of AMU to the Indian Muslim community as a symbol of perseverance, progress, and empowerment. ■

AMU Faculty Delivers Keynote Address at International Conference in Algeria

ALIGARH: Dr. Irfan Ali, from the Department of Statistics and Operations Research, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), was a keynote speaker at the *AMAIECO 2024* international conference held at the University of Algiers 3, Algeria.

Dr. Ali's talk, titled "**Integrating Mathematical Optimization Modelling with Triple Bottom**



Line Sustainability for UN SDGs", focused on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their role in fostering economic, social, and environmental well-being by 2030.

He elaborated on the interplay between SDGs, environmental impacts, and energy optimization, presenting innovative solutions to assist stakeholders and policymakers in making informed decisions. Dr. Ali's insights highlighted the critical importance of mathematical modeling in achieving sustainability and advancing the global agenda for development. ■

Workshop on Qualitative Research Methodology Concludes at AMU



Aligarh: The Department of Education, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), successfully concluded a ten-day ICSSR-sponsored workshop on "*Qualitative Research Methodology with 21st Century Skills*" with a valedictory function.

Focus on 21st Century Skills

Prof. P.K. Dashora, Vice Chancellor of Mangalayatan University, Aligarh, addressed the gathering as the chief guest.

Speaking on "*21st Century Skills and Viksit Bharat*," he emphasized integrating modern skills to drive India's development and urged participants to adopt innovative methods in their research and professional endeavors.

Insights on Research Methodology

Prof. Nasrin, former Chairperson of the Department of Education, delivered a special address,

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Empowering Muslim Youth through Modern Education: Maulanas and Dargahs Leading the Way



Kaleem Kawaja

In the landscape of Indian Islam, the figures of maulanas (clerics) and dargahs (religious shrines) are prominent, especially in the towns and cities where Muslims live. For many, these symbols represent the cultural and religious heart of the community, with maulanas delivering sermons and devotees flocking to dargahs for spiritual

solace. However, these institutions are often associated with the backwardness of the Muslim community, particularly in terms of education and socio-economic progress.

In contrast, the world of successful Indian youth, particularly those entering prestigious fields like the Indian Administrative Services (IAS), the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), and medical colleges, paints a very different picture. These successful

individuals often emerge from competitive, modern educational environments, and their accomplishments seem worlds apart from the more traditional roles of maulanas and dargahs.

However, recent developments have shown a promising convergence of these two worlds. A few maulanas and dargahs have begun to bridge this gap, providing modern education and competitive opportunities to Muslim youth. Here are some notable examples:

1. Maulana Mohammad Fazlur Rahim Mujaddidi's Crescent Civil Service Academy, New Delhi



Founded by Maulana Mujaddidi over ten years ago, the Crescent Civil Service Academy offers coaching and guidance to Muslim aspirants aiming to join India's prestigious civil services. Despite the historical underrepresentation of Muslims

in services like IAS, IPS, and IFS, the academy has produced impressive results. In 2013, 13 candidates from Crescent Academy successfully passed the rigorous civil services exam, and 30 candidates cleared the preliminary round. To date, more

than 100 students from the academy have joined top positions in the Indian government, including IAS and IPS officers, judges, and civil servants, significantly impacting policy-making in the country.

2. Maulana Wali Rahmani's Rahmani-30 IIT Entrance Coaching Center, Patna



In 2008, Maulana Wali Rahmani founded the Rahmani-30 coaching center in Patna with the goal of helping Muslim youth gain admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), India's top engineering institutions.

Historically, Muslim students have had limited representation in the IITs. In 2013, 24 out of 30 students from the Rahmani-30 center successfully passed the IIT Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), a remarkable achievement

for the center. The center has now become a beacon of hope for Muslim students aspiring to enter the IITs, with graduates going on to prestigious careers in top corporations and research institutions.

3. Khaja Bandanawaz Gaisudaraz Dargah's Engineering College and Institute of Medical Sciences, Gulbarga



The Khaja Bandanawaz Gaisudaraz Dargah in Gulbarga, Karnataka, established the Khaja Education Society in 1966 to promote education in the Muslim community. The Dargah Trust, in particular, has focused on providing modern education through its 15 institutions, including the Khaja Bandanawaz College of Engineering (established in 1980) and the

Khaja Bandanawaz Institute of Medical Sciences (established in 2000). These institutions have played a transformative role in uplifting Muslim youth from educationally backward backgrounds, helping them become engineers and doctors who contribute significantly to the development of both the Muslim community and the nation.

4. Collaborative Success: The Role of Religious Leaders and Educated Muslims

A key factor behind these successes is the collaboration between religious leaders (maulanas) and educated Muslim professionals. Instead of competing, these leaders have worked together to combine the widespread influence of

religious figures with the knowledge of modern education held by educated Muslims. This partnership has created a powerful model for uplifting the community through education and competitive success.

The Path Forward: Investing in Youth Development

These success stories, though rare, highlight the enormous potential for socio-economic development within the Muslim community if more maulanas and dargahs focus on imparting modern education and preparing youth for competitive exams. If the energy spent on political and publicity activities were redirected towards empowering the youth, the Muslim community

could see a drastic transformation within a generation. Through such initiatives, Muslims in India can break free from the cycles of poverty and underrepresentation, ensuring a brighter future for their youth in fields ranging from government services to engineering, medicine, and beyond. (Extract from <https://www.milligazette.com/news>)

“By focusing on quality education and collaboration, India's Muslim community has the opportunity to change its socio-economic trajectory and create a future where success is not limited by religious or educational background.”

Madrasa Committees Express Shock Over Karnataka Government's Survey Circular

Bengaluru: The Karnataka government has issued another circular mandating a survey of madrasas in the state, raising concerns among madrasa committees about the intent and methods employed.

The circular, released by the Congress-led Siddaramaiah government on October 21, instructed police officers to gather detailed information about madrasa operations,



including management committees, staff, student enrollment, and recognition status. This move has left madrasa committees questioning the necessity of involving law enforcement in what they view as an educational matter.

Background of the Controversy

The origins of the madrasa survey date back to August 24, 2022, under the BJP-led government of Basavaraj Bommai. At that time, the education department was tasked with surveying 960 madrasas, with a committee led by the department's commissioner overseeing the process. However, the survey did not proceed

he Muslims of India, throughout history, have faced the challenge of adapting to a changing political landscape. From the fall of the Muslim empire to British colonial rule, efforts to restore Muslim power and governance were unsuccessful. Despite these struggles, Indian Muslims continued their fight for freedom, joining forces with patriots to achieve independence. After India gained its freedom, the secular and democratic system was established, along with the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equal rights for all religions and minorities.

Under this democratic framework, Muslims have the responsibility to use their constitutional freedoms to develop their religious and social identity. This includes preserving

their personal laws, promoting education, and engaging in social reforms. Additionally, Muslims are encouraged to contribute to national development while striving to spread the message of Islam, making use of the freedom of speech and expression to convey truth and righteousness.

However, a question arises: Is democracy and secularism in line with Islamic principles? While secularism and modern democracy may not align perfectly with Islamic teachings, they are viewed as the lesser of two evils in situations where a non-Islamic dictatorship is a possible alternative. This concept is rooted in the principle of "Man Abli Biblitin Falkhtar Ahunhama,"



which means choosing the lesser evil when two harmful options arise. In countries where Muslims are a minority and cannot immediately establish an Islamic system, it becomes necessary to support the democratic government to avoid the rise of authoritarian regimes. By participating in democratic processes, Muslims can safeguard their rights and promote an

environment where Islamic values can flourish.

Islamic scholars like Shaykh Izzuddin Abdul Salam have addressed similar dilemmas in the past. They argued that when facing difficult choices, one must prioritize the lesser of two harms. For example, if one ruler commits lesser injustices, like theft, while another is responsible for greater harm, such as killing innocents, the lesser harm should be prioritized. This logic applies to the modern political landscape, where supporting a democratic government is preferred over supporting a dictatorship, even if democracy itself is imperfect. In a non-Muslim country, it is essential for Muslims to engage in

democratic processes, as democracy is still less harmful than dictatorship. It provides an opportunity to advocate for Islamic values, strengthen community ties, and promote peaceful coexistence. Scholars like Hazrat Maulana Thanvi and others have emphasized that in situations where two evils are inevitable, the lesser evil should be chosen to prevent a greater harm.

Thus, the political strategy for Muslims in secular democracies is clear: support democratic systems as a means of ensuring their survival and promoting their values, while striving to improve the social and political conditions in which they live.

(Muhammad Qamar-ul-Zaman Nadvi, Teacher/Madrasah Noorul Islam Kanda Pratapgarh)

Syed Ali Mujtaba

Chennai: The three-member commission led by former Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan has received a one-year extension to finalize its report on granting Scheduled Caste (SC) status to Dalit Muslims and Christians.

The debate traces back to the 2007 Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission, which recommended extending SC status to Dalit converts to Islam and Christianity. However, the government dismissed the report as "flawed."

Legal and Constitutional Background

The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, reserves SC benefits for Dalits from Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist communities. Petitions challenging this exclusion have been pending in the Supreme Court for two decades, urging an extension of reservation benefits to Dalit converts from Islam and Christianity.

Acknowledging the issue's

SC Status for Muslim Converts: Decision Delayed Again



significance, the apex court directed action, prompting the formation of the Balakrishnan Commission to examine the matter. The commission is tasked with evaluating the socio-economic conditions of Dalit converts across India, but delays in field visits and data collection have slowed its progress, leading to the recent extension.

Government's Opposition

The government has resisted

extending SC status to Dalit Muslims and Christians, citing:

- **Lack of Social Stigma:** It argues that untouchability does not exist in Islam or Christianity.
- **Foreign Origin of Religions:** The Centre has highlighted the non-Indian origins of these religions as a basis for exclusion.
- **Impact on Existing SC Groups:** Concerns have been raised about how inclusion might dilute benefits for current SC communities.

The Centre criticized the Ranganath Mishra report, stating it was flawed due to the absence of field studies and inadequate assessment of the implications for existing SCs.

Counterarguments

M.H. Jawahirullah, an MLA from Tamil Nadu, dismissed the government's stance, arguing: "Changing religion does not change one's social status. A Dalit

remains a Dalit, regardless of converting to Islam or Christianity."

What Lies Ahead

As the Balakrishnan Commission continues its work, the Supreme Court's final decision will have far-reaching implications for the socio-economic landscape and the ongoing struggle for equality among Dalit communities in all faiths.

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Workshop on Qualitative Research Methodology Concludes at AMU

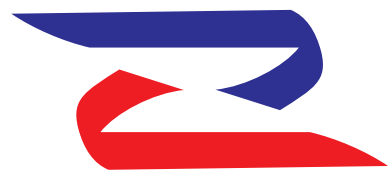
highlighting the importance of qualitative research methodology in contemporary academic studies.

Acknowledging Collective Efforts

Prof. Mujibul Hasan Siddiqui, Chairperson of the Department, welcomed the guests and commended the collaborative efforts behind the workshop's success. He lauded the contributions of Co-course Director Dr. Anjum Ahmed and

her team of student coordinators. Dr. Mohammad Shaheer Siddiqui, Course Director, presented a detailed report, summarizing the workshop sessions and their key outcomes. Certificates were distributed to participants by Prof. Dashora, while Prof. Raashid Nehal from the Department of English presented appreciation certificates to the student coordinators.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Prof. Sajid Jamal.



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Interview with Syed Ubaidur Rahman: Exploring the Peaceful Expansion of Islam in India



Syed Ubaidur Rahman, a New Delhi-based author and historian, has sparked discussions with his latest book, *Peaceful Expansion of Islam in India*. Known for works like *Forgotten Muslim Empires of South India* and *Biographical Encyclopedia of Indian Muslim Freedom Fighters*, Rahman presents a fresh perspective on Islam's spread in India. In this interview, he discusses his research, the role of traders and Sufis, and the misconceptions surrounding forced conversions.

The Inspiration Behind the Book

Q: What motivated you to write this book?

A: This idea was long in the

making. I felt the narrative of Islam spreading in India through forced conversions needed to be debunked with scholarly evidence. Alhamdulillah, I was fortunate to address this important theme and, I hope, do it justice.

The Early Arrival of Islam

Q: What surprised you most during your research?

A: The narrative that Islam came through force, particularly via northern invasions, is unfounded. Historians like Eton and T.W. Arnold have shown that Islam spread predominantly through peaceful means. For example, in Malabar, local rulers even encouraged families to convert certain members to

Islam, highlighting its organic spread.

Role of Arab Merchants

Q: How did Arab merchants contribute to the spread of Islam in India?

A: Muslim traders played a pivotal role, particularly along the western and eastern coasts. Long before the arrival of Sufis, merchants established relations with local communities in Kerala, Gujarat, Konkan, and Bengal. By the 8th century,

thriving Muslim communities existed in these regions, reflecting Islam's peaceful integration into Indian society.

Sufism's Influence

Q: What role did Sufis play in spreading Islam?

A: Sufis profoundly impacted Indian society, not by proselytizing but through their asceticism, charisma, and non-discriminatory conduct. They attracted people of all faiths, fostering conversions through

their spiritual influence. Even after their death, their shrines became enduring centers of interfaith interaction and devotion.

Peaceful Coexistence and Conversions

Q: Can you share examples of Islam's peaceful spread in India?

A: The influence of Sufis like Shaikh Hujwiri in Lahore and Hazrat Nathar Shah Wali in Tamil Nadu is well-documented.

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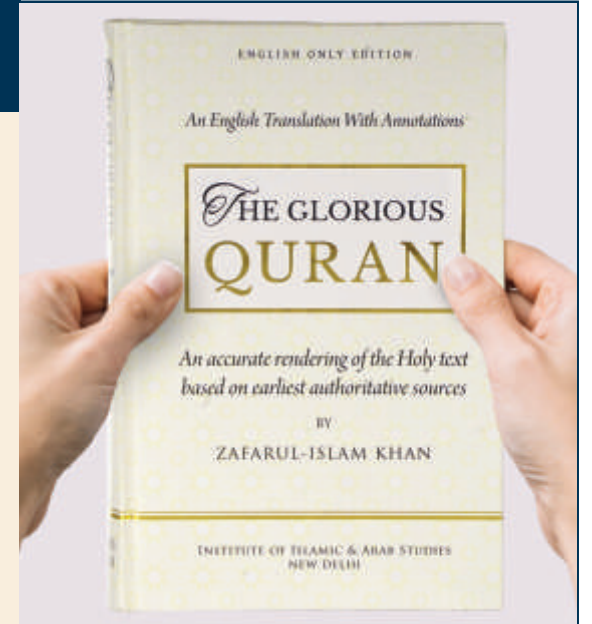
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Studied at Indian madrasas, then later at Al Azhar and Cairo universities and obtained his PhD in Islamic Studies from Manchester University (UK) in 1987. He is author and translator of over 50 books in Arabic, English and Urdu.



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Haj 2025: Efforts Underway to Ensure Hassle-Free Pilgrimage



New Delhi: Union Minister for Minority Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju emphasized the government's commitment to making Haj 2025 a seamless experience, underscoring its significance as a cornerstone of the strong bilateral relationship between India and Saudi Arabia. Speaking at the Conference of Chairpersons of State and UT Haj Committees, he launched the upgraded *Haj Suvidha App 2.0* and highlighted key reforms to enhance the pilgrimage experience.

Rijiju described Haj as the largest logistical operation managed by the Indian government abroad and noted the introduction of modern facilities, such as improved accommodation near the Haram, upgraded buses for pilgrim travel, and a stronger medical support system. He also pointed out that the ratio of Khadim-ul-Hujjaj (Haj assistants) has been improved to provide better

support to pilgrims.

New Features of Haj Suvidha App 2.0

The new app version builds on its 2024 predecessor by offering:

- Pilgrim selection process updates.
- Boarding pass and air travel details.
- Navigation tools with Mina maps.
- Personalized medical history and health advisories.

Concerns Over Costs and Management

The conference addressed stakeholder feedback and preparations for Haj 2025. Rijiju acknowledged concerns over irrational airfares and rising pilgrimage costs, which had led many intending pilgrims to withdraw. For instance, airfare disparities such as ₹67,000 from Mumbai versus ₹97,000 from Aurangabad were highlighted as problematic.

Ashfaq Ahmad, CEO of the

Jammu and Kashmir Haj Committee, noted economic difficulties in the region, leading to a drop in applications despite a quota of 7,000 pilgrims. Ahmad stated that over 3,500 applicants withdrew due to high costs, with the unused quota being returned.

Demand for a Full-Fledged Haj Committee

The absence of a fully operational Central Haj Committee, mandated by the Haj Act of 2002, remains a pressing issue. For the past four years, no such committee has been formed, despite a Supreme Court directive. The delay is attributed to the lack of Muslim MPs in the ruling BJP for required nominations, leaving the current committee with limited functionality.

Chairman AP Abdullakutty, a former CPI(M) MP turned BJP leader, and two BJP-affiliated women vice chairpersons, Mafuza Khatun and S. Munawari Begum, currently head the committee. Rijiju assured that forming a proper Haj Committee is on the agenda as the current tenure ends soon.

The conference concluded with deliberations led by dignitaries, including George Kurian, Minister of State for Minority Affairs, and Abdullakutty. Rijiju announced plans to visit Saudi Arabia in January to finalize the Haj 2025 agreement. ■

10 and 4 Muslim candidates win in Maharashtra and Jharkhand

Staff Writer

New Delhi: In the recently concluded assembly elections, Maharashtra saw 10 Muslim candidates elected, while Jharkhand elected four. These figures highlight the continued underrepresentation of Muslims despite their significant population share in both states.

Maharashtra Assembly Results

Maharashtra, with over 13% Muslim population, elected 10 Muslim MLAs to its 288-seat assembly, maintaining the same number as in the previous term. This amounts to only 3.5% representation, reflecting a persistent gap. Notably, no Muslim candidates from Maharashtra have representation in the Lok Sabha.

Out of 420 Muslim candidates in Maharashtra, 218 ran independently, while 150 were supported by smaller parties. Major political parties fielded very few Muslim candidates, drawing criticism for neglecting Muslim representation.

Among the winners, **Abdul Sattar** (Shiv Sena), **Hasan Mushrif**, and **Sana Malik** (NCP-Ajit faction) secured victories for the Mahayuti alliance. **Rais Shaikh** of the Samajwadi Party achieved the largest margin, winning the Bhiwandi seat by 52,015 votes. Congress's **Amin Patel** came second in Mumbai with a margin of 34,844 votes.

The AIMIM faced setbacks, narrowly winning only the Malegaon Central seat with **Mufti Abdul Khalique**, who edged out the competition by just 75 votes. AIMIM lost both Aurangabad seats, with **Imtiyaz Jaleel** narrowly defeated in Aurangabad East.

Other key victories included:

- **Abu Asim Azmi** (SP) won Mankhurd Shivaji Nagar with a margin of 12,753 votes.
- **Sajid Khan Pathan** (Congress) claimed Akola West with a slim lead of 1,283 votes.
- **Haroon Khan** (Shiv Sena UBT)

won the Versova seat by 1,600 votes.

Congress, criticized for fielding only nine Muslim candidates despite earlier promises of 18, contributed to vote splitting. AIMIM fielded 12 candidates, the highest among all parties. Analysts also noted **Ajit Pawar's** efforts to consolidate minority support for the alliance.

Jharkhand Assembly Results

In tribal-dominated Jharkhand, where Muslims make up a smaller proportion of the population, four Muslim candidates emerged victorious despite a highly communalized campaign by the BJP. The **INDIA bloc** (Congress and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha) secured 56 of the 81 assembly seats, benefiting significantly from minority votes.

Key victories included:

- **Muhammad Tajuddin** (JMM) defeated BJP's Anant Kumar Ojha in Rajmahal by a massive margin of 43,432 votes. Tajuddin secured 140,176 votes, while Ojha received 96,744.

• **Irfan Ansari** (Congress) won the Jamtara constituency for the third consecutive term, defeating BJP's Sita Soren by 43,676 votes.

• **Nishat Alam** (Congress), wife of former Jharkhand minister Alamgir Alam, won the Pakur seat with 86,029 votes, defeating AJSU's Azhar Islam, who garnered 155,827 votes.

• **Hafizul Hassan** (JMM) secured the Madhupur seat by a margin of 20,027 votes, defeating BJP's Ganga Narayan Singh.

The Jharkhand results showcased the consolidation of minority votes and highlighted the critical role of Muslim voters in the success of Congress and JMM.

The elections in both states underline the challenges of achieving fair representation for Muslims and the growing significance of minority participation in shaping electoral outcomes. ■

Seminar Highlights Legacy of Jamea-Tul-Hidaya Founder Maulana Shah Abdur Rahim Mujaddidi



Abdul Bari Masoud

Jaipur: The Alami Rabita Adab Islami organized a three-day seminar (November 15–17) at Jamea-Tul-Hidaya, Jaipur, to honor the life and contributions of its founder, Maulana Shah Abdur Rahim Mujaddidi (1920–1994). Established in 1976, Jamea-Tul-Hidaya embodies Maulana Mujaddidi's vision of integrating Islamic and modern education to address the Muslim community's challenges in India.

Over 100 scholars from India and abroad presented papers on Maulana Mujaddidi's contributions. They highlighted his relentless efforts in founding the

institution, inspired by 25 years of discussions with leading Islamic scholars like Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. Speakers underscored his dedication to bridging educational, economic, and political gaps while preserving Islamic values.

Legacy and Vision

Maulana Mujaddidi hailed from a distinguished lineage of Rohilla Pathans and was deeply influenced by his grandfather, Maulana Shah Hidayat Ali, a renowned scholar and Sufi. Hidayat Ali envisioned an educational system blending religious and secular knowledge to benefit both worlds. After his grandfather's death, Maulana

Mujaddidi carried forward this mission, introducing innovative curricula at Jamea-Tul-Hidaya to produce graduates equipped for modern challenges.

Jamea-Tul-Hidaya was conceived as a comprehensive institution featuring educational facilities, a hospital, a mosque, and community infrastructure. Operational since 1986, the campus symbolizes Maulana Mujaddidi's vision of holistic development for the Muslim community.

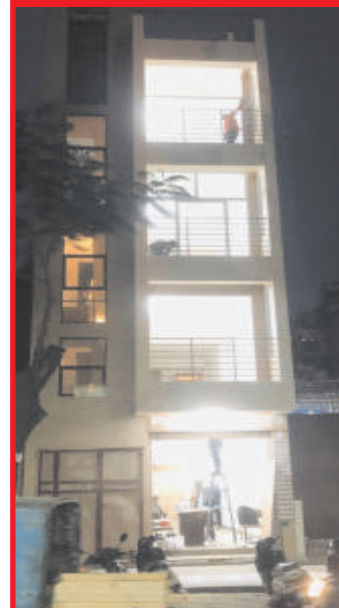
Seminar Sessions and Acknowledgments

The seminar featured five sessions and included the release of several books. Speakers like Maulana Bilal Hasni (Nazim-e-Ala, Nadwat-ul-Ulama), Maulana Fazlur Rahim Naqshbandi Mujaddidi, Prof. Waseem Akhtar, and Dr. Saeed Faizi (UK) emphasized the significance of blending religious and modern education.

Rabita Secretary Maulana Umair Siddique presented an overview of the organization's activities since its establishment in 1984. The event concluded with reflections on Maulana Mujaddidi's enduring legacy as a scholar, reformer, and advocate of education, embodying the essence of Sufism, Shariah, and community service. ■

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Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani Re-elected AIMPLB President

Bengaluru: Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani (68) was re-elected as President of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) during its 29th session held on November 23–24 at Darul Uloom Sabeel-ur-Rashad in Bengaluru, Karnataka's largest religious seminary.

A noted scholar and jurist, Maulana Rahmani is respected across Islamic schools of thought. He has authored significant works such as *The Islamic Jurisprudence: Introduction and Codification* and *Kit b-ul-Fatwa*. He also serves as the General Secretary of the Islamic Fiqh Academy of India.

Alongside his re-election, a 40-member executive committee was formed. Maulana Rahmani will now finalize his team of office-



bearers in consultation with this committee.

The Board also addressed pressing issues, including the controversial circular issued by the Chhattisgarh Waqf Board, which mandated pre-approval for Friday sermons (Juma khutba). AIMPLB strongly opposed this move, citing it as unconstitutional and beyond the Waqf Board's jurisdiction. It urged the

immediate withdrawal of the directive, emphasizing that the Waqf Board's role is limited to managing and protecting Waqf properties, not interfering in religious matters.

The session occurred at a critical juncture, focusing on the protection of Waqf properties and challenges to Islamic laws in India. Scholars and leaders from across the country participated, reaffirming AIMPLB's commitment to safeguarding Shariah and opposing legislative threats to Waqf assets.

The two-day event concluded with a public meeting themed "Protection of Shariah and Waqf" at Eidgah Qudoods Saheb, where the "Bangalore Declaration" was released, reiterating the Board's resolve to address these challenges. ■

Khalid Husain Honored with Singapore Community Long Service Award

New Delhi: Veteran journalist Syed Khalid Husain has been awarded the Singapore Community Long Service Award by the People's Association (PA), a statutory board established in 1960 to foster multicultural harmony and active citizenry in Singapore.

Husain, originally from India, has had an illustrious 47-year career in English and Urdu journalism across India, the UAE, and Singapore. He began his journey in 1977 with *Radiance Views Weekly* and went on to work with leading media organizations in print and electronic journalism.

Expressing his gratitude, Husain told *Islamic Voice* that he was humbled by the recognition, calling it a testament to Singapore's multicultural ethos.

The PA's mission is to nurture community participation and



foster unity among Singaporeans of all backgrounds. With a network of over 2,000 grassroots organizations, 100 community clubs, and multiple outreach initiatives, the PA aims to build a resilient and cohesive society, promoting the vision of "One People, One Singapore" while celebrating diversity and shared values. ■

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind's 3-Day Conclave Tackles National and Global Challenges



Hyderabad: Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) held a three-day national conclave in Wadi-e-Huda, Hyderabad, from November 15–17, 2024. The event, attended by over 15,000 members, focused on pressing local, national, and international issues, culminating in resolutions addressing key challenges.

Addressing Communal Tensions

JIH expressed grave concern over the rising communal violence in India, highlighting attacks on individuals, organizations, and places of worship. The conclave criticized the use of bulldozers in demolition campaigns that violate Supreme Court orders and decried the misuse of legal processes. Participants warned that such divisive agendas endanger both national integrity and the Muslim community's security.

Resisting the Waqf Bill

The conclave rejected the proposed Waqf Bill, accusing it of harming the Muslim community's resources and undermining national interests. The resolution called the bill unjust and misaligned with public sentiment, urging its withdrawal.

Strengthening Solidarity and Unity

JIH emphasized solidarity among Indian Muslims, urging them to remain steadfast in faith and committed to justice despite challenges. Delegates stressed the importance of peaceful reform and countering misinformation about Islam through deliberate, community-driven initiatives.

Social and Economic Concerns

The conclave criticized increasing economic inequality and wealth concentration among a small elite, attributing these issues to systemic corruption and authoritarian tendencies. It also raised alarms about the erosion of democratic values and the rise of extremism in media and education.

Condemning Gaza Aggression

JIH strongly denounced Israel's actions in Gaza, calling them genocide and a crime against humanity. The conclave urged the Indian government to uphold its historical support for Palestinian rights and called on international organizations to hold war criminals accountable. It appealed to global Muslim leaders to advocate for justice and support persecuted populations.

Commitment to Justice and

Nation-Building

The conclave concluded with a call for Muslims to prioritize judicial, social, and political reforms while contributing to national development. Delegates stressed the importance of patience, resilience, and peaceful efforts to achieve long-term objectives in the face of adversity. JIH's conclave served as a platform to address multifaceted challenges and reinforced its commitment to justice, unity, and moral integrity on both national and global fronts. ■

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Interview with Syed Ubaidur Rahman: Exploring the Peaceful Expansion of Islam in India

These saints inspired people through their simple, spiritual lives, leading to conversions across diverse regions without coercion.

Economic and Social Factors

Q: How did socio-economic dynamics encourage conversion to Islam?

A: Muslim traders were indispensable to several kingdoms like the Zamorin of Malabar and the Kadamba Kings of Goa. These rulers provided state protection and religious freedom to Muslims, creating a conducive environment for Islam to flourish.

Challenging Misconceptions

Q: How does your book address the myth of forced conversions?

A: This misconception stems partly from overzealous chroniclers. Historical evidence shows that Islam spread primarily through peaceful

means, with traders and Sufis influencing people over centuries.

Reception and Impact

Q: How has your book been received so far?

A: The response has been decent but not overwhelming. It's still early days since the book's release, and I am hopeful it will gain more attention, inshaAllah.

Message for Readers

Q: What do you hope readers will take away from your book?

A: I aim to provide a clearer understanding of Islam's history in India, grounded in evidence rather than myths. My hope is that readers see the peaceful and multifaceted ways in which Islam integrated into Indian society.

For more information, Syed Ubaidur Rahman can be contacted at 9818327757 or via email at syedurahman@gmail.com. ■

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Baku: The Faith Pavilion at COP29, organized by the Muslim Council of Elders, witnessed the launch of the "Women, Faith, and Climate" global alliance. This initiative aims to mobilize women religious leaders worldwide to combat climate change and amplify women-led climate action efforts.

The alliance brings together over 50 women religious leaders from eight major religions, spanning 15 countries, and represents organizations that collectively serve more than 73 million people globally. Key figures in the alliance include former President of Ireland

Mary Robinson, who underscored the pivotal role of religious leaders in engaging 5.8 billion people worldwide to address the climate crisis, and young climate activist Ridhima Pandey.

The alliance seeks to leverage the power of women religious leaders to promote environmental sustainability, foster interfaith collaboration, and inspire global participation in climate action. The group aims to support both national and international efforts by highlighting successful climate



initiatives, advocating for renewable energy, and

encouraging the implementation of effective climate policies at major global events such as COP30, as shared by the Muslim Council of Elders.

Prominent organizations involved in the alliance include the *Mothers' Union*, the *Tzu Chi Foundation*, and the *International Union of Superiors General*, all representing millions of members

globally. In addition to advocacy and policy efforts, the alliance plans to launch media campaigns, green places of worship, plant trees, and enhance knowledge exchange among its members. The Faith Pavilion at COP29 continues to position climate change as a moral and spiritual issue, calling on policymakers to recognize the ethical implications of environmental neglect and take decisive actions to ensure a sustainable future. ■

Global Alliance of Women Religious Leaders Unites to Address Climate Change at COP29

Libya to Host Major Islamic Educational Summit in 2025



Libyan and ICESCO officials formalize agreement in Rabat for the organization's 2025 Executive Council meeting in Tripoli.

Libya is set to host the 45th session of the **Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO)** Executive Council in Tripoli in January 2025, marking a milestone in its contributions to Islamic educational and cultural development.

The agreement to hold the summit was formalized in Rabat, Morocco, through a signing ceremony between Libya's Permanent Representative to ICESCO, Mohamed Amari Zayed, and ICESCO General Secretariat Director Salem Al-Habsi. Al-Habsi expressed confidence in Libya's ability to host the high-profile event, which will include a special consultative session addressing challenges and opportunities for the Islamic world.

"We are fully committed to providing all necessary resources to ensure the success of these meetings," said Amari Zayed, reaffirming Libya's dedication to its hosting responsibilities.

The ICESCO Executive Council, comprising representatives from all 53 member states, serves as the organization's primary oversight body. The council meets annually to evaluate performance reports and approve action plans that shape ICESCO's vision for education, science, and culture in the Islamic world.

Hosting this summit positions Tripoli as a hub for fostering collaboration and tackling pressing issues in education and culture across the Islamic world, further solidifying Libya's role on the global stage. (Extract from /www.libyanexpress.com) ■

Iran's Exports to Islamic Countries Surge by 17%

Iran's exports to Islamic countries have grown by 17% since the start of the Iranian calendar year on March 20, according to Mahdi Eslampanah, head of the National Standard Organisation.

Speaking at the 18th National Quality Awards ceremony, Eslampanah attributed this success to enhanced foreign trade initiatives and the strengthening of a unified approach among Islamic nations. The event, which brought together parliamentarians, industrial leaders, entrepreneurs, and quality experts, highlighted the

impact of collaboration on economic growth.

Eslampanah also pointed to significant strides in standardisation as a key factor in boosting export performance. "The National Quality Award was established to address the specific needs of Iran and the broader Islamic world," he noted, emphasizing the role of quality assurance in fostering international trade.

This achievement underscores the benefits of coordinated efforts among Islamic countries in driving mutual economic progress. ■

Saudi Arabia Unveils First AI Travel Companion, 'SARA'

The Saudi Tourism Authority has launched **SARA**, an innovative AI-powered digital human, to redefine travel experiences in the Kingdom. Presented as a brand ambassador, travel companion, and personal concierge, SARA marks a groundbreaking move in the tourism industry.

A Global First
Saudi Arabia claims SARA is the first AI digital human travel companion developed for a national tourism board. She was showcased as a beta version at the Saudi Pavilion during the **World Travel Market (WTM)** in London, highlighting the Kingdom's commitment to cutting-edge technology in tourism.

What Sets SARA Apart?



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- **Interactive Engagement:** She understands context, intent, and adapts through learning from user interactions.

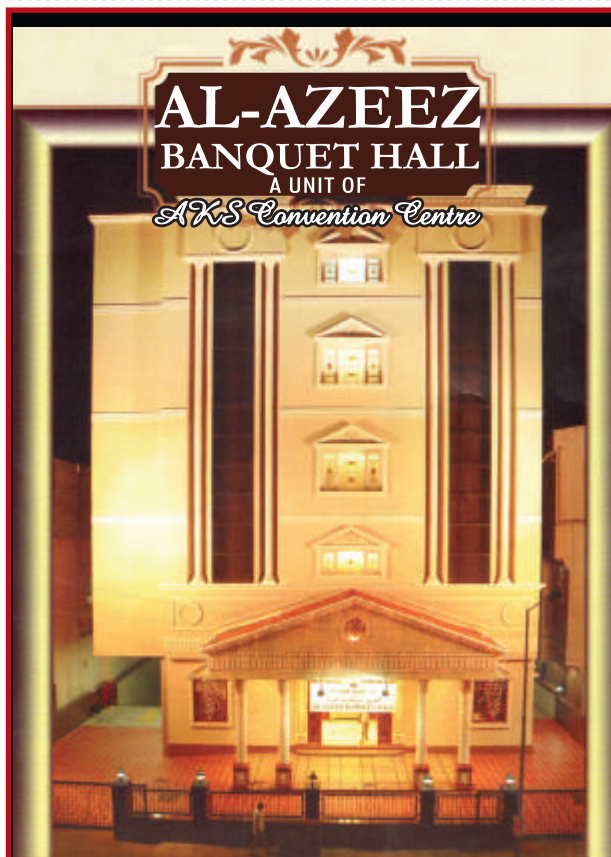
- **Cultural Immersion:** Portrayed as a young Saudi national, SARA embodies the spirit of Saudi hospitality and curiosity, offering a glimpse into the country's vibrant culture.

- **Personalized Experiences:** Designed using human-centered principles, SARA provides tailored recommendations, from exploring the ancient ruins of **AIUla** to shopping in Jeddah's bustling markets.

Strategic Vision

SARA is part of Saudi Arabia's broader strategy to enhance digital tourism, attract global travelers, and offer seamless, culturally immersive experiences. By merging AI technology with the Kingdom's rich heritage, Saudi Arabia aims to set a new benchmark for smart tourism.

This initiative underscores the nation's dedication to innovation and hospitality, aligning with its vision of becoming a global travel destination. ■



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A Surge in Mosque Construction

The Taliban's Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, recently declared during the opening of a new mosque that the Taliban constructs dozens of mosques annually. His statement aimed to reinforce the Taliban's commitment to religious devotion. The Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs also reported that 29 hectares of land in ten provinces had been designated for building mosques, religious schools, and cemeteries.

Afghanistan already boasts one of the highest numbers of mosques per capita in the Islamic world. In cities like Kabul, parks and recreational areas have been converted into mosques, often disregarding urban planning. For example, Baharistan Park in Kabul's Karte Parwan district now houses a mosque and a multi-story religious school, across the street from the prominent Haji Mir Ahmad Khan Mosque.

Religion in Public and Private Spaces

Afghanistan's devout population fills mosques, particularly for Friday prayers, even leading to

The Mosque Paradox: Religion, Power, and Reality in Afghanistan



street closures in major cities. Since the Taliban regained power, public displays of religiosity have become even more pronounced, with citizens adopting traditional attire, carrying prayer beads, and attending all five daily prayers. In some cases, Taliban enforcers patrol public spaces to compel people to pray.

However, this outward display of piety contrasts sharply with the deeper virtues of Islam, such as honesty, kindness, and justice. Observers question whether religiosity should be measured by mosque attendance or by adherence to Islamic principles in

everyday life.

Mosques as Instruments of Power

Throughout Islamic history, mosques have often been used by rulers as tools of political propaganda. From the Umayyad Caliphs to modern regimes, mosque pulpits have disseminated messages to solidify political power under the guise of religious authority. The Taliban are no exception. They mandate that preachers deliver Friday sermons supporting their regime, turning mosques into platforms for political ideology rather than spiritual enlightenment.

Imams, financially supported by the Taliban, are often required to promote the group's image. In a society marked by widespread illiteracy, these sermons have a profound impact, enabling the Taliban to manipulate public perception and maintain control.

Superficial Religiosity vs. True Faith

While many Afghans are consistent in their prayers, fasting, and Quran recitations, societal issues like dishonesty, corruption, and prejudice persist. This superficial practice of religion often overshadows the essence of faith, which emphasizes compassion, justice, and integrity. A study comparing nations based on values such as welfare, trust, and honesty found that many non-Muslim countries scored higher on Islamic ideals than Islamic nations. This raises critical questions about the true markers of religiosity and whether Afghanistan, rife with poverty, discrimination, and systemic gender inequality, aligns with the Islamic values it claims to uphold.

Mosque-Building vs. Public Welfare

From an Islamic perspective, acts of charity and assisting the poor

hold greater spiritual merit than constructing mosques, especially in a land already filled with them. Worship in Islam can occur anywhere; a mosque is not a necessity. Yet, in Afghanistan, wealthy individuals and the Taliban prioritize building mosques over addressing urgent needs like providing food, clean water, or education.

The Taliban's focus on mosque construction appears more about public image than genuine piety. Their mosque-building initiatives are announced with pride, even as poverty and economic struggles deepen. This raises the question: should the government invest in more mosques, or should it prioritize the basic welfare and development of its people?

Conclusion

While mosques are essential spaces for spiritual reflection, their overabundance in Afghanistan, coupled with the neglect of societal well-being, reflects a misplaced emphasis on appearances rather than substance. True faith lies in actions that uplift society, support the vulnerable, and promote justice values that Afghanistan's leadership seems to overlook in favor of hollow displays of religiosity. ■

ICESCO Urges Global Efforts to Promote Scientific Diplomacy for Peace and Development

Rabat: The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO) has called on the international community to intensify efforts to raise awareness about the critical role of scientific diplomacy in fostering peace and advancing global knowledge. The organization emphasized the need for increased cooperation to elevate the quality of scientific research, given the pivotal role that science plays in societal progress and sustainable development.

In a statement released in observance of World Science Day for Peace and Development, which is celebrated annually on November 10, ICESCO reaffirmed its commitment to integrating scientific diplomacy into its vision and strategic objectives. The organization stressed that science is a powerful tool for peacebuilding and sustainable development.



ICESCO is currently conducting a study titled "Promoting Scientific Diplomacy: Roadmap to the Strategy of ICESCO Member States," aimed at strengthening scientific cooperation and knowledge exchange among Islamic countries. The study focuses on addressing critical challenges, particularly in the fields of climate change, healthcare, and sustainable development.

Additionally, ICESCO highlighted its ongoing efforts to promote scientific research and innovation for societal welfare and natural resource sustainability. Some of the

key initiatives include:

- The "ICESCO Contest for Transforming Bio-Waste into Food Bars", which supports food security efforts.

- The "500,000 Seedlings Production Programme", aimed at reforestation and combating desertification across the Islamic world. This initiative seeks to promote responsible governance of natural resources and rehabilitate degraded lands.

In its statement, ICESCO also called for training individuals with skills that meet contemporary needs and anticipate future professional demands, positioning science as a vital tool for progress, peace, and prosperity.

Through these initiatives, ICESCO aims to foster global cooperation and harness the power of science to create a more sustainable and peaceful future. ■

Biban24 Spurs SME Growth with Landmark Deals Worth SAR 35 Billion



Riyadh: Saudi Arabia's premier startup and SME forum, concluded with groundbreaking agreements totaling over SAR 35 billion (USD 9 billion). Organized by **Monsha'at**, the Kingdom's Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority, the event showcased Saudi Arabia's commitment to advancing entrepreneurship.

Held from November 5-9 at the **Riyadh Front Exhibition & Conference Center**, Biban24 attracted a record-breaking **182,000 visitors** and brought together entrepreneurs, investors,

and business leaders from around the globe. The forum provided a platform for innovative partnerships and impactful collaborations aimed at driving regional and global SME growth.

Key Highlights and Agreements
On the final day, several significant agreements were signed:

- **Tameed** launched a financing portfolio worth **SAR 2.6 billion**.
- **Interactive Smart Communications** introduced a portfolio valued at **SAR 1 billion**.
- **Mudarabah** unveiled a portfolio worth **SAR 1 billion**.

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Dr. Ausaf Sayeed

West Asia Review

Donald Trump's re-election as the 47th President of the United States marks a turning point in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East. His victory has elicited varied responses, reflecting the region's diverse political and social landscape. As Trump prepares to take office, his policies are expected to reinforce alliances, challenge adversaries, and reshape the region's geopolitical dynamics.

Revitalizing U.S.-Israel Ties

Trump's return to power has been warmly welcomed by Israeli leaders. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu lauded his victory as "history's greatest comeback" and highlighted the potential for renewed cooperation. Trump's earlier tenure saw landmark decisions like the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations between Israel and several Arab nations.

Under Trump's leadership, Israel expects stronger U.S. support, including reduced international

Donald Trump's Victory: A New Chapter for Middle East Politics



scrutiny over settlement activities. Right-wing factions anticipate greater leeway in military operations, a stance underscored by Trump's criticism of ceasefire proposals during the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.

Tougher Stance on Iran

A defining feature of Trump's Middle East policy is his confrontational approach toward Iran. His "maximum pressure" campaign in his previous term included withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and severe economic sanctions. Analysts predict a return to these tactics, potentially including targeted actions against

Iran's nuclear infrastructure and economic sectors.

Iran, a key supporter of Hamas and Hezbollah, may escalate its regional activities in response, raising concerns over broader instability.

Evolving Palestinian Relations

The Palestinian leadership has voiced skepticism regarding Trump's policies. His strong alignment with Israel has marginalized Palestinian aspirations in past peace processes. Hamas has urged the incoming administration to address Palestinian rights, signaling potential challenges in balancing Israeli support with broader regional diplomacy.

Strengthening the Abraham Accords

Building on his prior successes, Trump is likely to expand the

Abraham Accords, with the possibility of Saudi Arabia joining the normalization framework. While these agreements signal a shift in Arab-Israeli relations, critics argue they overlook Palestinian grievances, leaving significant diplomatic hurdles unaddressed.

Mixed Reactions from Arab States

Arab leaders' responses reflect a mix of optimism and caution. Leaders from Qatar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE expressed hopes for enhanced regional cooperation under Trump's leadership. However, Iranian officials and groups like Hamas adopted a guarded stance, emphasizing their readiness to respond to U.S. policy shifts.

Economic and Strategic Implications

Trump's presidency could have far-reaching economic impacts on the

Middle East, particularly in trade relations and sanctions. His policies are expected to further integrate U.S.-aligned states into global trade while exacerbating economic challenges for adversaries like Iran.

Conclusion

Donald Trump's return heralds significant changes for the Middle East. While his administration's policies promise stronger alliances and diplomatic initiatives, they also risk deepening divisions and heightening tensions. As the region navigates these shifts, the coming years will reveal whether Trump's unconventional approach fosters stability or fuels further discord.

Dr. Ausaf Sayeed is India's former ambassador to Saudi Arabia. His blog, West Asia Review, offers in-depth analysis on Middle East dynamics, covering geopolitics, economics, culture, and security. Visit westasiareview.com for more insights. ■

Trump's Victory and the Future of Palestine



Khursheed Alam Dawood Qasmi, Zambia

Donald Trump's return to the White House as the winner of the November 5th U.S. presidential elections raises significant questions about the future of Palestine. Trump defeated Democratic candidate Kamala Harris, whose campaign struggled under the weight of the Biden administration's policies, including its unwavering support for Israel during the Gaza conflict.

Trump's landslide victory reflects voter dissatisfaction with the Biden administration's enabling of Israeli actions against Palestinians. While Harris fought valiantly, her administration's stance on Palestine alienated many American voters, contributing to her defeat.

Despite his promise in his victory speech to "stop wars," Trump's track record offers little optimism for Palestinians. During his first term, his decisions including recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, defunding UNRWA, closing Palestinian missions in the U.S., and promoting the

controversial "Deal of the Century" favored Israeli interests while sidelining Palestinian rights. Trump's close ties with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, coupled with his support for settlement expansions and annexations, suggest continuity in policies detrimental to Palestinian aspirations. Concerns persist that his return to power may embolden Israel, further shrinking Palestinian territories and intensifying conflicts.

While Trump may attempt to broker peace, his approach will likely prioritize Israeli objectives. Palestinians fear that his proposals, including the possible revival of the "Deal of the Century," may impose unjust terms, risking further devastation in Gaza under the guise of eliminating resistance movements like Hamas.

The Middle East remains at a crossroads. The world watches as Trump begins his second term, hoping for a shift in approach that prioritizes justice and peace. May wise counsel guide his actions, leading to decisions that honor the rights of the oppressed and bring lasting stability to the region. ■

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On November 2, 2024, first-year theology students from the Vidyajyoti Institute of Religious Studies, accompanied by Anil Almeida SJ and Joseph Victor Edwin SJ, visited Nadwatul Ulema, an esteemed Muslim educational institution in Lucknow. Established in 1898 CE, Nadwatul Ulema has been instrumental in preparing Muslim scholars for contemporary challenges. With over 2,000 students, the institution offers education free of tuition fees and provides complimentary lodging and meals to most students.

Maulana Faizan Nagarmi Nadwi Sahib and Maulana Mansoob Hasan Sahib welcomed the group warmly, providing a guided tour of the campus. Highlights included the extensive library housing 300,000 books and the manuscript room, showcasing preserved ancient manuscripts. The visit fostered mutual understanding and gratitude,



Visit to Nadwatul Ulema

culminating in prayers for the institution's continued success.

Insights on Muslim-Christian Understanding



The visit offered an opportunity to reflect on interfaith relations.

Engaging Interfaith Visits in Lucknow

Firangi Mahal. This historic institution, dating back to the 11th century, has been a hub for Islamic scholarship. The Firangi Mahal madrasa, founded in 1695, is renowned for its curriculum developed by Allama Nizam-ud-din Farangi Mahli, which continues to influence madrasas across the subcontinent.

Maulana Khalid highlighted his family's contributions, including Maulana Abdul Bari's advocacy for Hindu-Muslim unity and active role in the freedom movement. Emphasizing the importance of religious unity, Maulana Khalid commended the students for their perceptive engagement, urging religious leaders to foster harmony and understanding among faiths.

Visit to Integral University



On November 4, 2024, the group visited Integral University, an institution established by Muslim intellectuals to promote inclusive education. Dr. Syed Nadeem Akhtar, Pro-Chancellor, emphasized the university's vision, grounded in values derived from both the Holy Bible and Qur'an. He urged the students, future Catholic

priests, to serve as ambassadors of peace and harmony, guiding individuals to divine truths.

Exploring Unity College



The group concluded their interfaith engagement with a visit to Unity College, run by Shia Muslims under the Tauheedul Muslimeen Trust. Established in 1987, the college provides a serene educational environment. A discussion on Shia Islam, guided by Najmul Hasan Rizvi, explored the beliefs of Imam Ali's rightful leadership and the enduring significance of Karbala in shaping Shia practices.

The visit highlighted the importance of interfaith dialogue in fostering mutual understanding and respect. As the group departed for Varanasi, they carried with them a deeper appreciation for the rich diversity within the Muslim community and its enduring traditions.

These reports offer a valuable perspective on interfaith interactions, bridging understanding between communities. Joseph Victor Edwin SJ provides a thoughtful account of these enriching experiences. ■

Mission of God Conference 2024: Equipping Christians to Engage with Islam



Birmingham: Over 170 Christians gathered in Birmingham for the annual *Mission of God* conference, jointly organized by Christian Concern and the Ezra Centre for Christian Thought. The event aimed to equip attendees with a deeper understanding of Islam and practical strategies for engaging with Muslims in the UK, where cities like Birmingham have a significant Muslim population.

Contrasting Beliefs: The Crescent and the Cross

Joe Boot, Director of the Ezra Institute, opened the conference by exploring the foundational differences between Islamic and Christian beliefs. Highlighting the Islamic doctrine of *Tawhid* versus the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, he underscored how these theological differences shape cultural and societal norms. Boot argued that Islam's singular view of God limits diversity and individual expression, while Christianity's covenantal God invites relational engagement with creation.

Islam and the Nation: The Growing Challenge

Tim Dieppe, Head of Public Policy at Christian Concern,

presented a comprehensive overview of Islam's influence in the UK, supported by detailed statistics and real-life examples. His presentation emphasized the urgency of countering Islam's growing political and cultural presence with a robust biblical response grounded in love and truth. Dieppe proposed five pillars for Christian engagement: loving Muslim neighbors, prayer, confronting Islam as a false ideology, exposing its realities, and resisting its advancement.

The Church's Role:

Community and Visibility

Apologist Bob of Speakers' Corner urged Christians to adopt a collective and visible approach to evangelism. He called for a recovery of Christendom's focus on cultural transformation and the establishment of supportive Christian communities for Muslim converts, who often face isolation and loss of family ties.

Personal Evangelism: Sharing Christ with Muslims

Beth Peltola, CEO of the One Truth Project, focused on individual efforts in evangelism. She dispelled common misconceptions, encouraging attendees to rely on scripture and Christ's teachings to engage

Muslims meaningfully. Peltola emphasized the importance of addressing core theological differences, such as the deity of Christ, while using personal testimonies to connect with Muslim women.

A Call to Action

The conference concluded with a Q&A session, addressing practical challenges such as reaching Muslim men, youth, and women. Panelists encouraged attendees to take their evangelism efforts to social media, recover the militancy of the Christian faith in confronting societal challenges, and deepen their knowledge of both Islam and Christianity. Reflecting on the event, Tim Dieppe remarked, "This conference highlights the hunger among Christians to understand and engage with Islam in an informed and loving way. Churches must now take the lead in equipping their members for this vital mission."

The *Mission of God* conference reaffirmed the need for Christians to rise to the challenge of Islam by living out their faith with conviction, knowledge, and unity, aiming to bring the light of Christ to every sphere of life. ■

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Decoding HATE in Indian Politics

Suhail Anjum

Understanding Islamophobia in Indian Politics

Asad Mirza's *Decoding HATE in Indian Politics* offers a comprehensive exploration of Islamophobia's rise globally and its deeply troubling impact on India's political and social fabric. This book aims to clarify misconceptions about Islamophobia while tracing its roots and evolution both globally and nationally.

Globally, Mirza charts the trajectory of Islamophobia from its early stages to its intensification post-9/11, fueled by concepts like the "Clash of Civilizations." In the Indian context, the book delves into the colonial origins of Islamophobia and its subsequent politicization post-Partition, exposing how Hindu nationalist strategies have weaponized it to gain power.

Key Themes

1. Historical and Political Analysis

The book examines the role of politics in fostering Islamophobia, tracing its growth during colonial rule and its institutionalization in contemporary India.

2. Social and Judicial



Author: Asad Mirza
Publisher: BI Publications,
 New Delhi
ISBN: 978-81-946797-7-6
Pages: 205
Price: Rs. 295

Dimensions

Mirza highlights the socio-economic challenges faced by Indian Muslims, the bias within legal and law enforcement systems, and the rise of Hindu vigilante groups.

3. Media and Public Discourse

The role of Indian media in amplifying Islamophobia through

hate speech and biased narratives is critically analyzed.

4. Documenting Hate Crimes

A standout feature is the detailed review of hate crimes from 2021 to 2023, presented with graphic representations and data, ensuring this period's critical incidents are preserved for future reference.

5. Combating Hate Speech

The book outlines societal efforts to counter hate speech through legal reforms, community engagement, and education, emphasizing the need for political will to foster inclusivity.

A Valuable Resource

Through meticulous research and nuanced analysis, Mirza sheds light on the alarming rise of Islamophobia in India and its ramifications for national unity and global perceptions. The book offers readers a balanced perspective, supported by up-to-date statistics and insights from organizations monitoring hate crimes.

Decoding HATE in Indian Politics is an essential read for anyone seeking to understand the interplay between Islamophobia and Indian politics, offering a roadmap for combating hate and fostering harmony in a pluralistic society. ■

Crafting China's Image in the Islamic World

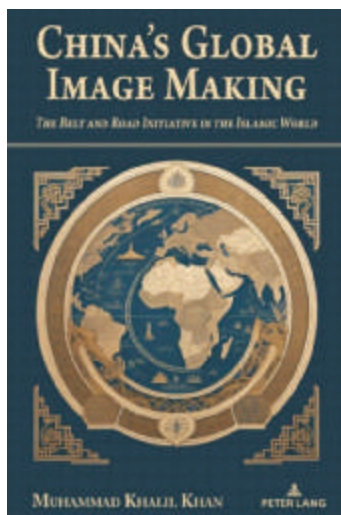
China's Global Image Making: The Belt and Road Initiative in the Islamic World by Muhammad Khalil Khan offers a thought-provoking analysis of how China uses media and diplomacy to shape its image in Islamic nations. This scholarly work delves deep into the interplay between the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and media representation, shedding light on China's growing influence in these regions.

Key Insights

The book draws on theories of soft power and media framing to argue that China's engagement with Islamic countries transcends economic exchanges. By analyzing over 43,000 articles from Islamic English-language media (2009–2018), it reveals how regional media narratives evolve in response to China's diplomatic and economic initiatives.

Key findings include:

- **Diverse Media Portrayals:**



Favorable coverage in Pakistan and Iran contrasts with critical views in Turkey and Egypt, highlighting varied geopolitical and historical contexts.

• Economic Correlation:

Positive narratives often align with infrastructure investments and BRI collaborations, while human rights issues invite

criticism.

• **Historical Context:** China's current strategies are framed within a legacy of Sino-Islamic relations, enriching the narrative of long-term engagement.

A Scholarly Contribution

This book is a valuable resource for understanding China's public diplomacy and its impact on Islamic nations. It underscores the need for nuanced strategies that respect local contexts and cultural sensitivities, making it an indispensable guide for students of international communication, political science, and history.

Conclusion

Khan's work not only enriches academic discourse but also offers practical insights into the critical role media plays in shaping global perceptions. **China's Global Image Making** is a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the complexities of China's influence in the Islamic world.

(Extracted from: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/>) ■

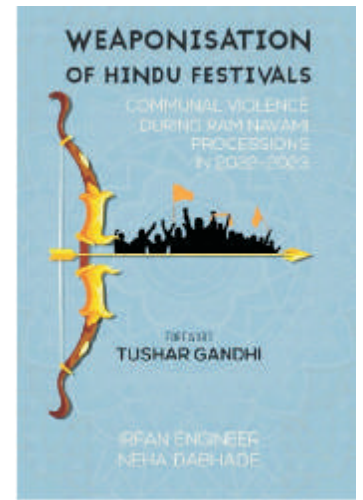
Weaponization of Hindu Festivals

Irfan Engineer & Neha Dhabade

Weaponization of Hindu Festivals critically examines how Hindu festivals, traditionally celebrated as symbols of unity, cultural heritage, and spirituality, are increasingly being politicized and used as tools to propagate divisive ideologies. The authors, Irfan Engineer and Neha Dhabade, meticulously unpack the socio-political dynamics behind this trend, offering a thought-provoking exploration of its impact on Indian society.

Through detailed case studies and historical analysis, the book highlights how festivals like Holi, Diwali, and others have been co-opted to fuel communal tensions, perpetuate stereotypes, and reinforce majoritarian narratives. The authors also address the consequences of such weaponization, including its effects on interfaith harmony and India's secular fabric.

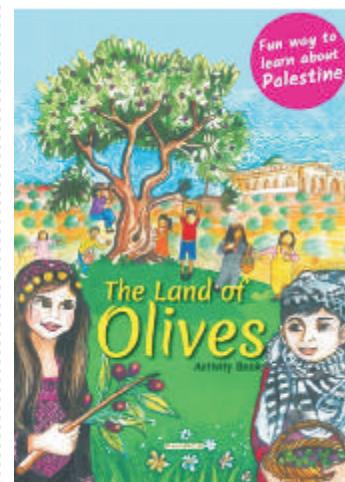
This work is both insightful and



timely, encouraging readers to critically engage with the evolving meanings of cultural practices in a polarized world. It's a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the intersection of religion, culture, and politics in contemporary India.

For copies, contact Mithila at **9833650236**, or purchase on **Amazon**. Watch the book's trailer on YouTube. ■

The Land of Olives



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The Land of Olives by Pharos Media is a delightful and engaging activity book that offers readers a creative way to learn about Palestine. Combining fun with education, this book invites readers of all ages to explore the rich history, culture, and resilience of the Palestinian people through

interactive activities.

The book is thoughtfully designed, with puzzles, coloring pages, quizzes, and more, making it both entertaining and informative. It takes readers on a journey through Palestine's ancient heritage, iconic landmarks, and the significance of olives, a symbol of Palestinian identity and perseverance.

One of the book's strengths is its ability to present serious topics like the history of Palestine and its ongoing struggle for justice in a way that is accessible and engaging, particularly for younger audiences. Each activity is crafted to encourage curiosity and empathy, fostering a deeper connection to the Palestinian cause while celebrating its vibrant culture and traditions.

Whether you're a parent, educator, or simply someone looking to understand Palestine from a fresh perspective, *The Land of Olives* is an excellent resource. Its combination of fun and learning makes it an ideal tool for starting meaningful conversations about Palestine's past, present, and future.

In short, *The Land of Olives* is more than just an activity book—it's a gateway to understanding and appreciating a land and its people through a lens of creativity and compassion. ■

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Biban24 Spurs SME Growth with Landmark Deals Worth SAR 35 Billion

• **Saudi Aramco** announced **WAED Ventures** investment rounds worth **SAR 18 million**. **Entrepreneurship World Cup (EWC) Finals**

Biban24 also hosted the prestigious **Entrepreneurship World Cup (EWC) finals**, featuring **100 finalists from 52**

countries competing for a **\$1 million cash prize pool** and access to networking and investment opportunities.

The **2025 EWC edition** introduced a new strategic track focusing on **space technologies**, covering subfields such as mining, agriculture, health, and

resource management. This track offered cash prizes totaling **\$200,000**, complementing the overall **\$800,000 prize pool**. Biban24 highlighted Saudi Arabia's innovative approach to entrepreneurship and cemented its position as a hub for global SME collaboration and investment. ■

FURQAN

The concept of Furqan in the Quran signifies a divine tool of distinction, helping individuals and communities navigate moral and spiritual decisions. Whether as a revelation itself or as a quality granted to the faithful, Furqan embodies clarity, guidance, and the ability to separate good and evil and True from Falshood

In Jerusalem, there once stood the Pilgrims' Market, now known as the Long Market—a bustling hub of trade and trust. Pilgrims traditionally entrusted their money and belongings to shopkeepers there before departing for Hajj, retrieving them upon their return.

One day, a man from outside Palestine arrived carrying a red pouch containing 3,000 dirhams. He entrusted it to a shopkeeper, who carefully counted the amount and agreed to safeguard it until the man returned from Hajj.

Months later, the pilgrim returned. He went to the shop where he had left the pouch but found the shopkeeper absent. The workers directed him to wait for the owner. When the shopkeeper arrived, the man asked for his pouch.

"How much did you leave with us?" the shopkeeper asked.

"3,000 dirhams," the man replied.

"What is your name?"

A Story and a Lesson: Dishonest Merchants and Their Betrayal



"On which day did you leave the deposit?"

The man answered the questions, though he grew suspicious. Finally, the shopkeeper asked, "What was the color of the pouch?"

"Red," the man replied.

The shopkeeper then excused himself, offering the man a meal and saying he had an urgent matter

to attend to. After some time, the shopkeeper returned with a red pouch containing 3,000 dirhams. The man counted the money, confirmed it, and left with gratitude.

An Unexpected Revelation

As the man walked through the market, he noticed something strange. To his surprise, he realized he had mistakenly entered the

wrong shop earlier. Embarrassed, he went to the correct shopkeeper, explained what had happened, and received the red pouch with the exact amount he had originally deposited.

The man was shocked and shared his story. The neighbors questioned the first shopkeeper about why he gave money to a stranger. His reply was profound:

"By God, I did not know him, nor did I remember having any trust from him. But when I saw his confidence in me and realized he was a stranger in this land, I feared that if I didn't give him his money, he would leave heartbroken. He would return to his family and say that his money was stolen in Jerusalem, tarnishing the reputation of all Palestinians not just one person. I remembered the verse from the Qur'an: 'So let him who is entrusted fulfill his trust and let him fear Allah, his Lord' (Al-

Baqarah: 283). So I sold some goods for 1,000 dirhams, borrowed 1,500 from a friend, and added 500 dirhams of my own to complete the amount for him."

A Timeless Lesson

This shopkeeper's sacrifice was not for fame or fortune but to protect the honor of his community. He feared for the reputation of his people.

Today, we witness a stark contrast: an era where trust is rare, dishonesty is normalized, and consuming others' wealth unjustly is glorified. Those who sell their religion, land, and honor for fleeting gains betray not only their own souls but the legacy of integrity they inherited.

Let this story be a reminder of the profound value of trust and the weight of betrayal. It challenges us to reflect: *If a man went to such lengths to preserve the reputation of his nation, what does it say about those entrusted with land, honor, and people who betray them?* ■



M. Mohammed Aslum

In today's fast-paced world, our careers often dominate our lives, leaving little room for anything else. The relentless pressure to succeed and meet expectations can leave us feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. However, it's important to remember that true fulfillment extends far beyond our professional achievements.

Prioritize Self-Care

To live a balanced life, self-care must be a priority. This involves caring for our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Regular exercise, mindfulness practices, and getting enough sleep are essential for

Life Beyond the Career Grind: Finding Fulfillment Outside Your Profession

maintaining health. Additionally, nurturing relationships with loved ones and building a strong support network offer much-needed emotional strength and encouragement.

Discover and Pursue Your Passions

Finding joy outside of work often comes from exploring our passions. Whether it's a hobby, creative activity, or a long-held dream, dedicating time to what we love can bring deep satisfaction. These activities allow us to relax, de-stress, and explore new facets of our personality.

Build a Strong Support Network

Having positive, supportive



people around us is crucial for maintaining a healthy balance. Friends, family, or like-minded individuals offer encouragement, perspective, and a sense of belonging, all of which enhance our overall well-being.

Give Back to the Community

Volunteering or engaging in community service is a fulfilling way to contribute to the world around us. Giving back not only helps others but also gives us a

sense of purpose and connection to something larger than ourselves.

Take Breaks and Vacations

It's essential to take time off from work to prevent burnout. Whether through a short getaway or simply unwinding at home, these breaks allow us to recharge and return to our responsibilities with renewed energy.

Diversify Your Income Streams

While careers provide financial stability, having multiple income sources can offer flexibility and security. Exploring side ventures, investing, or starting a small business can help us gain control over our financial future and provide opportunities for new

experiences.

Seek a Fulfilling Career

If your current career feels unaligned with your values or passions, it might be time to explore new possibilities. By reflecting on your strengths, interests, and goals, you can pursue a career that brings deeper satisfaction and purpose.

Conclusion

A truly fulfilling life goes beyond professional success. By focusing on self-care, passions, relationships, giving back, and aligning our careers with our values, we can create a more enriched and balanced life. It's never too late to pursue a path that brings fulfillment. (The writer is a Soft Skills Trainer, Career Mentor, and Purpose Coach based in Salem, Tamil Nadu.) ■



Sana Rubiyana

What is Self-Sabotaging?

Self-sabotage occurs when individuals consciously or unconsciously engage in behaviors that block their success or hinder goal accomplishment. These actions can negatively impact personal and professional achievements, as well as mental health.

Signs of Self-Sabotaging Behavior

- Giving up when faced with challenges
- Struggling to assert yourself
- Setting unattainable standards
- Doubting your worthiness of success
- Criticizing yourself harshly
- Focusing on negatives rather than positives
- Comparing yourself to others

Understanding and Overcoming Self-Sabotage



- Feeling unworthy or devalued
- Prioritizing others' approval over your own needs

Why Do People Self-Sabotage?

1. **Low Self-Esteem:** Feelings of inadequacy or unworthiness.
2. **Perfectionism:** Unrealistic expectations leading to procrastination and dissatisfaction.
3. **Fear of Abandonment:** Suppressing personal needs to avoid being left by loved ones.

4. **Procrastination:** Making excuses to delay progress.
5. **Childhood Trauma:** Fear of intimacy stemming from past abuse or neglect.
6. **Cognitive Dissonance:** Discomfort from actions misaligned with personal beliefs or values.
7. **Negative Self-Talk:** Doubting abilities and feeling like an imposter.

8. **Avoidance of Emotional Pain:** Sabotaging relationships to protect oneself from hurt.

How to Stop Self-Sabotaging

- **Identify Root Causes:** Recognize patterns and triggers.
- **Combat Procrastination:** Break tasks into manageable steps.
- **Shift Perspectives:** Focus on progress, not perfection.
- **Learn from Failure:** Embrace setbacks as opportunities for

growth.

• **Practice Self-Care:** Prioritize acceptance, self-compassion, and mindfulness.

• **Leverage Strengths:** Celebrate your unique abilities.

• **Seek Professional Help:** Therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), or motivational therapy can offer effective solutions.

Psychologist & Rational Emotive Cognitive Behavioral Therapist ■

«Page 1

Syed Iftexhar Jamal Honored with Urdu Academy Award

Mr. Jamal's first drama, written in 1995, was adapted into Andhra Pradesh's first Urdu telefilm the following year. His notable works include *Mohabbat Aur Jung* (1997), *Lagan* (2002), and *Koun Banega Ghar Jamaai* (2003). As a director, his plays like *Khwab Pather Mein*, *Padam Shiri*, and

Dafeena received acclaim across Hyderabad, Kurnool, and Kadapa. In addition to his literary accomplishments, Mr. Jamal serves as the **State Secretary of the Minority Hakkula Parirakshana Samiti, Andhra Pradesh**, advocating for minority rights. ■

The Holy Quran consistently highlights the significance of helping the poor, emphasizing it as a means of achieving societal balance and divine reward. The poor, often marginalized, possess inherent strength through their collective influence, which can shape societal norms and hold leaders accountable. This principle is evident in both spiritual teachings and historical events.

1. Moral and Spiritual Responsibility

The Quran commands believers to give charity and support the needy, framing it as a test of faith and a path to earning Allah's favor:

- "And establish prayer and give zakah (charity)..." (Quran 2:43)
- Charity is not just a material act but a spiritual responsibility that ensures wealth is a blessing rather than a source of arrogance. The story of Qarun (Korah) serves as a warning against greed and neglecting the poor. His downfall illustrates the impermanence of worldly wealth when used without compassion. This teaches that wealth should be a means to uplift others, not oppress them.

The Importance of Supporting the Poor and Their Political Influence



2. The Political Influence of the Poor

The collective voice of the poor holds transformative power in shaping societies:

- **Accountability of Leaders:** Leaders are often judged by how they treat their most vulnerable citizens. When leaders prioritize the well-being of the poor, they earn divine and public favor.
- **Grassroots Movements:** Historically, oppressed and underprivileged groups have catalyzed significant social and political changes by uniting for

justice.

• Moral Compass for Leadership:

The poor remind leaders of their responsibilities, acting as a mirror to their governance. Leaders who ignore the needs of the poor risk losing both divine blessing and political legitimacy.

3. Quranic Principles on Wealth and Justice

The Quran repeatedly underscores the need for fairness in wealth distribution and debt forgiveness:

- "And if someone is in hardship,

then let there be postponement until a time of ease. But if you give from your right as charity, then it is better for you..." (Quran 2:280)

This guidance fosters a society where economic inequality is mitigated through mercy and compassion.

Additionally, Islam condemns hoarding wealth and exploiting the poor, warning of dire consequences on the Day of Judgment:

- "Woe to every scorner and mocker, who amasses wealth and counts it." (Quran 104:1-2)

4. Lessons from Current Events: The Gaza Crisis

The ongoing suffering in the world highlights the profound challenges faced by impoverished and oppressed communities. These struggles resonate deeply with Islamic teachings on justice:

- **Leadership and Accountability:** The crisis underscores the role of just leadership in addressing inequality and preventing oppression.
- **Global Responsibility:** The Quran's call for charity extends to supporting oppressed populations worldwide.
- **Moral Imperative:** The Quran warns against spreading corruption and destruction ("Do not cause corruption on the earth after its reformation..." Quran 7:56). This principle calls for peace and justice as foundational elements of leadership.

5. Unity and Equality Among People

The Quranic verse highlighting the creation of all people from a single soul (Quran 49:13) establishes the foundation for unity and mutual respect. It reminds leaders and citizens alike that distinctions in wealth, tribe, or nation do not define superiority; piety and righteousness do.

Conclusion

The poor hold both moral and political significance in shaping a just society. Their well-being reflects the ethical fabric of a community and the effectiveness of its leadership. The Quran's guidance encourages a system where wealth is shared, oppression is resisted, and leaders prioritize the vulnerable. In today's world, these principles remain vital in addressing global injustices, including those evident in crises like Gaza.

The collective efforts of individuals and leaders to uplift the poor can lead to societal harmony, divine blessings, and enduring peace. ■

Embracing Islamic Justice: A Path to Global Revolution



Justice Beyond Borders

Islam emphasizes justice, even towards one's enemies, offering a revolutionary approach that humanity desperately needs today. Modern international relations are plagued by revenge, retaliation, and disproportionate responses. Islam's concept of absolute justice can transform these dynamics, fostering peace and righteousness. The Quranic principle of justice is unequivocal:

"O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be [always] just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do." (Surah al-Ma'idah, Ch.5: V.9)

A Call for Impartiality

"Leave aside personal, social, and national affairs—it is the believer's duty to uphold the highest standards of justice, even

with enemies. Failing to do so indicates a departure from the path of righteousness."

This level of fairness is unparalleled:

"The Quran's command, 'let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice,' is unique and absent in any other religious scripture. Justice must be applied universally, without discrimination, and Muslims and non-Muslims alike deserve fairness."

Justice in Practice

This principle extends beyond international affairs to every aspect of life, including personal, domestic, and social matters. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) exemplified this standard through his actions.

• Reprimanding Injustice:

When companions killed two enemies near the Sacred Mosque, thinking it was justified, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) immediately

paid blood money and reprimanded them for their wrongful actions.

- **Financial Integrity:** A companion who owed a Jewish man four Dirhams was instructed by the Prophet (pbuh) to repay his debt immediately, even if it meant selling his clothes.

A Lesson for Today's World

The Quranic teachings on justice are not just moral ideals but practical solutions for modern conflicts. Sadly, even Muslim nations fail to embody these teachings, with atrocities widespread in their societies.

"Muslims should have been the ones teaching the world about the beautiful teachings of Islam through their conduct and examples. Yet, the reality is far from this ideal."

The Key to True Justice

Practicing such impartial justice is challenging, especially in personal relationships. Achieving this standard requires deep righteousness and a strong relationship with Allah.

"True justice can only be achieved when a person has absolute faith in God Almighty and unwavering belief."

A Universal Solution

Islamic justice is a timeless, universal principle, applicable to friends and foes alike, in both personal and international matters. This approach is not merely a moral teaching but a practical roadmap to resolving global conflicts. If adopted, it can ignite a global revolution of fairness, equity, and peace. ■

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M. Basheer Ahmed

Once Leaders in Science, Philosophy, and Innovation

Muslims were once at the forefront of knowledge, excelling in mathematics, philosophy, and science during the medieval era. The Quran and Hadith emphasize the pursuit of knowledge, with the very first revelation commanding, "Read in the name of your Lord who created..." (96:1-5). This divine inspiration led to a golden age of learning, where Muslim scholars profoundly contributed to world civilization.

The Abbasid caliphs established the *Bait-ul-Hikmah* (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad, a beacon of intellectual activity where Greek, Latin, Chinese, and Indian works were translated into Arabic. Centers of learning across Baghdad, Cordoba, and Samarkand fostered a culture of inquiry, producing luminaries such as Al-Khwarizmi (mathematics), Al-Razi (medicine), and Ibn Sina (philosophy). For centuries,

The Decline of the Pursuit of Knowledge



Muslims dominated the intellectual and scientific fields, but this era of enlightenment began to fade by the 11th century.

Why the Decline?

Muslims' intellectual dominance waned due to internal and external factors. While the Mongol invasion of Baghdad (1258 CE) and colonial exploitation played roles, the critical blow came from within. Theologians opposed philosophy and science, fearing they might undermine faith. Educational reforms by leaders like Nizam-ul-Mulk shifted university curricula toward religious

studies, sidelining science and philosophy.

Key observatories, like Ulugh Beg's in Samarkand and Taqi ad-Din's in Istanbul, were dismantled due to ideological opposition. By the 15th century, scientific inquiry in the Muslim world had nearly ceased. The Ottoman Empire's refusal to adopt the printing press until the 17th century further stalled progress. Meanwhile, Europe translated Muslim works, advancing their scientific and industrial revolutions and leaving the Muslim world behind.

Modern Challenges

Today, Muslims make up 25% of the global population but contribute just 1% of the world's scientists and 6% of scientific publications. With low literacy rates and minimal investment in research, Muslim countries lag significantly behind Western nations.

While some visionaries, like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Muhammad Abduh, revived interest in scientific education, widespread progress remains elusive. Most Muslim Nobel laureates in science have conducted their research in Western institutions, highlighting the need for systemic reform.

The Way Forward: Integrated Education

The Quran calls for balancing worldly knowledge with spiritual values. Integrating science and ethics into the education system can revive the intellectual vigor of earlier centuries. This approach can also address social issues like poverty. For example, zakat funds could support education, enabling

long-term economic growth and self-reliance.

Organizations like IMPMS and DiscoverSTEM are nurturing critical thinking and innovation among young Muslims. By encouraging students to explore STEM fields and problem-solving, they aim to foster the next generation of scientists and intellectuals.

Renewed Renaissance

The Muslim world needs a renaissance in science and philosophy, supported by an intellectual environment that values inquiry and innovation. As the Quran states, "God will never change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (13:11). Renewing the pursuit of knowledge as an act of worship can rekindle the spirit of discovery and progress that once defined Islamic civilization.

Dr. Basheer Ahmed is a former professor of psychiatry at Southwestern Medical School, Dallas, and chairman emeritus of the Muslim Community Center for Human Services, Dallas.

Ziyan

The very word *Islam* originates from the Arabic root *s-l-m*, encompassing meanings such as **peace, submission, and surrender**. In Islam, submission signifies yielding to the will of Allah (God), while surrender denotes adherence to a righteous and ethical path. This dual understanding fosters **harmony, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence**.

A Divine Blueprint for Peace: Quranic Teachings for Harmony

The Quran, the holy book of Islam, lays a strong foundation for peace and unity. Its teachings emphasize honesty, equality, and religious freedom. Key verses include:

- "And do not mix truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth while you know." (Quran 2:42)
- "O people! Be conscious of your Lord, who created you from a single soul." (Quran 4:1)

- "There is no compulsion in religion." (Quran 2:256)

These verses highlight Islam's dedication to fostering harmonious relations within and between communities.

The Prophet's Legacy of Compassion

The life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplifies Islam's principles of **tolerance, forgiveness, and peaceful conflict resolution**:

- **The Treaty of Hudaibiyah:** A peace agreement demonstrating the Prophet's dedication to diplomacy.
- **The Conquest of Mecca:** A moment of unparalleled forgiveness where the Prophet granted amnesty to his former persecutors.
- **Emphasis on Mercy:** The Prophet's teachings consistently prioritized compassion for all living beings.

The Pillars of Islamic Peace

Islam's framework for peace rests on key principles:

The Language of Peace



- **Tawhid (Oneness of God):** Fostering universal brotherhood and sisterhood.
 - **Adl (Justice):** Ensuring fairness, equality, and protection of individual rights.
 - **Rahma (Compassion):** Promoting mercy and kindness toward all beings.
 - **Aman (Security):** Safeguarding life, dignity, and property for all.
- These pillars guide Muslims toward creating a just and

peaceful society.

Challenging the Stereotypes

The Root Causes of Extremism

While Islam inherently promotes peace, political instability, social inequality, and economic hardship often give rise to extremism.

Media Misrepresentation

The portrayal of Islam in the media frequently lacks nuance, spreading misinformation. By encouraging **media literacy** and accurate interpretations of Islamic texts, society can combat negative stereotypes and reveal the faith's true essence.

A Call for Peace and Understanding

Bridging Divides

1. Fostering Interfaith Dialogue: Encouraging cooperation among diverse communities promotes mutual understanding.

2. Advocating Peaceful Conflict Resolution: Supporting

diplomatic efforts emphasizes non-violent solutions to global challenges.

3. Countering Misinformation: Sharing accurate knowledge about Islam fosters tolerance and reduces prejudice.

Together, these steps pave the way for a world where **peace, compassion, and justice prevail**.

A Deeper Dive into Islamic Teachings

Jihad: An Internal Struggle

Often misunderstood, *jihad* primarily refers to the internal struggle to purify one's soul and strive for righteousness. Only in limited contexts does it address **defensive warfare**, as a last resort to protect the innocent and uphold justice.

The Importance of Education

Islam places great emphasis on the **pursuit of knowledge** and critical thinking. Education helps counter misconceptions, revealing the true teachings of Islam as a path of **peace and wisdom**.

The Philosophical Distinction Between 'Human' and 'Muslim'

Generally, the term *human* is translated to mean *insaan* (person), with the assumption that all humans are fundamentally the same, whether from the East or the West. However, this issue is far more complex. Every civilization, or way of life, has its own unique understanding of individuality. This understanding answers the profound question: "Who am I?" (Other questions like the purpose of life, what is good, what is evil, etc., also stem from this fundamental inquiry).

Historically, the commonly accepted answer to "Who am I?" has been: "I am a servant of Allah

(Muslim)." For a long time, this understanding of individuality was considered the valid expression of humanity, particularly in religious societies. While there have been other views, most traditional societies, including religious ones, centered on this concept of servitude to God.

However, during the 17th and 18th centuries, European societies influenced by the Enlightenment began to adopt a different response: "I am not a servant; I am free and self-sufficient." This idea found its roots in Descartes' famous statement: *Cogito, ergo sum* ("I

think, therefore I am"), which suggests that the self is the only entity justified by its own existence. In Enlightenment thought, this self-sufficient entity is referred to as *human*, a concept that rejects servitude and claims autonomy.

French philosopher Michel Foucault argued that the concept of *human* emerged for the first time in the 17th century, not because humans didn't exist before, but because no earlier civilization had embraced freedom as the basis for individuality. Prior to this, humanity was referred to as *mankind* (God's creation and

subjects). The concept of *humanity* was only developed in the 17th century, giving rise to modern *humanism*, which asserts that being free and self-sufficient is the essence of being human.

Those who say, "A person is just a person," are simplifying a complex issue. The notion of good and evil, knowledge, truth, and justice change completely depending on how we answer "Who am I?" Just as Muslims and Christians have disagreed for centuries on the nature of Jesus (peace be upon him) one seeing him as the son of God, and the other as the messenger of God so too does the difference between a

human and a *Muslim* reflect fundamentally different views of life.

Some will argue, "First become a human, then a Muslim." This is a deceptive argument, for *human*, in this sense, refers to someone who denies servitude to God and claims autonomy. In reality, to be a *Muslim* is to acknowledge, "I am, first and foremost, a servant of Allah." Anything else is a distortion of that truth.

Ultimately, to be human means to be a servant of Allah in any form whether as a human, animal, or even an angel.



Sadathullah Khan

Monsoon Musings: Living Life with Purpose



Rainy days often bring about gloomy moods, don't they? "Oh, it's been raining again!" a complaint we frequently hear. But isn't the rain a blessing from Allah? We humans often forget to appreciate His gifts, endlessly grumbling instead of recognizing nature as His divine creation. This dissatisfaction is symbolic of how many today lead purposeless lives, drifting without direction and blaming others for their unhappiness.

Here, I wish to share some nuggets of wisdom from my own life's journey, join me in reflecting on life's lessons. I don't claim perfection, but these insights might help you reframe your life's purpose.

Facing Life's Challenges: Lessons in Resilience

Years ago, I found myself stuck in the rut of smoking an unconscious way to cope with the stresses of running my export business. Trained as an engineer, I had ventured into business.

Business, as you know, has its ups and downs. Betrayal and financial loss hit me hard. I could have let the setback drag me into depression, but by Allah's grace, I didn't. Instead, I chose to face the storm and let go of the business, after realizing that business life wasn't for me.

What did this experience teach me?

1. Take risks head-on. Every climb in life's journey requires courage to face obstacles.

2. Let go and move forward. My addiction to cigarettes and the bitterness from my business failure faded when I decided to focus on resilience.

Building Dreams with Purpose
Starting *Islamic Voice* in January 1987 a newspaper to give a voice to the Muslim community. It was a leap of faith, but with Allah's help and the support of a few friends, the groundwork began.

Starting *Islamic Voice* meant I had to roll up my sleeves. From working late nights to designing layouts, and even delivering files



” Life isn't just about existing; it's about living with purpose. Let us place our trust in Allah, take bold steps, and live an Akhirah based spiritually fulfilling life.



on my old scooter, no task was beneath me. To this day, I continue editing and proof reading late at night, especially after restarting the post-pandemic paper.

What did this teach me?

1. Stay positive and keep hope in Allah. Challenges are inevitable, but perseverance pays off.

2. Embrace opportunities with humility. Prestige and pride should never hold you back from meaningful work.

Discovering a Higher Purpose

At one point, I felt like a hamster on a wheel caught in life's routines, from grocery shopping to mundane chores. While I valued my responsibilities, I sensed a deeper purpose waiting to be fulfilled.

Allah's perfect timing brought the *Discover Yourself* Workshops into my life. Attending all the levels of the workshop transformed my outlook, giving me the inspiration to share this knowledge with others. This led to the launch of the *Discover Yourself* Workshop in 2002, which has since impacted

lives across several countries.

What did I learn?

1. Share knowledge freely. I encourage participants to share the workshop's teachings with their families because a harmonious family life creates lasting happiness.

2. Begin with yourself. The workshops emphasize personal transformation applying Islamic principles like forgiveness, responsibility, integrity, and unwavering faith in Allah to daily life.

A Life of Service and Purpose

Now, at 74, people often ask how I still manage to travel, counsel, and connect with people worldwide. My answer is simple: it's not about age; it's about purpose.

I could choose a life of comfort, enjoying home-cooked meals and leisurely holidays. But such a life feels limited to me. Instead, I strive to reach people globally through the workshops, inspiring positive change.

Takeaways for a Meaningful Life

1. Have faith in Allah and embrace risks. Fearlessness paves the way for growth.

2. Live beyond yourself. Set higher spiritual goals that give life a deeper meaning.

3. Keep learning and sharing. Knowledge isn't owned it's meant to uplift others.

Life isn't just about existing; it's about living with purpose. Let us place our trust in Allah, take bold steps, and live a Akhirah based spiritually fulfilling life.

May Allah bless you all with clarity, courage, and contentment! ■

Viewing the Quran Through Allah's Wisdom

Question: What is the practical way to read the Quran from Allah's perspective and not from others or my own perspective?
Yusra, Srinagar

Answer: The first step is recognizing that you have a choice: you can read the Quran from your perspective, relying on personal logic and reasoning, or you can approach it from the perspective of Divine Reality.

Allah established a communication system through His prophets and revealed books to guide humanity. Without this divine communication, even the greatest minds could not determine the ultimate truth. Human interpretations are shaped by limited experience and are not absolute truths; they reflect personal reality or opinion. Only Allah, who is the Absolute Reality (Al-Haqq), can declare the ultimate truth. The Quran is His word, revealing the clear distinction between truth and falsehood, guiding us to recognize the true enemy (Satan) and the path of Haqq (Truth).

Reading the Quran is an external action, but listening to it is an internal process. This internal listening allows you not only to GET but to truly receive what Allah is communicating. This ability comes through living the message. The finite mind cannot grasp Allah's infinite wisdom only by living in alignment with it can we truly "GET" it.

The mind, with its judgments and opinions, often acts as a barrier between us and Allah. To read from Allah's perspective, we must transcend the mind's constructs and step into the realm of Reality, free from subjective interpretation. This journey moves us beyond personal opinions and judgments, immersing us in a space of true

meaning.

For 50 years, I lived within this false reality until, by Allah's mercy, I was guided from the world of illusion into the world of Reality. This shift brought a profound sense of peace and calm the life Allah desires for us. With the blessing of this experience, I felt compelled to share it with the world, and thus, in 2002, the Discover Yourself workshop was born. Its purpose is to help people live from Allah's perspective. Alhamdulillah, to date, we have conducted 504 workshops.

The Discover Yourself workshop, helps participants move beyond the "false self" and introduces them to their true, authentic self in alignment with Reality.

Sometimes, like in the Quranic story of the cow, Allah's commands are simple, but human logic complicates them with unnecessary questions and doubts. The mind, as a questioning machine, often distracts from the essence of Allah's guidance. The Quran is not a book of mere rights and wrongs; it is Al-Furqan, the Criterion, distinguishing between truth and falsehood, and good and evil. To read it from Allah's perspective, one must transcend personal biases and allow divine truth to shape one's understanding. I acknowledge my inability to clear all your doubts as the answer is from my perspective.

If this raises more questions, please let us know we can learn together. We are in a state of "I don't know," and by sharing our experiences and knowledge, we can grow. Our ultimate purpose is to connect with Allah and live a life He loves. ■

“To read it from Allah’s perspective, one must transcend personal biases and allow divine truth to shape one's understanding.”

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» Page 20

Reducing Global Tensions: A Human-Centered Approach to Peace

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A Call for Military Implementation of IDT

Given the scientific backing and successful implementation of IDT, it is time for military forces to consider establishing Prevention

Wings trained in these techniques. These units could significantly reduce tensions and help prevent the escalation of conflicts. If military adoption is not immediately feasible, civilian groups could take the lead.

The military that first integrates IDT into their operations would gain international recognition not only for fostering peace domestically but also for playing a key role in averting global conflicts and protecting humanity

from further destruction.

As General Giulio Douhet once stated, "Victory smiles upon those who anticipate the change in the character of war." The time to act is now.

Arlene J. Schar is the Director of Communications at the Center for Advanced Military Science (CAMS) & Dr. David Leffler is the Executive Director at CAMS (<https://www.iadb.in/2024/10/31/brain-based-technology-to-end-and-prevent-war/>) ■

Dr. Syed Shah Khusro Hussaini, Visionary Leader of Gulbarga Dargah, Passes Away

Kalburgi: Dr. Syed Shah Khusro Hussaini, the esteemed Sajjadanashin of the Dargah Khawaja Bandenawaz in Gulbarga, passed away on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at the age of 79. He had been ailing for some time and breathed his last around 11 PM.

Dr. Hussaini, following in the footsteps of his illustrious father Mohammed Al-Hussaini, transformed the Dargah's administration into a beacon of education and social upliftment. He modernized the Dargah's operations, utilized its charities to establish a network of educational institutions, revitalized the surrounding area, and created a marketplace supporting local artisans and small traders.

Custodian of a Legacy

The Dargah Khawaja Bandenawaz, renowned for the mausoleum of Khawaja Bandenawaz Gesudaraz (1321-1422), remains a revered site in Kalburgi. Khawaja Bandenawaz, a disciple of Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti, played a pivotal role in spreading Islamic teachings in the Deccan during the Bahamani era. Dr. Hussaini's leadership extended this legacy by founding the Khawaja Bandenawaz University in 2018. The university, a pioneering institution born out of a Dargah, has become a hub for modern education. It encompasses over 35 institutions, including high schools, polytechnics, an engineering college, a medical college, a teachers' training



college, and a girls' college. Additionally, it houses an Industrial Training Institute, a hospital, guesthouses, hostels, and a library preserving invaluable manuscripts.

A Life of Scholarship and Service

Dr. Hussaini was a distinguished scholar, holding degrees from

McGill University in Canada and a PhD from a university in the United States. His vision was to merge traditional values with modern education, creating opportunities for future generations.

A Lasting Impact

Dr. Hussaini is survived by his wife, two sons Syed Muhammad Ali Hussaini and Dr. Syed Mustafa Hussaini and three daughters. His dedication to education and community service has left an indelible mark on Kalburgi and beyond.

He was laid to rest within the sacred premises of the Dargah on Thursday evening, a fitting farewell for a man who devoted his life to its legacy and mission. May his soul rest in eternal peace. ■

S.M. Khan, Former Press Secretary to President Kalam, Passes Away at 67

New Delhi: S.M. Khan, a distinguished senior Indian Information Service officer and former Press Secretary to President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, passed away on November 17, 2024, at a Delhi hospital. He was 67. Khan was laid to rest in his hometown, Khurja, Bulandshahr district, Uttar Pradesh. Born on June 15, 1957, Khan excelled academically, earning an LLM from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), where he received the Chancellor's Gold Medal. He later pursued Economics at the University of Wales.



Khan's illustrious career included serving as spokesperson for the

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), where he handled numerous high-profile cases, and as Director General of Doordarshan News. As the Press Secretary to President Kalam (2002-2007), he chronicled his insights in the acclaimed book "People's President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam" (2017).

He also represented India at Cannes and Berlin Film Festivals as Director of the Directorate of Film Festivals, held leadership roles in the Press Information Bureau, and contributed significantly to Jamia Hamdard as

Dean and Director of its Residential Coaching Academy.

A trustee and Vice President of the India Islamic Cultural Center, Khan was a notable alumnus of AMU, where he served on its Court and Executive Council.

AMU Vice Chancellor Prof. Naima Khatoon, along with the university fraternity, mourned his loss, lauding his contributions and praying for his place in Jannah. Khan's passing is deeply felt by his family, colleagues, and the communities he served with dedication and excellence. ■

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Reducing Global Tensions: A Human-Centered Approach to Peace

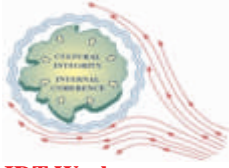
Despite ongoing efforts, the war between Russia and Ukraine continues to raise fears of a global escalation, potentially leading to World War III. Similarly, tensions in the Middle East also threaten to spiral out of control. To prevent further conflict and the immense suffering that war brings, it is essential to de-escalate rising tensions. A human-centered approach, rooted in collective stress reduction, could provide a meaningful solution.

The Role of Collective Stress in Conflict

Social violence, including war, conflict, terrorism, and crime, often stems from a buildup of collective societal stress. To address these issues, solutions must focus on reducing this stress. Research highlights that one of the most effective ways to decrease collective stress is through an ancient, non-religious method called Invincible Defense Technology (IDT), pioneered by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. IDT has shown promising results in various conflict zones, including the

Middle East.

Maharishi Effect



How IDT Works

IDT uses the practice of Transcendental Meditation (TM) and advanced techniques to reduce societal stress. Large groups practicing these techniques twice a day have been shown to positively influence peace in society. Studies have demonstrated that when such groups practice IDT, crime rates decrease, quality-of-life indicators improve, and tensions related to war and terrorism are reduced. The collective effect of this practice creates a "field-effect of consciousness" that extends to surrounding populations, promoting peace.

Empirical Evidence of IDT's Effectiveness

Research across multiple countries has validated the impact of IDT. For example, a 1993 study in



Washington, D.C. showed a 24% drop in crime when large groups practiced TM. Similar findings have been recorded in Cambodia, India,

and the Philippines. Moreover, a study published in the *World Journal of Social Science* found that when 1% of a population practiced IDT, various stress indicators in the U.S. decreased. When the group size reduced, stress indicators increased again, demonstrating the power of group practice.

The Biological Mechanism of IDT

IDT not only influences society at a macro level but also produces individual biological effects. Studies have shown that practicing TM enhances brain coherence, which correlates with greater well-

being and reduced stress. Research also indicates that higher levels of serotonin (linked to happiness and contentment) are observed in communities where IDT is practiced, while cortisol (a stress-related hormone) levels decrease. This biological mechanism may explain how IDT reduces aggression and hostility.

Global Impact and the Potential for Military Application

The impact of IDT is not confined to local communities. Between 1983 and 1985, global data showed a 72% decrease in deaths from terrorism and a 32% reduction in

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